

**From:** [Maddie Faull](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Do not cut social services  
**Date:** Monday, February 19, 2024 4:23:45 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from mkfaull@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

I am writing to you in regards to the projected \$27 million deficit in our upcoming 2025 budget. I am a Madison resident in the Mansion Hill neighborhood and a graduate student studying social work. By 2025, I will be practicing social work in Madison, and it is essential that you do everything to preserve funding for our vital community services. While the nonprofit sector struggles to care for our community with its limited budget, the police continue to see increases to their budget. Policing alone is not the answer to public safety, and without adequate funding for social services like housing, employment support, community mental health care, and other basic needs, we will continue to spend more and more on policing with no real impact on safety. There is no amount of policing that can create a healthy, safe, and equitable Madison, only investing in the community can do so.

Instead of cutting essential social services, I urge you to pass a referendum to raise the tax levy ceiling and bring in additional revenue sources. Instead of continuing to funnel more and more money into policing every year, I encourage you to use some of that budget to address the root of crime in the first place (which our nonprofit sector seeks to do).

Please work with the nonprofit sector to figure out a solution to this deficit, instead of cutting essential services without acknowledging the short and long term impact. Although up front, these cuts may appear to save the city money, cutting these services will cost us greatly in the long term. Without continued investment in social services, the health of the community will suffer, and Madison will hurt financially in the long run.

Best,  
Maddie Faull (she/her)

Master of Social Work | 2025  
BA Sociology & Philosophy, Criminal Justice Certificate  
University of Wisconsin-Madison  
TA for American Indian and Indigenous Studies 100  
Office Hours: Mondays 12:00pm - 1:00pm  
118 Ingraham Hall

**From:** [Jerry Folk](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Linda Ketcham](#)  
**Subject:** City priorities  
**Date:** Monday, February 19, 2024 4:28:05 PM

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As a Christian, a Lutheran Pastor, a former Executive Director of the Wisconsin of Churches and, most importantly, as a person who cares about the well-being of those most in need among us, I appeal to all Alders of Madison to find a way to deal with next year's projected deficit without reducing support for social justice projects or the already inadequate social safety-network available to those in need. As a citizen blessed with the resources necessary to live a secure and meaningful life, I am willing to pay more in taxes if they are used to fund these projects and services. I believe many of my fellow citizens feel the same way.

Although I appreciate the necessary role of the police department in providing security for the citizens of Madison, I am convinced that social justice and measure of economic equity, along with an effective social-safety network play a far greater role in creating a safe and secure society. Police departments cannot provide those things. Only wise, courageous, and visionary political leaders can do that. Failure to do so increases social pain, dissatisfaction, and violence, making the police department's job more difficult. Rather than addressing the underlying causes of this pain and violence, political leaders too often look to the police department to solve the problem. This creates a vicious cycle of ever greater violence-repression. . Soon more and more of society's resources are invested in police, jails and prisons while social justice projects and social-safety networks are defunded and whiter. .

I hope and pray that you will have the courage, wisdom and vision to find a way to prevent this vicious cycle of violence/repression from defining the future politics of the city of Madison in the future.

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** City of Madison <noreply@cityofmadison.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 15, 2024 10:10 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** [All Alders] \$27m budget deficit

Recipient: All Alders:

Wed, 02/14/2024 - 09:45

Denise Garlow

2223 Chamberlain Ave

Madison, Wisconsin. 53726 No, do not contact me. All Alders \$27m budget deficit A property tax referendum to increase taxes is a hard NO in my opinion. A mix of across- the-board staff and program cuts is the best tact to get balanced for this year's budget cycle and next. Best intentions aside, a city has to live within its means - restrictions and all. Remember, we're a city, not an experiment.

**From:** [City of Madison](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 14, 2024 6:52:08 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Wed, 02/14/2024 - 06:49

Marty Groskreutz

605 whitehall dr

madison, Wisconsin. 53714 Yes, by email. [magpack1@charter.net](mailto:magpack1@charter.net) All Alders Budget  
Question, last night on the news the Mayor stated the budget for 2025 is in dire concerns. My  
concern we are into six weeks of the new year and have money issues for the budget  
shortages, for 2025, why not start now to reduce the pain in 2025. Sounds more like poor  
management of funds.



**From:** [Marina Haan](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 2025 budget Please listen or I will turn into a Republican  
**Date:** Saturday, February 17, 2024 4:36:56 PM

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Do not cut police funding or no one will be re-elected  
Cut all city funds for the City Market that no one actually wants.  
The BRT is bankrupting us. Pull the plug. No one wants this either.  
Stop throwing money at the homeless problem. Housing first with no requirements is a loser for all concerned.

The last 4 years of mayoral and council member not listening to us but aspiring to trendy goals has alienated me and many others from progressivism.

Marina Haan  
Hammersley Rd  
Madison 53711  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Bruce Hansen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** suggested budget cuts.  
**Date:** Saturday, February 17, 2024 12:01:58 PM

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Dear Alders,

The Mayor is right about involving Madison's Alders in determining how to negotiate Madison's debt and responsibilities. You are our representatives. It is more democratic to include the voices of our Alders than just accepting the agenda of the Mayor. Taxes are already too high in Madison but we must appreciate that we have to pay for Madison to remain as good of a place as it is.

Things I most value in Madison are its libraries, well paid municipal workers, its parks, roads and relatively low crime rate.

Things I least like about Madison include Madison's enthusiasm to intentionally fill in neighborhoods with higher density housing thus making Madison more crowded and its traffic worse. DEI spending and affordable home spending needs to be cut. Taxes are already too high but i support raising them no higher than inflation to at least accommodate inflation.

'Affordable home' spending is tied in with the developers' insatiable drive for rapid growth and corporate profits. I suggest revoking zoning changes made to make the new bus route theoretically more cost efficient. Affordable housing is a corporate subsidy. I first ran into 'affordable housing' when I lived in California. Marin County was getting to be so expensive that only wealthy people could live there. Instead of raising the pay levels of teachers nurses, trades people, and municipal workers so they could afford to live in Marin County, State and federal money was used to build 'affordable' housing for workers to keep profits high. Tax money from other places was used instead of forcing companies and local taxpayers to pay more for workers. Profits went to the rich instead of workers' wages. Stop moving forward on affordable housing that requires other Madison residents to pay more taxes thereby making their own housing more expensive..

Get rid of most or all DEI spending. Put deleted DEI employees to work in other vacant City of Madison jobs so as not to eliminate their means of support as DEI jobs are eliminated. A higher priority should be placed on saving jobs keeping health, safety, and educational services open.

Also, I don't know how we in Madison have so far been spared the high costs of caring for surplus migrants that Gov. Abbott is removing from Texas. Migrants are showing up in places as close to Madison as Whitewater, Marshfield, and Stevens Point. Once they are directed to or find their way to Madison, you as Alders will be faced with huge additional expenditures and will have to cut back services designed for Madison residents. Denver is having longer waits for emergency medical care because that's where migrants go for any medical care. NY City is evacuating schools of children to house migrants. New York children are supposed to go online for education. We know how that works. Some cities are evacuating motels of tourists and poor Americans including elderly Vets to make room for migrant. And dare i say it, crime is rising in some of these places. This is in our future if you allow it to happen. Whatever budget deficits Madison now faces will get much worse. If taxes get too high, there will also be more public resistance to funding Madison's public schools.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Bruce Hansen

**From:** [Miranda Hassett](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Projected deficit and cost cutting...  
**Date:** Friday, February 23, 2024 2:40:33 PM

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Dear Madison Alders,

I'm writing to you as a community member and a pastor here in Madison. In my role as a pastor, and through my parish's active outreach ministry, I hear a lot about the needs of our city and our county.

Needs are increasing, not decreasing. Demand on food pantries is up. High housing costs are forcing tough choices on so many households. It's hard for so many people to get into housing and stay in housing.

We have some big challenges in Madison, and they need sustained and holistic engagement. Our social services and support programs can't fall victim to cost cutting. That would only deepen cycles of desperation and despair.

Please keep investing in the people, families, and neighborhoods of Madison and beyond, and keep working with the many non-profits who support our neighbors and work for solutions.

Thank you.

Miranda Hassett  
Resident, District 20  
Pastor, St. Dunstan's Church, District 19

**From:** [kao466](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget deficit  
**Date:** Sunday, February 18, 2024 2:36:19 PM

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Legalize Marijuana.

Cut council wages .

Defer buss improvements and changes. How profitable are the city busses. Don't put money in a department that isn't making money. The schools and education should be given more money not less.

Put tolls on our interstates.

I was born and raised in Madison. Madison was great to raise my kid however I won't be able to retire here.

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

**From:** [Linda Ketcham](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** City funding priorities for 2025  
**Date:** Monday, February 19, 2024 4:19:16 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from linda@justdane.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing today on behalf of JustDane to support your efforts to secure additional funding in support of the Community Development Division in 2025. I understand that the projected deficit is daunting, I also recognize that public safety is much broader than policing. You may have heard on NPR or read in other news that nationally philanthropic giving has declined over the past two years leaving many of the agencies doing vital work in our community struggling to maintain their current level of programming AND pay a competitive wage to retain skilled staff. Recognizing that rarely is there any political will to reduce funding for police, the City of Madison being no exception, it is imperative that you work collaboratively with the non-profit sector to find new ways of generating revenue, of cost savings within the City, to support the vital work that actually builds a safer, healthier, and more equitable community. Policing doesn't build a healthy or safe community, investing in people, neighborhoods, in initiatives that address systemic inequities and offer support to individuals and families is how we build a safe community. Our shelters are all at capacity with waiting lists. Homelessness is increasing. The violence prevention work the City is funding is having an impact as violent crime is generally down, but we need mental health supports, AODA treatment to help continue that trend. We need truly housing, treatment, support, shelter, food access, all of these are crucial to improving the quality of life for everyone in Madison.

You do have some options - certainly going to referendum to raise the tax levy is an option and it is an option we, as an organization, would support if the funds are used to preserve the safety net and invest in our neighborhoods but they cannot be used to supplant existing CDD funds. Increasing certain fees could be an option we would support as long as they are not regressive. Administrative costs could be reduced by moving to a longer contracting cycle for initiatives as Dane County has done with five year contracts. This would reduce administrative time and allow non-profits to do more long range planning. Longer contract periods also provide more long-term data on program effectiveness.

I encourage you as a Council to reach out to the Homeless Services Consortium, the Recovery Coalition, the Affordable Housing Action Alliance, and other groups for their input on both budget priorities, needs and ideas for generating additional

revenue. The non-profit sector in Dane County is a very large employment sector with the capacity to lend its voice and support to efforts to invest in the residents of our City to continue to move toward the goal of reducing racial disparities, reducing homelessness, reducing violence, and making sure that no adult or child is without food, shelter or access to the supportive services they may need.

Thank you for starting the conversation early. I look forward to working with you and other non-profits in our City to effectively address the shortfall while increasing the health and wellbeing of all of our residents.

Sincerely,

Linda Ketcham (she, her, hers)  
Executive Director  
Madison-area Urban Ministry, Inc. (dba JustDane)  
128 E. Olin Ave. Suite 202  
Madison, WI 53713  
608-256-0906  
She, her, hers

*"Compassion and justice are companions, not choices." Wm. Sloane Coffin*

**From:** [City of Madison](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] 2025 projected budget deficit  
**Date:** Monday, February 19, 2024 3:06:30 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Mon, 02/19/2024 - 15:04

Tanya R Lettman-Shue  
5675 Polworth St

Madison, Wisconsin. 53711 No, do not contact me. All Alders 2025 projected budget deficit I understand that there are significant budgetary concerns for all governmental agencies as the ARPA funds are no longer available. It is important to continue to build on the public health initiative that have been advanced and remember that social services and public health services improve the general public's lives and decrease the need for government intervention such as police and fire response. Please continue to keep this in mind as you are looking at the budget for 2025.



**From:** [Catherine Martin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** City of Madison budget deficit  
**Date:** Sunday, February 18, 2024 12:39:56 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from cathymartin07@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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If you're looking for ways to cut the budget for the city of Madison ? Simply send back all those expensive and brand new EV electric buses and make do with what we have for the time being.

**From:** [City of Madison](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] balancing the budget  
**Date:** Saturday, February 17, 2024 1:12:07 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Sat, 02/17/2024 - 13:10

Valerie Mellerop

5922 MEADOWOOD DR

MADISON, Wisconsin. 53711 No, do not contact me. All Alders balancing the budget A well thought out "a little bit of this and a little bit of that" would be more helpful than going to extremes. See what can be cut back in the city AND put some additional revenue request on the ballot.

Not all one or another.

Would it be helpful to postpone some street repairs/replacement since our summers seem to be a never ending construction season and drivers might appreciate a break?

**From:** [Kristen Peterson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** City debt  
**Date:** Sunday, February 18, 2024 11:45:46 AM

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Relieve the mayor of her duties. Let's not incur more bad debt.  
Kristen Peterson

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Brief document  
**Date:** Sunday, February 18, 2024 1:14:37 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from bonnie.roe@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Alders,

I look forward to the fact that many of you are really seeking ways to narrow the \$27 million deficit for the 2025 Operating Budget. I know this work won't be easy, but I'm glad the Mayor has charged you with this direction.

I came across this really helpful document and thought I would pass it along, just in case you haven't seen it:

[https://wispolicyforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/BudgetBrief\\_2024CityofMadison.pdf](https://wispolicyforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/BudgetBrief_2024CityofMadison.pdf)

Thanks for serving the City,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

**From:** [Greg Smith](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Deficit  
**Date:** Friday, March 1, 2024 8:39:21 AM

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We should never be in this position. We took the one time funds from the federal government and built that money into ongoing to spending. Surprise! No money to pay for those continuing programs. Cut spending if you have to. Don't keep raising our taxes.

Greg Smith Retelle Acadia

Sent from my iPhone

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** jclausius@charter.net  
**Sent:** Monday, March 4, 2024 4:39 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** City \$27M Deficit

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Dear City Council Members,

My Alder Sabrina Madison, reached out to me for my thoughts on dealing with the \$27M budget deficit facing our city. She hoped that as a former alder I would share my ideas for your discussion at the March 5th council meeting.

Numerous media articles or pieces have been warning of the city "structural deficit" for quite some time now. Proposed attempts to close the \$27M gap by spending cuts and raising city fees and hotel/vehicle taxes are unrealistic and unsustainable.

A property tax referendum is the most workable solution at this time. If successful it would buy time for city officials to work with state officials to increase the shared revenue formula. At the same time granting our city ability to implement a sales tax (such as Milwaukee) could be explored.

Financial referendums are a hard sell and city government must share full transparency with voters to be successful. Believe me, budget discussions during my city council tenure were no picnic then and nothing has changed! Please contact me if anyone has any questions.

Good luck tomorrow evening,

Joe Clausius  
18 Clarendon Court  
Madison, WI 53704

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Joanna Frasch <jefra1313@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 4, 2024 1:48 PM  
**To:** Madison, Sabrina  
**Cc:** All Alders  
**Subject:** 2025 City Budget

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Dear Alder Madison,

I'm writing as your constituent to ask you to please raise my taxes. As a citizen of Madison, I'm well aware of the \$27 million dollar budget shortfall the city is facing, and I urge you to support a referendum which would allow the city to increase the tax levy and cover the shortfall without cutting services to the city. I understand and am grateful for the city's ability to have covered the deficits in the past with pandemic aid, and I would personally rather have a slight increase in taxes in order to maintain this level than face the consequences of deep cuts to programs and services.

I'm also writing as a union member to urge you to support a referendum in order to avoid layoffs of city employees. I am concerned for my union siblings that deep cuts could result in them losing their jobs with the city they passionately and faithfully serve. I believe that in the long run deep cuts to city programs and services while displacing a number of city employees would eventually create larger issues and further strain on the budget.

It's my understanding that this predicament we're facing is due, at least in part, to perpetually stagnant shared revenue funds from the state. Hopes were raised for a short time with the legislature enacting 2023 Wisconsin Act 12 (Shared Revenue, Personal Property Tax Elimination, and Milwaukee Sales Tax Authority) only to learn it didn't deliver funds as hoped. This Act also brought a new restriction on municipalities with populations greater than 20,000 creating budgets; it abolishes the ability to make cuts to police and fire/EMS services. To be clear, I do not believe that if Madison could cut \$27 million from these departments they should, or that it would solve the problem. It is, however, an overreach of the state legislature to restrict cities' (only of a certain size) spending and limit their autonomy to make their own budget decisions.

In the city of Madison's case, if there was no referendum, it would mean a funding cut of 15% to all other divisions except police, fire, and EMS in order to cover the budget shortfall. It seems odd to me the state would favor one group of services over another in this Act, when shared revenue funds are usually unrestricted. It is basically telling municipalities to favor police and emergency services over programs and services designed to decrease their need, whether the communities agree to this or not. I believe this is a direct violation of Wisconsin's constitution, [Article 11](#) which states: "Cities and villages organized pursuant to state law may determine their local affairs and government, subject only to this constitution and to such enactments of the legislature of statewide concern as with uniformity shall affect every city or every village. The method of such determination shall be prescribed by the legislature." I urge you in your position on the city council to demand the City of Madison challenge this Act, as by only restricting cities over a certain population threshold, it is clearly not uniform.

Please support a referendum which would close the budget gap, maintain programs and services, and save city jobs. Please also, for the long run, refer the matter of Act 12 for legal action by the city attorney.

Sincerely,

Joanna Frasch  
Constituent and proud member of AFSCME  
3348 Ambassador Dr. #3  
Madison, WI 53718  
715.321.0569  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Letesha Nelson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Goodman concerns regarding budget  
**Date:** Monday, March 4, 2024 7:05:20 PM  
**Attachments:** [GCC Letter for City Council - March 4 2024.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from lnelson@goodmancenter.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello City Council, I wanted to share some thoughts with you regarding the upcoming City budget decisions you have to make and that will affect us as a community. Please see the attached letter that explains an important community perspective.

I look forward to keeping in touch and learning more about the next steps in the coming months.

Thanks in advance for your time and consideration.

Letesha

**Letesha Nelson** (she/her/hers)

CEO/Executive Director

**GOODMAN COMMUNITY CENTER**

214 Waubesa St., Madison, WI 53704

Office 608.204.8025 // Main 608.241.1574 // [goodmancenter.org](http://goodmancenter.org)

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*We need kindness now more than ever. [Learn more & share your story.](#)*





March 4, 2024

Common Council  
City of Madison  
City County Building  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 417  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Council Members,

On behalf of Goodman Community Center's board and staff, I'm writing to share our concern about the City of Madison's anticipated \$27M budget shortfall in FY25. We understand you must consider all available options as you make the difficult but necessary decisions to address such a large financial gap. However, any cuts to the City's annual funding for Goodman Community Center and other neighborhood centers will be especially challenging due to the record-high demand and need we're all experiencing in all of our programs.

Goodman Community is Dane County's largest community center, serving over 40,000 people annually ages 3-103. Our annual expense budget is \$8.3M and we have over 100 employees. People from all walks of life and all ages come here for programs and services that make their lives – and our community – stronger. GCC is committed to creating and maintaining a community that respects and values diverse life experiences. We currently house a preschool, 4-year-old kindergarten, after-school programs for all ages (including countywide Girls Inc.), an older adult program, food pantry, fitness center, and a gym. We also rent our spaces to individuals, private corporations and community groups.

The City's annual support of Goodman Community Center makes a profound impact on our youth and their families and the overall financial health of the center. Goodman receives approximately \$450,000 from the City through a competitive Community Development Grant that we work to apply for annually and dutifully report on. This grant award funds several of our core programs, including:

- Preschool Childcare
- Elementary Youth Programming
- Middle School Youth Programming
- High School Youth Programming
- TEEN works
- Senior Services
- Case Management



**Goodman**  
Community Center

[goodmancenter.org](http://goodmancenter.org)

We strengthen lives  
and secure futures

} *With our community*

As Madison continues to grow exponentially, so do the needs of our community. Now, is not the time to divest City resources as it will only cost our community even more in the long-term. However, if cuts are inevitable, I encourage you to proactively communicate with Goodman and our fellow service agencies, so we can best manage our limited resources to weather this challenge as safely as possible.

We provide critical services for our community, as do many of our fellow agencies, and it will be terribly difficult to do more with less but, as always, we will do our best.

Please contact me with any questions. Regardless of the difficult road ahead, our community is stronger if we collaborate and work together to make the best, community-informed decisions.

Thank you for your consideration and your partnership.

In community,

Letesha Nelson  
CEO/Executive Director



**From:** [Bruce Hansen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Balancing the budget.  
**Date:** Monday, March 4, 2024 12:56:36 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from de22bock@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Alders,

In order to partly balance Madison's budget, I propose two revenue increases (1. and 4.), and two spending cuts (2. and 3.), and a change of policy (5.).

- 1.) Increase property tax revenue to an amount 2% higher than the national inflation rate. I support this higher than inflation rate increase because we, as Madison voters, have voted in representatives who spend with abandon. We consequently should pay higher taxes. However, these taxes will hurt seniors and others on fixed incomes and will be passed on to all renters too. Increasing taxes will not just hurt the rich so increased taxation is not a total answer.
- 2.) End all DEI programs and spending. Transfer DEI employee to other non-DEI Madison City employment jobs.
- 3.) End all affordable housing programs and projects that are not too far along to stop. There is no way to provide affordable housing for everyone who wants to move to Madison.
- 4.) Sell existing affordable housing units to private interests to reduce Madison's structural debt with some strings attached to prevent the ruin of those already made dependent on subsidies. Madison is not required to provide and maintain a supply of cheap labor for its businesses. Businesses should pay more if they need to attract workers.
- 5.) Cease and desist Madison's frenetic pro-growth policy. It enriches developers but runs up taxes and causes undesirable zoning changes.

Thank you.

Bruce Hansen

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Nicholas Pjevach <nick.pjevach@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 4, 2024 8:16 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Cc:** Mayor  
**Subject:** Need for theory behind budget

Some people who received this message don't often get email from nick.pjevach@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear alders,

As you prepare for the committee of the whole tomorrow evening to discuss the 2025 budget outlook and addressing the structural deficit, I want to turn your attention to a moment from the January 23 Common Council meeting. During discussion of Legistar File [#81016](#), Mayor Rhodes Conway answered Alder Bennett with the following statement at 2:38:45 (<https://media.cityofmadison.com/mediasite/Showcase/madison-city-channel/Presentation/f76d56ed58764af7bddeca3050b308701d/Channel/d29c91089bda40e7bb0fba20311ff0755f>) regarding any additional briefing on the budget that alders were not yet aware of (mind you this was before the presentation from Finance, [#81870](#)):

"The sort of factual way to answer the question is what is represented in the fiscal note, right? Depending on which version you are looking at, there is a sort of total dollar impact or the percent of the entire budget impact, both of those are available to you for all the relevant numbers. I think though you are asking sort of a more philosophical question which I'm not really sure is mine to answer, but nonetheless, I think the short version is any additional expense to this city increases the gap between what's available to us in revenue and our cost to continue. So, you can look at that as any additional expense makes the problem worse or you can look at that in the bigger picture this is a relevant small increase compared to, for example, the well-deserved wage increase that city staff are getting this year or whatever we find out in terms of increases of our health insurance rates or fuel prices. All of those are likely to be much larger total price tags than this item. **At the end of the day, historically when we bring the budget to the floor, you and your colleagues are "making decisions"— to use polite language— over items that are \$5,000.00, which is a very small portion of the total cost of what you are talking about right now. So it's all relative, alder.** I don't think there is a way to encapsulize what the impact on the budget would be other than literally looking at the numbers. **Beyond that it is more of a philosophical approach you want to take to the budget.**"

I would like to compliment Alder Bennett for her subsequent [blog post from last week](#) which thoughtfully explained the difficult situation we find ourselves in as well as insight into her priorities going into tomorrow's meeting. As you all navigate this tough conversation over the coming months (I do not envy you at all, but am here to be supportive in whatever ways I can be), I would encourage you to articulate your priorities to your colleagues, constituents, but most importantly, yourselves. This is not to justify your future votes, but rather have clearly stated guiding principles to ground your decision making.

May tomorrow's discussion be a fruitful one which helps everyone understand how our community will tackle this crisis together through your collective leadership.

Best wishes,  
-Nick

**Nick Pjevach**  
he/anything respectful  
[nick.pjevach@gmail.com](mailto:nick.pjevach@gmail.com)

262-853-7094

*Address for next couple weeks:*

2417 E Mifflin St #1  
Madison, WI 53704

*Future address:*

2513 E Mifflin St  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Christine Powell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Testimonial from a City Streets Staff person regarding a potential referendum  
**Date:** Monday, March 4, 2024 8:52:58 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from christine.j.powell@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to you as a City Employee, and AFSCME 6000 member, who is asking for the Alders to strongly consider a reoccurring referendum to help the City meet its fiscal needs, as the State has prevented the city from raising the property tax to match with the growing costs in a more typical manner.

I joined the City staff in the fall of 2019, first as an Information Clerk in the Streets Division, and now as the Operations Clerk. I'm the person who gets the calls from residents who need help with Streets services, who are not happy with their services, who ARE happy with their services, or are just moving in and need to know how Streets Services work. I help elderly people navigate the city's services without internet access, and also jump in and help with other projects as needed, like the roll out of the new large items garbage collection system. I tell elderly people their brush schedules, I explain what goes into what cart, and why. I listen to a lot of frustrated people, because that's the nature of customer service (happy people don't call as much!) - and try to make sure that the residents feel they are well serviced by their tax dollars.

I can only speak to what I've seen – but that has been a steady increase in new homes – averaging 160 serviced homes a year just on the West side, with the eastside is roughly the same. We have garbage and recycling routes that have new blocks added into our far west area every month, as large developments complete homes on new streets. Collection routes are getting longer, without added staff positions. So also are areas we need to manage snow, collect brush and yardwaste on. That number does NOT count unserviced homes such as larger apartment buildings with 8+ units. We're up to about 1,800 lane miles that need to get plowed every snow storm for a City General Plow event. A rough estimate from our GIS staffer has over 800 cul-de-sac or dead end streets that need special handling for storms, and are trickier for garbage and brush collection. Talking with my superintendent, Charlie Romines – he put it well – we've squeezed as many efficiencies as we can at this point out of the system. We added wing plows (they do two lanes at once), automated trucks (far faster and less staff needed than 2 person rear loader trucks), we've moved large items to schedules (not driving every street 24 times a year hoping to find garbage items), we've added a night shift in the winter to even out the 24 hour nature of the work without dipping those staff into Overtime. We've also had open managerial positions for salary savings over these last years too.

If we must cut services to match a budget without referendum, we'll have less optional services, that will drive the costs to individually be paid by residents, as they have to haul their own brush, large items to the landfill, or move to paid extra collections like local cities such as Middleton have. We'll have slower responses to snow events, as the nature of Streets staffing is cyclical – the summertime brush and yardwaste staff, the drop off attendants become plow and sander trucks in the winter. They clear crosswalks, bike paths, and city

responsible sidewalks. Garbage is year round, but 'seasonal duty' people are where we gain the flex to handle Wisconsin winters. Those staff who haul resident material won't be there for winter plowing rotation, where we have people rotating overtime – less staff means more long shifts for remaining workers, and that has an impact on people's lives.

Ending my email here with some numbers from my West side Streets office – to get an idea what we are doing with current budget amounts.

During Student Move in 2023 (7/31/23 -9/15/23) – we collected **1,863 tons** of large items and 'extra' garbage (that's whole city, not just West side). I averaged the amount in excess of the normal Thursday collections, as 'Thursday-land' is much of our student focused housing – and added that to the volumes of Student Move specific garbage collected to get that number.

From 2020, 2021, and 2022 – a total of 2,658 garbage or recycling cart swaps (want a small cart, have a large, have large, want a small) were done. This is an example of a service that is 'extra charged' by private services. Pelliteri charges \$45 a swap cart swap. \$119,610 – that would cost residents. Many of these are simply families moving into homes that previously had smaller households, or people recycling more cardboard and needing a larger cart. It makes sense to do it – so we do, without charging. We want people to be able to efficiently be able to dispose of things properly.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I'll be in the audience gallery Tuesday night watching the presentations and discussions and reporting back to the AFSCME membership how things look after the meeting.

--

In Solidarity,

Christine Powell

AFSCME 6000 At Large Board member

[Christine.J.Powell@gmail.com](mailto:Christine.J.Powell@gmail.com)

**From:** [Sarah Russell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 82316  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 3:15:32 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from srussell806@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I am both a City of Madison resident and employee. I have some ideas that I would like to share for tonight's meeting.

All permanent employees that do not live within the City of Madison should have a pay reduction of some sort (1%-2%). There used to be a 1% longevity reduction for CG18 only who lived outside of Madison which went away because it wasn't fair to just that comp group. I think it should be for any and all permanent employees (not hourly), regardless of comp group. This would be an incentive for people to want to live within the city.

If I have to pay another wheel tax, or more property tax for working and living in the city, those who don't live here should also have to take a similar hit.

Are there properties that city owns that could be sold?

Increase the cost of parking tickets.

Streets Dept. could charge a small fee to pick up large item refuse, which is now free.

Install red light cameras to be able to issue more tickets.

Are there more services that the city could offer for a fee? (tree trimming?)

Having electric fleet vehicles available for the public to rent.

Are there building inspection/permit fees, can these be increased?

Ambulance could charge for non-transports.

Are there business license fees?

Offer PPP's (Public Private Partnership) to jointly create and run revenue-generating operations (tourism, real estate).

Tax incentives for new businesses to come to the area.

Create tourism draws, that will bring people to the city.

Thank you.  
Sarah Russell





**From:** [Shelley Van Proosdy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** City of Madison 2025 Budget  
**Date:** Saturday, March 2, 2024 11:41:46 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from shellyv@chorus.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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I would like to voice my opposition to the proposed November referendum to raise property taxes in an effort to close the \$27 million structural deficit in the 2025 budget. How much more do you think fixed income property owners can bear in property tax?

In addition, this would only be a temporary fix. Please consider the alternatives of reducing expenditures in order to close the gap. We need a big picture solution not bandaid fixes.

Shelley Van Proosdy

**From:** [Joseph Keyes](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Budget Deficit  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 4:11:49 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jkeyes1a1@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To All Alders:

The City of Madison is in a terrible budget deficit position through its own making and lack of fiscal stewardship. It was brought on by incurring new, ongoing costs when money was not available and by misapplying funds like one time ARPA funds to recurring expenses. The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds will soon be gone but the ongoing expenses remain.

I am a retired Certified Public Accountant and Certified Management Accountant who is well aware of budget preparation. To properly get the budget back in balance the following steps must be taken:

- 1) Stop any and all new spending until the budget is in balance without the use of budgetary gimmicks.
- 2) Identify all ongoing costs currently being paid for by one-time funds like the ARPA funds or by debt. Those costs need to be the focus of immediate cuts.
- 3) Prioritize all city services. Those at the lower end of the priority scale will need to have the most budget cuts.
- 4) If there is a reluctance to prioritize services for expense cuts, then there will need to be an across-the-board percentage cut to all services. Cuts will be painful, but they are needed.
- 5) Identify some services that can be separately billed to the public. This will bring some but, most likely, not a material amount of revenue.
- 6) As a last step, raise property taxes or ask the public to raise the property taxes through referendum. However, this should only be done after each of steps 1 through 5 have been completed and have made a material impact on the deficit. A referendum is only a short-term fix. Points 1 through 5 will need to be repeated until a balanced budget can be reached.

Again, this deficit evolved through lack of fiscal stewardship. The Mayor and the City

Council need to treat this budget like their own personal household budget where they would not spend what they currently do not have.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Keyes

District 11

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** City of Madison <noreply@cityofmadison.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 9:46 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Financial Restraint- Please

Recipient: All Alders:

Wed, 03/06/2024 - 09:41

William Banholzer  
100 Wisconsin Ave  
801

Madison, Wisconsin. 53703 No, do not contact me. All Alders Financial Restraint- Please Dear Council member, I urge you to exercise restraint in considering or proposing increased revenue for Madison. You have a challenging job, and we are lucky to have your service to our community- Thanks. I appreciate the impending budget challenge, which I feel is the result of excess hiring and too many new initiatives. The property taxes in Madison are already high, and further increases are just not warranted. Please refuse to consider increased revenue as part of the 2025 budget; instead, focus on eliminating costs, even if that means diminishing some social services.

## Matthias, Isaac L

---

**From:** Fields, Debbie  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 8:46 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** FW: Structural Deficit - Start cutting

Alders,

Below please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thank you,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Bill Bock <wlbock@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 4:21 PM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Structural Deficit - Start cutting

You don't often get email from [wlbock@gmail.com](mailto:wlbock@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Council Members,

Please cut services to balance the budget. Everyone must live within their means and that includes the City of Madison. This is truly the time to get back to basics.

Emergency services (police, fire, EMS)  
Maintain the streets (plow, trash pickup)  
Promote healthy greenspace (parks)

Everything else can go.

Respectfully,

Bill Bock  
2142 Keyes Ave  
Madison, WI 53711

## Matthias, Isaac L

---

**From:** Drew H <drewhansiii@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 7:08 AM  
**To:** Mayor; All Alders  
**Subject:** Deficit? Boost growth and development

Some people who received this message don't often get email from drewhansiii@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor and Council,

More people want to live in Madison, there is a massive affordable housing shortage, and there is a structural deficit. Please treat these as one problem.

Be creative by finding a fee tied to building heights over ten stories that can be increased to, say, \$1 million.

For buildings located more than one mile from the Capitol, make it a \$2 million fee and allow up to 25 story buildings.

There are bound to be at least 15 Madison property owners who would pay such fees for building density, address the affordable housing shortage, and eliminate a big chunk of the structural deficit for many years to come.

There's a way to do this without putting \$25+ million on current tax payers.

Sincerely,  
Drew Hanson  
Madison, Wi

**Matthias, Isaac L**

---

**From:** Valerie Mellerop <vmellerop@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 7, 2024 2:45 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** next fiscal year

Some people who received this message don't often get email from vmellerop@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please freeze any new spending on park improvements/plans - but keep or increase maintenance. Most people aren't happy with current plans to change facilities anyway.

And I think everyone would be happy if the planning department was eliminated (for a period - I believe in planning, but clearly the planners are not listening to public suggestions at all).

Also, stop any contribution to new construction of apartments. Let the builders find their own financing.

Above all - do NOT rely solely on new money from referendums. Suggest putting several alternatives to referendum - earmarked for specific spending!

Thank you,  
Valerie Mellerop  
1052 East Gorham Street  
5922 Meadowood Drive



## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Fields, Debbie  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 7, 2024 10:19 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** FW: No property tax increases no referendum!

Alders,

Below please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thank you,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

-----Original Message-----

From: Jj Murp <psalm349@icloud.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 7:03 PM  
To: council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: No property tax increases no referendum!

[You don't often get email from psalm349@icloud.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Find cuts in the over bloated budgets  
Us middle class are making budget cuts bc prices are increased on everything!!

There's plenty of jobs in the private sector to make layoffs

Too lazy to find cuts? You didn't have a problem when it came to plowing...

No referendum!

Sent from my iPad

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Bonnie Roe <bonnie.roe@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 5, 2024 5:04 PM  
**To:** Bennett, Juliana; All Alders  
**Subject:** Budget Shenanigans

Some people who received this message don't often get email from bonnie.roe@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hi Alder Bennett et al,

I think if one of your top 3 priorities is, in fact, to "Mitigate housing cost increases," then you would not want to recommend a referendum for increasing property taxes to cover \$27 to \$30 million.

If you ask Finance Director Dave Schmeideke about the implications of raising property taxes that significantly (and all for a temporary bandaid), you will realize that property tax increases affect renters just as they do homeowners. Renters don't pay taxes directly, but landlords raise rents to come up with the increase, they don't just lose their profits.

Madison rent prices are already increasing faster than anywhere else in the country. Dane County is set to increase taxes by 14%, MMSD is going to be doing another large referendum to cover its \$1 billion (with a B) budget, and this is just too much to ask. Especially for what Finance Director Schmeideke calls a "short-term fix."

City of Madison spending is rampant, in light of our current reality, and I see you all will be voting on increasing spending (and therefore, the deficit) even more tonight. Every vote to increase spending will increase the deficit.

I think the way forward is a mix of prioritizing City services/positions, cutting those positions that have not proven cost effective and/or are unnecessary, freezing all additional spending, raising certain fees for services, and as a last resort, putting a property tax referendum for the smallest portion as possible on the ballot. Because it's a temporary bandaid, folks are already struggling to afford housing, and the City needs to find a way to do what the rest of us have to do: live within our means.

I hope you have a successful and profitable meeting tonight.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe  
608-239-1748  
District 11

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** City of Madison <noreply@cityofmadison.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 6, 2024 11:42 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Budget Reduction - Madison Police Oversight Board

Recipient: All Alders:

Wed, 03/06/2024 - 11:36

Glori Sabin  
10 Jubilee Circle

Madison, Wisconsin. 53718 Yes, by email. [kdietzman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kdietzman@sbcglobal.net) All Alders Budget Reduction - Madison Police Oversight Board Dear Alders,

I'm very concerned and disturbed about the shortfall for the 2025 budget and therefore compelled to submit my suggestion to help close this unimaginable gap. The Madison Police Oversight Board has so far not conducted any business. ELIMINATE this non effective, not necessary, repetitive (required duties of the Police & Fire Commission), and Vast waste of taxpayers money from the budget. We will NOT support any rise in our taxes nor reduction in city services because of the Common Council's inability to stand up to this overspending Mayor and denying any unnecessary expenditures such as this Police Oversight Board. You have a responsibility to make SOUND decisions and you are clearly shirking those responsibilities with frivolous approving and spending of taxpayers money. This is really unbelievable behavior.

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** City of Madison <noreply@cityofmadison.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 7, 2024 11:52 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Budget shortfall

Recipient: All Alders:

Thu, 03/07/2024 - 11:47

Diane Geralyn Schwartz  
Diane Schwartz Properties  
2145 East Washington Ave.,  
East Washington

Madison, Wisconsin. 53704 Yes, by phone. [6083588314](tel:6083588314) All Alders Budget shortfall I think that you should balance the budget without raising taxes or going to referendum. It can be done.

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Rebecca Carlin <rcarlin@wisconsinyouthcompany.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 13, 2024 8:21 AM  
**To:** council  
**Cc:** Alex Booker; Alexis London; Arturo Ambriz; Dani Lockett; Gary Kallas; Hedi Rudd; Weber, Jennifer; Kennedy Heights; Laura Gundlach; Letesha Nelson; Regina McConnell; Tauri Robinson; Tiffany Loomis; Tom Moen; nateschorr@bayviewfoundation.org; richardj@veracourt.org  
**Subject:** City Budget Concern  
**Attachments:** Coalition Letter to Common Council.pdf

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Common Council Members,  
Please see the attached letter on behalf of the Coalition of Neighborhood Centers.  
Thank you,

Rebecca Carlin  
she/her  
Executive Director  
<https://www.wisconsinyouthcompany.org/>  
Cell: 608.571.3432

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March 13, 2024

Common Council  
City of Madison  
City County Building  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 417  
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Council Members,

On behalf of the coalition of neighborhood center directors encompassing the City of Madison's 14 centers listed below, I'm writing to share our concern about the city's anticipated \$27M budget shortfall in 2025. We understand that the council is working closely with the mayor to examine all options to address this shortfall. We write to express our opinion that any cuts to the City's funding for neighborhood centers would undermine the shared goals and values of the City of Madison.

The coalition of center directors speaks with a unified voice to share the importance of the work neighborhood centers do and to elevate our mission. Neighborhood centers are in virtually all areas of this beautiful City. We provide programming, safe places, food pantries and services that strengthen neighborhoods. We make a positive difference in the lives and futures of thousands of Madison's most vulnerable kids and families.

The City of Madison supports neighborhood centers to various degrees and centers fundraise independently to cover additional program and operational costs. However, every neighborhood center would be negatively impacted by cuts in funding from the city. Recently, the coalition worked closely with city staff, the mayor, and alders to see the first increase in over a decade in child and youth programming. We are grateful for these additional funds and appreciate everyone's effort to pass this increase. This increase reflects the common understanding that our neighborhood centers need additional resources not less.

In the past few years, costs have risen, and inflation has soared creating a negative impact on our organizations, our employees, and on the size and numbers of the programs we can offer. Every center across the city is feeling the strain of record-high demand and an increasing need for services. Neighborhood centers also house other programs and services that are essential to residents. In addition, many smaller nonprofits and innovative programs begin in and are supported by neighborhood centers. In other words, centers are a major part of the infrastructure that allows communities to thrive.

We recognize and appreciate Madison's investment of tax dollars to support the work of Neighborhood Centers. We understand budget constraints. We know the city depends on neighborhood centers to stabilize neighborhoods, deliver essential out-of-school-time programming to our city's most vulnerable children, and provide multi-generational services that support healthier families.

We look forward to our coalition working in partnership with the city and our elected officials to fund neighborhood centers in this budget and beyond. Thank you again for your work, for your dedication to making Madison a place where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

Sincerely,

1. Bayview Community Center
2. Boys & Girls Club of Dane County
3. Bridge Lake Point Waunona Neighborhood Center
4. East Madison Community Center
5. Elver Park Neighborhood Center

6. Goodman Community Center
7. Kennedy Heights Community Center
8. Lussier Community Education Center
9. Meadowood Neighborhood Center
10. Neighborhood House Community Center
11. Rooted, Badger Rock Neighborhood Center
12. Theresa Terrace Neighborhood Center
13. Vera Court Neighborhood Center
14. Wil-Mar Community Center

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Jon Jon <dadyo961@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 1, 2024 1:36 PM  
**To:** Madison Mayor; All Alders; Finance Committee; Tishler, Bill  
**Subject:** 2025 Budget Outlook Comments  
**Attachments:** Madison Budget Deficit 2025.docx

You don't often get email from dadyo961@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I would like to formally submit my comments to you on the 2025 budget shortfall. My comments are attached.

Thank you



Mayor Rhodes-Conway, City Alders, and City Finance Committee,

I'd like to share my opinion on the projected City budget shortfall in 2025.

**I STRONGLY urge the City Council to NOT increase property taxes nor to introduce a referendum asking residents to make up this budgetary deficit for 2025, with increased property taxes.** The City should seek other methods of balancing the budget including tough cuts if necessary.

Many of us are currently living on fixed incomes and property taxes in Madison are already too high. Many of us do not get regular raises and can, therefore, not afford continued property tax increases.

The city needs to make some tough choices by making program cuts to bring the budget back in line. These cuts should also include rolling back any new initiatives with monetary expenditures. The City should live within existing property tax collection income and keep deficits like this from occurring in the future, just like we all do with our personal finances.

I would like to suggest some ideas below to help rectify the budget shortfall. Many of them, as much as I hate to say it, involve taxes in one form or another, but, would not increase private property taxes:

- 1) **The City should institute a commuter tax.** This tax would be charged to all the out-of-town workers that commute to work from outside Madison each day. Businesses operating within Madison would be responsible for collecting this tax based on the employee's address. Madison residents would be exempt. Those living outside of Madison should take some responsibility in the maintenance of Madison's streets, plowing, etc. The City of St. Louis has effectively implemented a very similar program (ref. <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/collector/earnings-tax/file-earnings-tax.cfm>).
- 2) **Rework how trash is collected in Madison.** This could involve moving to a bi-weekly trash collection system similar to existing recycling pickup or to a pay-as-you-go system. With current GPS technology, each time a collection truck makes a garbage pickup, it could log the stop and a collection fee could be assessed. GPS logging could eliminate traditional garbage collection fees as part of a property tax and those who dispose of more waste would be charged more versus those that generate less. Advantages include the need for fewer trash collection employees, reductions in fuel usage with fewer truck stops and starts, and less maintenance in the long run on collection vehicles.
- 3) **Charge for Christmas tree collection.** This could be done similar to large item pickup where a sticker or tag is required for Christmas tree pickup.
- 4) **Along these same lines, there could be a leaf pay-per-pickup plan instituted employing GPS location technology.** Charging for leaf collection would generate additional revenue while at the same time encouraging mulching and composting of leaves in gardens or lawns.

- 5) **Generate additional revenues through hotel taxes.** I believe this has been used in the past and would be a good way to ensure that folks visiting Madison help support the City's infrastructure through their visits.
- 6) **Institute a 'drive through' tax.** Businesses in Madison that have drive through businesses could collect a nominal 'drive through' tax for each vehicle using their drive through windows. Instituting such a tax may get folks to park their vehicles thereby reducing idling, CO2 emissions and the reduction in the burning of fossil fuels.
- 7) **Close libraries one weekday a week or roll back morning/afternoon hours to evening hours only on certain days.** If library closures were staggered throughout the city and not all occurred on the same day, users would have the option of visiting an alternative location if they need to visit the library. Evening hours are times of the day most folks are free to use libraries anyway.
- 8) **Increase water connection fees and building permit fees for NEW development.** Many of the budget problems in Madison relate to out-of-control development which is taking place in the city and the need for expanded services required for these developments. Therefore, I suggest that these new developments pay higher upfront development costs in order to better reflect the true cost of new development.
- 9) **Institute a 'Green' tax.** A 'Green' tax would be a nominal tax charged every time a home owner or business within the city has chemicals or fertilizers applied to their lawns by a lawncare company. The lawncare companies would collect and forward this tax each time they visit a property.
- 10) **Remove all trees from street medians.** Removing trees would, in the long run, reduce costs of tree maintenance in medians and would save money by expediting grass cutting operations in the medians.
- 11) **Reallocate money from new street construction to the maintenance of streets we currently have.** This is more of a long term cost saving measure. I see many streets continually deteriorate because there is inadequate or no crack filling taking place on them. Letting streets deteriorate by not addressing crack filling, large capital expenditures are incurred in the future as large scale street reconstruction projects are required.
- 12) **Keep ALL heavy equipment off of city bike trails and paths.** Heavy equipment and trucks are very detrimental to the integrity and long term condition of bituminous pavement. These trails are not 'roads' and typically are not constructed to the same design standards as streets. Heavier vehicles cause them to deteriorate and crack prematurely reducing their life expectancies and requiring expensive reconstruction much sooner. This measure could save the city money in the long term by not having to reconstruct trails sooner than required.

**13) Reduce police budgets.** Allow the police department to write more tickets for speeding and moving violations to help offset police department budget reductions.

**14) Add city fees for property transfers within the City.** Any time a property is transferred within the city an increased transfer fee could be assessed. The fee could be determined on a sliding scale so that larger properties, complexes, businesses would pay a higher fee than residential properties. Nobody would be required to pay this fee unless they sell a property.

I ask the city to hold the line on increasing property taxes. Balance the budget without increasing property taxes. It is already extremely difficult to afford to live in Madison.

Respectfully,

John Olson  
540 Caldyl Pl.

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Dan Rolfs <dwrolfs333@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 14, 2024 6:35 PM  
**To:** All Alders; Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.  
**Cc:** Pete Holmgren; Sarah Lerner; Marc Gartler; Mike Miller; Kate Kane; Eric Halvorson; arteaga.mg@gmail.com; Zach Commons; Neil Rainford; Walt Jackson; Gregg Gotzion; Lara Mainella; jeff blicharz; Amber McReynolds; Matt; ken@capcityrealtors.com  
**Subject:** MPSEA Update re: Budget Outlook  
**Attachments:** 2024 3-14 MPSEA Update re Budget Outlook.pdf

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Mayor Rhodes-Conway, Council President Currie, Council Vice President Figueroa-Cole, and Council Members:

MPSEA is providing the attached document to put additional background to the City's ongoing budget discussions. You have heard, and will continue to hear, the impacts upon staff as we work to continue to provide quality services to the residents of our fair City. We believe that this information can offer additional data points and anecdotes regarding the increased demands upon staff as our City continues to grow.

MPSEA and our Coalition partners (CC'd on this email) continue to believe that working to address the City's revenue shortfall, as opposed to cutting staff, is the best way to ensure Madison residents continue to receive quality public services.

As I noted in my testimony at Council on March 5, 2024, the challenge before all of us requires leadership and creative thinking. I am confident that, if we work together, we can face this head on, and come out the other side better for it.

Thank you for your time and service to our City.  
Dan Rolfs  
MPSEA Board President

## March 14, 2024 MPSEA Update re: Budget Outlook

### **Neither existing nor anticipated resources can keep up with Madison's cost increases or population growth**

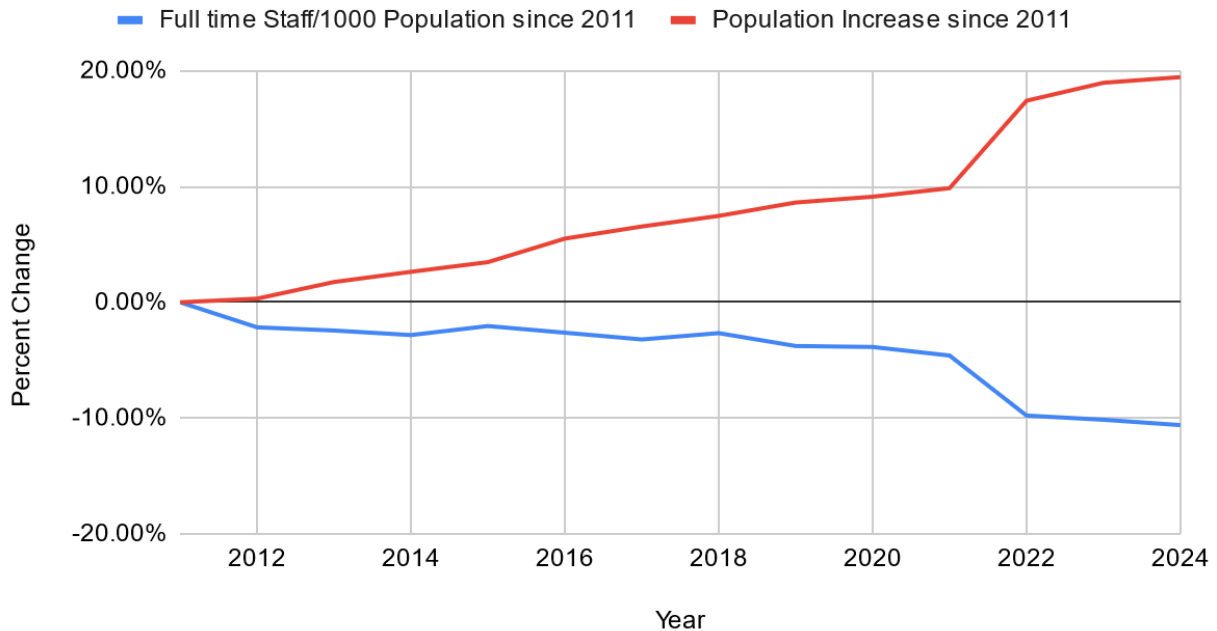
Madison's budget gap is part of a growing municipal financing crisis in the State of Wisconsin. [https://wispolicyforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/DollarsAndSense\\_Full.pdf](https://wispolicyforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/DollarsAndSense_Full.pdf).

For over a decade, the levy limit has required the city to provide more services with fewer resources - as we continue to experience record growth, increased pressures from climate change and aging infrastructure, all while still recovering from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Staffing levels have not kept pace with population increases, and levy limits have not increased with inflation. With this current trajectory, city services will continue to decline.

In the past 10 years the population grew by more than 49,500 people (20%) and inflation grew by 31.1%. Our growth trajectory continues, and **in the next 10 years, Madison will likely grow by another ~ 50,000 new residents.**

### **Full Time Staff/1000 Population**



City Full-Time Equivalent Positions per 1,000 Populations (excludes Public Health of Madison and Dane County - county employees) Sources - Adopted City Budgets; Wisconsin Department of Administration Population Estimates

## **Madison is one of the fastest growing cities in the state, which requires additional resources to ensure we maintain the same level of city services.**

Madison's population is consistently one of the fastest growing in the state, and had the [highest population growth in the state since 2020 of Wisconsin's most populous cities.](#)

- Our growth requires significant staff to review plans, coordinate with developers, issue permits, design and issue plans for utility or street connections, inspections and more. Reconstruction and new construction increase demands on a variety of staff. For example, Landmarks Commission approvals have grown steadily from 174 in 2018 to 245 in 2023.
- In 2010, city staff were issuing 5,969 permits for **\$178,144,514.50 total construction costs. Compared that to 2023, when staff issued 6,629 permits for almost \$1 billion in construction costs (\$957,875,262.81).**

In 2023 alone, the city grew by 2,000 people and added 325 new, single-family homes. This means we need to:

- Acquire 20 more acres of parkland to meet standards adopted under the Park and Open Space Plan.
- Expand trash and recycling pickup to 250 to 300 new addresses each year.
- Sweep and plow five to six more miles of new streets and provide maintenance for pavement markings (crosswalks, lanes, etc.) signage, street lights and long term repairs.
- Maintain five more miles of storm sewer and sanitary sewer, and 615 new storm inlets.
- Maintain an additional 17 new acres of stormwater utility land each year.
- Annually install 2,000-2,400 new street trees.
- Install over 350 new street lights/signal poles each year.
- Consistently provide library services to more and more families

This is compounded by other growing maintenance needs, replacing core infrastructure, maintaining land and city services, and extending existing infrastructure lifespan through repairs, cleanings, and maintenance, such as chip sealing and patching over 200 miles of streets each year.

Maintaining existing levels of service requires significant resources. Each year, HR's staff post 300 positions and review over 10,000 applications to provide services to residents.

On top of this, additional investment and resources are required as part of intergovernmental agreements.

- In 2023, the Town of Madison's dissolution brought in 1,350 new parcels into the city.
- Within the next few years, the city will be servicing new areas currently covered by other municipalities, including the Town of Burke, Town of Blooming Grove and portions of the Town of Middleton. Many of these communities will require resources to upgrade their existing, aging infrastructure, and provide new municipal services.

## **Levy limits tied to construction ignore inflation and force municipalities to do more with less.**

State laws require municipalities to depend more on property tax revenue than most states in the U.S. Increases in property taxes can only be issued within strict levy limits, and is tied to net new construction.

**Under Act 10 levy limits, the only way for the city to continue to maintain revenue funding for existing levels of service without increasing additional fees is if Net New Construction (NNC) growth equals the rate of inflation.**

Consumer Price Increases (inflation) have been higher than Net New Construction **eight times since 2009**. **Over the** past few years, inflation has significantly widened this gap between NNC and CPI. **This means the City has less money to provide the exact same services, and is the reason why we face a structural deficit today.**

Without increasing the levy limit and/or seeking long-term funding commitments, there will be fewer financial resources to provide the level of services and staffing needed to meet the demands of our growing city.

## **There are a few of the examples, submitted by our members who are concerned about Madison's future from the past week:**

"The Parks department continues to grow every year ..... in the last couple years we have absorbed the Town of Madison Parks, increased the number of Park shelters... Parks is responsible for over 280 parks, splash pads, pool, fountains, boat launches, piers, mooring field, stadiums, 160 drinking fountains, lighting, etc."

"Madison's child care system is a foundation to a thriving Madison economy. We continue to see challenges with cost and availability significantly impacting how parents work or whether they are able to work. With decreased state investment the needs of the local programs are higher than they have ever been. We see an increase in requests of technical assistance and consultation support to help programs keep their doors open. We have seen an increase in the needs of our youngest community members who spend their days in child care settings where teachers need additional support to manage the needs of these kids. It's critical that we continue to invest in child care to ensure businesses have employees able to work and to provide quality services to our next generation of community leaders and workers."

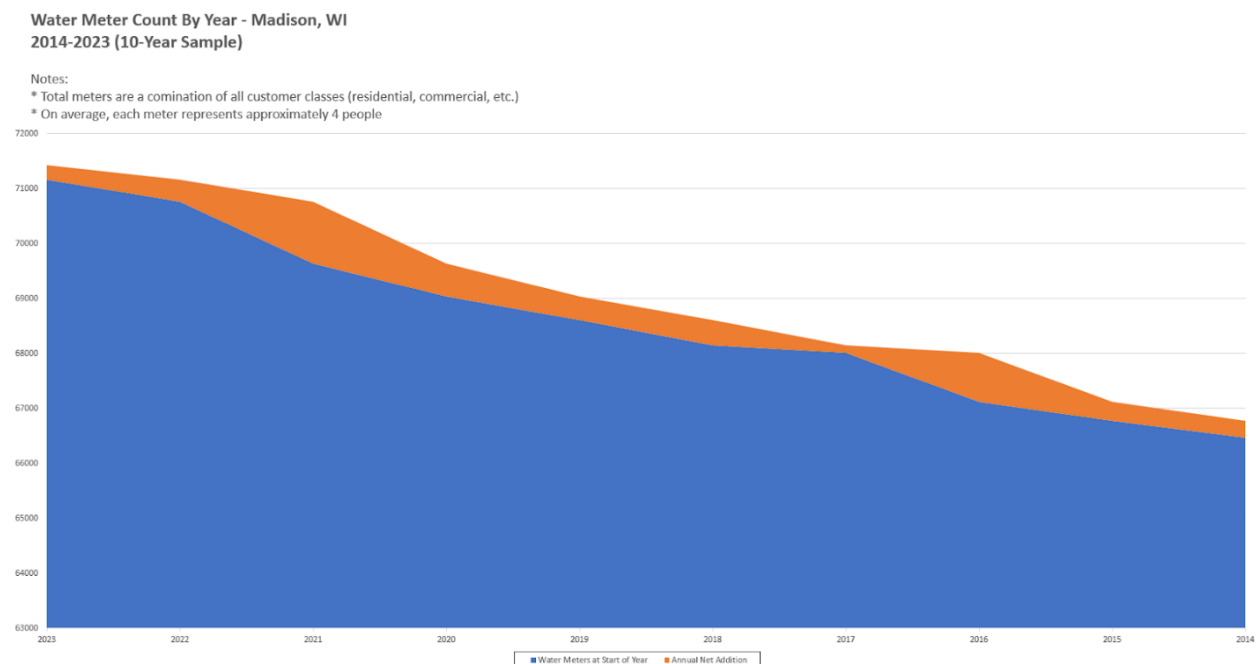
"One observation is not so much related to growth, but rather communications expectations post COVID. The demand for data & information in various formats has increased dramatically. Whereas previously verbal reports were common, the use of PowerPoint presentations, alder onboarding videos, etc. is highly effective, yet also very time consuming."

"Over the past 5 years, Madison Parks has either purchased or received dedication of 500 acres of park land. According to the 2023 Trust for Public Lands data, Madison ranks #2 in the country in parks per 10,000 residents. Additional land means more planning efforts and public engagement to determine the use of the land. Anecdotally, expectations for public engagement

have increased dramatically for parks over the past two decades, which requires additional time and effort to receive adequate public feedback and reduces time allotted to design and implement park improvements. In addition to providing typical parks and amenities, Madison Parks also is a host for numerous popular summer destinations, such as the Madison Mallards, Forward FC/Breese Stevens Field Concerts, Opera in the Park, The Capital City Band, and the Olbrich Biergarten. Hosting these things requires additional work from staff to ensure the facility needs for these partnerships are met.”

“Plain and simple, our unit is already short staffed. International standards as well as industry leading experts in our field recommend our unit have at least seven individuals supporting the department. We are currently not even operating at half the recommended capacity. • Supporting day to day operations, stratified policing and investigative tasks is simply unachievable, thus, the level of services that we can provide to our community are significantly hindered. • Overtime to support such demands is very seldomly approved (unlike sworn personnel) leading to very poor morale and retention amongst employees. In the past several years, we have had very good employees leave our specialized unit in order to find other more enjoyable career opportunities. It is only a matter of time before more individuals within our unit leave to find better working conditions.”

“Every home that gets built connects to the water infrastructure and requires a new meter and billing account, in addition of course to water consumption/demands. With more annexation scheduled in the coming years, private well agreements, monitoring, and coordination will jump dramatically too. The water system is sampled about 30,000 times per year to ensure quality; that will grow as pipes and facilities continue to build out in order to serve the City. Madison Water Utility needs to be replacing nearly 10 miles of aged-out pipelines per year in order to keep reasonable pace with acceptable capital reinvestments and that requires ongoing planning, engineering, construction, inspection, mapping and coordination across a growing City.”





## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Fields, Debbie  
**Sent:** Monday, March 11, 2024 4:05 PM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** FW: Letter from Neighborhood House Community Center  
**Attachments:** NHCC Common Council Letter 2024.pdf

Alders,

Below please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thank you,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Laura Gundlach <laura@neighborhoodhousemadison.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 11, 2024 2:51 PM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Letter from Neighborhood House Community Center

You don't often get email from [laura@neighborhoodhousemadison.org](mailto:laura@neighborhoodhousemadison.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good afternoon Council Members,

Please see Neighborhood House Community Center's attached letter voicing our concern about the upcoming budget shortfall and the effect it could have on neighborhood centers.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions.

Thank you,

Laura Gundlach-Heiman

Executive Director  
Neighborhood House Community Center  
29 S. Mills Street  
Madison WI 53715  
o: 608-255-5337  
c: 704-582-1408  
[laura@neighborhoodhousemadison.org](mailto:laura@neighborhoodhousemadison.org)  
(she/her/hers)



**Neighborhood House Community Center**

29 S. Mills St. | Madison WI, 53715

[neighborhoodhousemadison.org](http://neighborhoodhousemadison.org)

*Madison's first and oldest community center*

*Est. 1916*

March 11, 2024

Common Council  
City of Madison  
City County Building  
210 Martin Luther King Blvd., Rm. 417  
Madison WI 53703

Dear Council Members,

I am writing on behalf of Neighborhood House Community Center's staff and board to share our concern about the anticipated shortfall of \$27 million for the city's budget in 2025. We recognize the need for you to explore every possibility as you undertake the tough, yet essential choices required to bridge the significant financial shortfall. Nonetheless, reductions in the city's yearly allocation for Neighborhood House and other community centers will pose particular hardships, in light of the unprecedented demand and necessity our programs are currently facing.



Located in the historic Greenbush neighborhood, Neighborhood House is Madison's first and oldest community center at over 107 years old. Throughout the decades, Neighborhood House has always focused on our community and responding to its needs. Some of Neighborhood House's very first programs included caring for infants and children, providing health care, leading citizenship and language classes for new immigrants, and hosting social clubs.

Neighborhood House continues that tradition today with the diverse programs and services we offer. These include older adult social and wellness programs, free year-round youth programs for toddlers to high school students, youth internships and mentoring, programming and job training for individuals with intellectual disabilities, a food pantry, weekly meals, monthly law clinics, transportation assistance, technology lab, and more. We also rent our space out to dozens of community groups and individuals.

Annually, we serve over 6,000 unique individuals from across the city, employ only 3 full time staff members, and work with over 200 volunteers. Individuals and families from all walks of life and backgrounds come through our doors. Over the past year, we have seen 100% increase in food pantry usership, 50% increase in clients seeking help with housing navigation, and unprecedented enrollment and interest in our free



youth programs. Neighborhood House provides a safe space for residents to gather, learn, and support one another - any reduction in funding could compromise this.

Neighborhood House's operating budget is currently \$400,000 and we receive \$95,783 annually through a competitive grant process with the Community Development Division. While we actively seek other private and governmental funding, this amount from the city constitutes almost a quarter of our budget. City funding supports Neighborhood House's summer youth programs, general operating costs, and essential services.



The financial support from the city helps to ensure that Neighborhood House and other centers across the city can maintain a high quality of services and programs, reach a larger number of residents, and meet the diverse needs of the communities we serve. Many centers have received

consistent funding from the City for years, and any abrupt alteration in this support could be highly disruptive, unsettling the foundation upon which we've built our extensive range of services and community support mechanisms.



Please contact me with any questions. Considering the crucial support city funding provides, we hope for ongoing collaboration, communication, and assistance to maintain the essential services our

community relies on. If there are cuts to Neighborhood House's city funding, we will continue to serve our users at the highest level possible.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laura Gundlach-Heiman'.

Laura Gundlach-Heiman  
*Executive Director, Neighborhood House Community Center*

## Matthias, Isaac L

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**From:** Richard Olson <dick5070@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 9, 2024 8:16 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** city tax

Some people who received this message don't often get email from dick5070@sbcglobal.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Madison City Alders,

Like everyone else living in Madison, you must have experienced seeing the long lines of traffic coming into the city during the morning rush hour traffic.

Like me, you have undoubtedly had the thought, why can't we charge these people, who do not pay city property taxes, for using our streets, streets' maintenance, and winter plowing.

Well, the city of St. Louis, Missouri, has a way to do it with a tax in place since 1954. As stated on their website, "The City of St. Louis has an earnings tax. Funds from this tax provide critical resources for our city, such as street repair, fire and police services, lighting and forestry, and ensure that important city services are maintained."

"The 1% City earnings tax is collected from these individuals:

- Residents of the City of St. Louis, regardless of the location of their employer.
- Employees of businesses located or performing work/services within the City of St. Louis, regardless of where they live.

Individual earnings taxes are due on April 15th of each year."

[www.stlouismo.gov/government/departments/collector/earnings-tax/file-earnings-tax.cfm](http://www.stlouismo.gov/government/departments/collector/earnings-tax/file-earnings-tax.cfm),

With Madison facing a large budget deficit, I think that this is something that should be given serious consideration by the mayor and the city council.

Regards,

Richard E. Olson

Dick5070@sbcglobal.net

**Matthias, Isaac L**

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**From:** Allen Rickey <arickey@sbcglobal.net>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 24, 2024 10:52 AM  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** Another point of view

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Fyi

[https://madison.com/opinion/column/david-ahrens-does-the-city-of-madison-really-need-a-referendum-for-more-money/article\\_9d7cd882-e54b-11ee-a0b0-33b50480de37.html](https://madison.com/opinion/column/david-ahrens-does-the-city-of-madison-really-need-a-referendum-for-more-money/article_9d7cd882-e54b-11ee-a0b0-33b50480de37.html)

Al Rickey  
District 18

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Tishler, Bill](#); [Schmiedicke, David](#)  
**Subject:** District 13 Budget Engagement (shenanigans)  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 8:38:50 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

Here is how we know that the budget process is one-way only and that at least some of you don't really want resident input into the budget.

Sunday, Alder Evers sent out his weekly update, inviting residents to a "Budget Engagement Event" on May 29th!

May 29th.

As you know from the 2025 budget timeline, that is pretty late in the process. Capital Budget agency requests will already have been due and the agency briefings with the Mayor will already have happened.

This is a one-way, skewed, informational meeting only. Why have a meeting? Just keep disseminating your information.

Alder Evers goes on to try to clear up some "misunderstandings."

*"Alders are getting a lot of emails," he says, "many of which demonstrate fundamental misunderstandings about the source of the budget deficit and what steps could be taken to fix it. For example, there is apparent confusion between capital and operating expenditures, as many emails suggest the budget could be balanced by cutting affordable housing, BRT, and other capital projects."*

While obviously the \$218 million for the BRT is federal grant money into the Capital Budget, you must know that the increase in Metro Transit's Operating Budget (funded by the General Fund) is significant. You have added 4 additional Metro Transit Chief-level (21 Comp Group) FTEs for a total of 5. These positions, the cost of which will rise every year (under the current system), comes out of the Operating Budget, paid for by the General Fund... right? Not even the police or fire department have more than 1 chief, though they manage a lot more employees and complex scenarios. Why do you need 5 highly paid 21 Comp Group level supervisors in Metro Transit? Meanwhile the Transit General Manager makes it seem like operating costs will, if anything, go down with the arrival of the BRT line. Misinformed? Or misinforming?

And you will soon significantly increase the contract for attorney fees for the new parking ramp/bus facility downtown. All this, added to the \$27 million deficit.

And you think the residents don't get it?

Why does the City start with an incremental, cost-to-continue budget instead of zero-based budgeting? Especially in the situation we're in. This would be a good time (at least a better time) to start over and begin building expenses from the ground up based on efficiencies. The City needs to act like a business trying to run a government instead of a social program, throwing money around on good things as though we had it. Where is the budget analysis?

I recommend sending the whole budget back to the Mayor and Finance and requesting they start over. Throw out the cost-to-continue method and build the 2025 budget up from nothing. Add in what's needed. If they won't do it, find a way. You alone have the power to hold the Mayor accountable for the budget.

At the previous Council meeting, you voted to spend \$1.9 million to hire 8 additional Metro Transit FTEs and some other expenses by saying community partners will cover 100% of those expenses. Anyone see a contract for that \$1.9 million in 2024 (this is an expenditure from the Operating Budget) before voting? Or is it wishful thinking? There is no contract with community partners to review on legistar or in the fiscal note. So until someone shows me otherwise, I'm guessing we can add all or part of that to the growing deficit.

The North-South BRT line is set to receive \$118 million in federal grant money, but that covers just 78% of the startup costs. We will have to foot the rest of the expenditures, most of which will be coming out of the General Fund's Debt Service (the second largest expenditure out of the General Fund, after personnel costs, is debt service).

Not to mention no federal funding can go toward any of these rapidly growing Operating expenditures. Capital Budget expenditures often, maybe even usually, have operating costs associated with them, so it's important to think about that budget impact too, and obviously the time to do that is before the money is borrowed. After it's borrowed, of course you can't cut it. That's why you really should include resident input on the Capital Budget as well...maybe it would help you all realize its effect on the Operating Budget and the General Fund if you did. All the costs for capital projects need to be counted before moving forward to accept them. Some of you bring this up for certain select departments, so I know some of you understand it. Generous federal funds are tempting, but the inability to think clearly and turn some down has us in a real pickle.

Obviously low-income housing doesn't fully come out of the Operating Budget, but are you forgetting the \$424,000 in additional operating budget money that you all just approved for the residents that remain at Tree Lane and Rethke after the (predicted) abysmal failure of "Housing First?"

Do you realize the significant raises you recently passed for non-commissioned city employees added about \$10 million to the 2025 deficit? Which will increase again in 2026?

How did we get here? You really can't just blame this on the State legislature, which actually gave more in state shared revenue than we were projected to get (by about \$3 million) when the budget was formed last October/November.

You must realize that \$18 million in one-time funds (ARPA, TIF, etc) were used on ongoing expenses (against the advice of the Federal government) and now need to be replaced in 2025. This is not good management. Spending and revenue are significantly out of balance, yet you continue to spend more and more.

Our triple A bond rating is in jeopardy in the near future and will make all this debt much more expensive to finance. "Solving" this deficit through a referendum alone will ensure this drop in rating, and cause it to happen sooner. It is a short-term fix when you operate under an incremental budget with no evaluation.

At the last Council meeting you voted to give more funds for the Public Market because a contractual deadline was missed for the work to be done?

No one seems willing to consider cutting funding to nonprofits. Is there even an effectiveness study being done, on any of them? Where are the measurables? Where is the public accountability? Do we fund so many, year after year, that you don't have time to evaluate and make some cuts to those that aren't performing?

It looks like you all are about to vote on a proposed resolution authorizing the execution of a contract with Briarpatch Youth Services, Inc. in the amount of \$525,899 to **operate** a Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing project. The CoC's Youth Action Board (YAB) recommended these funds be allocated to Briarpatch's Joint Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-Housing project. [This is over half a million dollars that will be coming out of the Operating Budget, funded by the General Fund and adding to the deficit. Please correct me if I'm wrong.] You know, my kids recommended a family trip to Disney World but due to rising expenses, we had to say no.

Is there really no consideration being given to cutting any expenditures? Are there no



non-essential city employee roles that could be cut without impacting basic city services? I can sure think of some.

But it looks like the strong signal was that you will just balance the budget through a full referendum (iff it passes) and now maybe pursue a State sales tax? I see our sewer/ storm water bills are likely to rise \$20 annually for the average customer as well. Our rents are growing faster than any other city in the country. Do you think landlords are just going to absorb a significant property tax and rising fees for services through their profits? Our property values are sky high and continued zoning changes will ensure they continue to rise. Which will also ensure that our share of shared revenue stays low because we have so much compared to other Wisconsin communities. And we do, but our plentiful resources need wise stewardship.

This body needs accountability over its spending. I'd suggest bringing Dave Ramsey or any other budget expert in (or meet with them personally) to help you learn to say no to what the City can't afford right now. Maybe an objective outside source not tethered to the city's narrative. A lot of us can't afford more tax increases and this is getting old. This is irresponsible spending and irresponsible leadership, and the mere illusion of a public meeting when it's too late for actual input is classic.

We need leadership. Who among you is going to step up and deliver what Finance Director Dave Schmiedicke says we need? A multi-pronged strategy. A mix of new revenue and expenditure cuts. Many of us are watching and we're not misinformed.

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

p.s. I welcome correction and dialogue if I have any facts wrong. Feel free to email me back or initiate a meeting...I'm happy to dialogue about it.

**From:** [City of Madison](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] \$27 M Deficit  
**Date:** Tuesday, March 26, 2024 10:57:07 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Tue, 03/26/2024 - 10:54

Suzie Scott

615 E Washington Avenue

Madison, Wisconsin. 53703 Yes, by email. [sossuziescott2024@gmail.com](mailto:sossuziescott2024@gmail.com) All Alders \$27 M Deficit Dear Alders:

Can we begin addressing our deficit by not approving our lakefront "redesign". Our lakefront is fine and doesn't need bulldozers and road closures. Research - see how much of our waterfronts are being "reimagined" by China - from NY to LA - Sasaki is Boston based and Denver based - doing work in China and here. Why? All over our USA, our waterfronts are under seige

**From:** [Latimer Burris, Amani](#)  
**To:** [council](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: [District 12] Structural Deficit  
**Date:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 9:51:10 PM

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Budget comments to add to the list

**Alder Amani**

**Amani Latimer Burris**  
City of Madison Alder, District 12  
Contact: [608/345-8747](tel:6083458747) text/cell (preferred)  
City Council Office: [608/266-4071](tel:6082664071) (main line)  
City Council Fax [\(608\)267-8669">608/267-8669](tel:6082678669)  
Madison Common Council  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, #417  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

*"Please excuse any typos or errors, human here"*

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**From:** City of Madison <noreply@cityofmadison.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 30, 2024 8:27 AM  
**To:** Latimer Burris, Amani <district12@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** [District 12] Structural Deficit

Recipient: District 12: Amani Latimer Burris

Tue, 04/30/2024 - 08:26

Sue Mathison

Smathi Art

3505 Concord Ave.

Madison, Wisconsin. 53714 Yes, by email. [smathi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:smathi@sbcglobal.net) District 12 Structural Deficit I cannot attend the meeting on 5/1 but want to know why the city spends money it does not have? What non-essential projects could be cut? Here's a thought, stop projects like the new Public Market and stick to only the services that benefit everyone like safety, street and sidewalk repairs, trash and brush pick up.

**From:** [Janet Murray](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget deficit  
**Date:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 10:09:58 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from janetinmadison@hotmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I'm a City of Madison resident planning for retirement. I love living in the city and support many of our city social services. But I am middle class and my property taxes are rising too quickly to remain affordable. I'm going to be priced out of Madison soon. The city is providing well for low income housing and the wealthy can afford the increased taxes, but you're hollowing out the middle class, which is the backbone of spending in most US communities.

I urge the city to stem the spending, reduce city services if necessary, and get the budget back in the black without raising taxes. Madison is great, it doesn't need new and better everything, especially if the cost of that pushes people out of the city.

Thanks for avoiding tax increases and please don't put a referendum on the ballot. I'm afraid you might lose.

Thanks,

Janet Murray  
(M) 608-358-7971

Please excuse any typos, sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Tishler, Bill](#)  
**Subject:** Last Night's (Eastside) Budget Meeting  
**Date:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 7:45:14 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I attended the Eastside Budget Meeting last night and it went about as predicted. The obligatory presentation by Finance Director Dave Schmiedicke, followed by carefully selected questions submitted on notecards. I know they were carefully selected because when the facilitator transitioned with, "And that is all the questions," only one of my six had been "answered."

Then it was discussion around tables, residents and city staff and alders, and the questions felt a little backwards. *What do you imagine for Madison's future? What services do you value most and why?*

A huge assortment of actual food and drinks (versus the light refreshments advertised) filled the back of the room. Full-color handouts were doled out to everyone, delineating some of the bigger department budgets, services provided, and the budget timeline and next steps. The mood from the "stage" was chipper, upbeat, lighthearted. It felt a little like fine dining, expensive wine, and live violins in the moments before the Titanic sunk.

We're on a sinking ship, and the wrong questions were asked (in my opinion). It required solemn reflection and deep discussion with specifics, but instead it was pie in the sky.

We need to get beyond blaming past and current decisions of the state legislature, which our city has had a part in, and find solutions to solve this growing deficit. And get spending back in balance with revenue. That doesn't happen by dreaming of what we want, but by recognizing what we mutually can live without.

While Finance Director Dave Schmiedicke did say that all options are on the table, the case is clearly being made for a property tax referendum to cover the entire \$27 million (and growing) deficit. Meaning when I go to cast my vote in November, I will have the opportunity to vote yes or no on another property tax increase above and beyond the state-imposed limit. If that amount is for \$27 million, it will cost my average household an additional \$284 annually, or roughly \$24/month. Add to that to the maximum increase under the levy limit, plus the as yet undetermined amount of the coming MMSD referendum and a 14% increase to the County portion of the tax bill.

I know I will be voting no on a city referendum unless the Alders delineate an equal cut to expenditures in the budget. If you show reductions to the budget of \$15 million, I might

consider voting yes on a referendum for the other \$15 million.

But the cuts are being framed in terms of all or nothing. To cut staffing alone would mean about 270 positions. To cut departments, it would be an entire department, like the Streets Division's \$27 million budget. Or a certain equal percentage of cuts across the board, which makes no sense.

There is another way. It's not the easy way, but it's the way that makes the most sense. And I think it's what we should have been doing all along.

Throw the "--" () out the window and start over! Instead of just taking everything the city has ever done and is doing and adjusting for the cost of inflation, it's time to start with a - . Go back to the drawing board. Start at \$ and build in what we need, not what we've always done and are doing and adding from there. This incremental budget just bakes in all the inefficiencies and adjusts for inflation. One example: The Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Monitor. Where are the Measurables? After 3 years of heavy city spending, they don't even have a process established to submit a complaint. Why keep throwing money at it? There should be an input process that is open to public scrutiny. For every budget item. That is transparent government.

But last night, the Finance Director said that every year they do a "Cost- to-Continue Analysis," asking each department what it will cost for them to keep doing what they're already doing. ? Why not ask for plans, implementation strategies, review and accountability? Cut those programs or services that that are not performing or no longer a significant priority.

Look at every program, service, grant, and contract the City has been spending our money on and do a review of that spending. What were the goals? Were they goals (were they specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and timely)? Were they accomplished? Are they still necessary? Each program should be evaluated for efficiencies before budget time.

Say to and prioritize what we have. Don't increase wages for city workers, don't generate more upper management positions with new employees making over \$150,000 (Metro Transit recently hired four for the BRT), and don't try to vote yourselves a 60% raise when your spending led to this deficit. The Mayor, the Common Council and the Finance Director have known for years that this significant deficit was coming. Yet 2024 was a record spending year for the City. ?

Stop using **one-time funds** on **ongoing expenses** and **new programs**. The federal government warned against using covid-relief funds in this way, yet you went ahead and did it anyway. Same for TIF funding, the rainy day fund, and other one-time funds.

Debt is a . Of course there is good debt and there is bad debt. But if the City cannot afford

the Capital Budget debt, or the matching portion of federal or state grant money, or the corresponding operations cost in the Operating Budget, it needs to count the cost and just say no. Capital Budget debt is paid through the Operating Budget, funded by the General Fund (which is where the \$27 million, and growing, deficit lies). The second largest expenditure from the General Fund is now debt service, making up nearly 17% of the fund...a red flag. The City has taken on a ton of debt through the city match portion of federal grants, especially for the BRT. Over \$100 million in debt, paid for with interest over 10 or 20 years. ' ' . It will be paid on the backs of our children, if they can afford to live here. There is also massive (and growing) debt and operating costs for the Public Market, the Imagination Center, the Southside grocery store, the Men's Homeless Shelter, etc.

The General Fund general obligation debt service for 2024 is \$54,412,143 in principal and \$9,467,758 in interest for a total of \$63,879,900, a \$2,292,678 increase from 2023, or 3.7 %.

The General Fund general obligation debt service for 2023 was \$52,167,662 in principal and \$9,419,560 in interest for a total of \$61,587,222, a \$5,478,898 increase from 2022, or 9.8 %.

The more we borrow, the less sustainable the debt becomes.

If I got laid off from my job, the last thing I would be asking my kids is what their dream vacation looks like. We're going to have to have a staycation instead. When inflation hits and our taxes rise and our revenues don't, or can't, rise along to accommodate them, we make cuts. We cancel subscriptions and memberships, quit eating out, and we may need to put the new car on hold for a while. Some people will have no choice but to move.

These are the cash flow lessons the City needs to learn. Your residents can't just be the slush fund to pay for the City's lavish spending. Many of us can't afford it. Please, no more spending until revenues catch up, no referendum without matching cuts.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

**From:** [Norman Sannes](#)  
**To:** [Field, Derek](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** City budget  
**Date:** Monday, April 29, 2024 9:26:15 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from norman.sannes@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Derek, it doesn't look like I'll be able to attend the neighborhood budget meetings. I hope that the budget can be held in check, without raising property taxes, or have a referendum to exceed levy limits. Many Madison residents are in the same boat as my wife and I; RETIRED ON FIXED INCOME. We don't get raises to keep up with inflation and increased taxes. Actually, we should be getting a "property tax freeze," IMO.

These "budget shortfalls" are a result of POOR Planning, and the spending mentality of the current city administration (again IMO).

Norman Sannes.



**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [Matthias, Isaac L](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Kennedy School Meeting 5.1.2024  
**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2024 10:48:27 AM

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Another comment!

-----Original Message-----

From: Shirley Drouin <[smdrouin@wisc.edu](mailto:smdrouin@wisc.edu)>  
Sent: Thursday, May 2, 2024 3:20 PM  
To: council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
Subject: Kennedy School Meeting 5.1.2024

[You don't often get email from [smdrouin@wisc.edu](mailto:smdrouin@wisc.edu). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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I'm so disappointed in the number of area residents that didn't turn out for yesterday's meeting at Kennedy School. I'm of the opinion that more has to be done to get the word out. Then again, to many it may seem futile, so why bother. Who is listening?

Thank you, Shirley

**From:** [Mikael Snitker](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** No new taxes, without cuts  
**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2024 10:30:15 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from snitker@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Alder people,

The City cannot afford its current spending; incurring more debt and higher taxes on the backs of taxpayers, renters, families, people with moderate and fixed incomes is not the solution. So, I oppose new property tax increases—especially without talking about cuts—property tax increases which will only drive up rents and property tax payments, increasing the cost of housing for residents. Is that the goal?

Can you look at a family or senior in the eye, and suggest to them that they skip a meal to make their tax or rent payment-- without making cuts to the city budget for non-essential services? I would hope not. And, blaming former administrations, the legislature, and so on, is a total non-starter. The city's problems belong to the city, and need to be dealt with by the current administration.

It's time you start looking at cuts-- and get serious about balancing the deficit—just like every family has to. Simply asking for more isn't the answer.

Mikael Snitker, Madison

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Deficit  
**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2024 10:53:38 AM

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Alders,

Following please find an email that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thanks,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

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**From:** Victor Toniolo <[vatoniolo@gmail.com](mailto:vatoniolo@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024 4:48 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>; Mayor <[Mayor@cityofmadison.com](mailto:Mayor@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Deficit

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [vatoniolo@gmail.com](mailto:vatoniolo@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders,

Many of you have heard from me before, but I figured I should beat this drum some more in light of the budget meetings.

Build the housing.

Rather, get out of the way and let it be built. Your continued failure to attract and approve developments is harming our city in more, and more severe ways.

The state legislature isn't going to help us out AT ALL, so to the best of my knowledge, there are two ways to expand property tax collections (the vast majority of city income):

1) by referendum, which I plan to vote 'yes' on, but is only a bandaid solution

2) net new construction

That's it. You don't have any other options.

The council has taken actions to increase the supply of housing in Madison, but it has been too little, too late. The west area plan is an embarrassment. Hilldale is expanding and you allow single family zoning to remain just steps away. Expanding ADUs with these interest rates barely qualifies as virtue signaling, very few will be built. Denying developments for "historic" reasons outside of legitimate

historic districts or designations is ridiculous and probably illegal.

I could go on. Satya ran her campaign with housing as a major focus. She then beat a 6 term mayor by 24%. Madison is more than ready to move forward. Stop holding us back.

Best regards,

Victor Toniolo

**From:** [DARLENE GAKOVICH](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Solving the city budget deficit  
**Date:** Saturday, May 4, 2024 12:57:37 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

City of Madison Alders,

I cannot drive at night, so I was not able to attend the Budget Meeting. Thanks to the Nextdoor post (below), I learned how it went. The post is long but excellently written and detailed. Every single one of you should read it in its entirety because you are the decision makers responsible for solving the deficit disaster looming over our city; also because many of you have helped create it by irresponsible spending.

I am retired and living on a fixed income. Every year I have to make cuts in my budget for non-essential expenditures in order to meet the demands of increased cost of living, with property taxes taking almost a third of my pension income. I will definitely vote NO in November unless you make meaningful cuts in the city budget, starting with eliminating all non-essential projects.

Thank you!  
Darlene Gakovich



[Bonnie Roe](#)  
[Midvale Heights](#)

•

Edited 1 day ago

•

Solving a \$27 Million Deficit: I attended the Eastside Budget Meeting last night and it went about as predicted. The obligatory presentation by Finance Director Dave Schmiedicke, followed by carefully selected questions submitted on notecards. I know they were carefully selected because when the facilitator transitioned with, "And that is all the questions," only one of my six had been "answered." Then it was discussion around tables, residents and city staff and alders, and the questions felt a little backwards. What do you imagine for Madison's future? What services do you value most and why? A huge assortment of actual food and drinks (versus the light refreshments advertised) filled the back of the room. Full-color handouts were doled out to everyone, delineating some of the bigger department budgets, services provided, and the budget timeline and next steps. The mood from the "stage" was chipper, upbeat, lighthearted. It felt a little like fine dining, expensive wine, and live violins in the moments before the Titanic sunk. We're on a sinking

ship, and the wrong questions were asked (in my opinion). It required solemn reflection and deep discussion with specifics, but instead it was pie in the sky. We need to get beyond blaming past and current decisions of the state legislature, which our city has had a part in, and find solutions to solve this growing deficit. And get spending back in balance with revenue. That doesn't happen by dreaming of what we want, but by recognizing what we mutually can live without. While the Finance Director did say that all options are on the table, the case is clearly being made for a property tax referendum to cover the entire \$27 million deficit. Meaning when you and I go to cast our votes in November, we will have the opportunity to vote yes or no on another property tax increase above and beyond the state-imposed limit. If that amount is for \$27 million, it will cost the average household an additional \$284 annually, or roughly \$24/month. Add to that to the maximum increase under the levy limit, plus the amount of the coming MMSD referendum and a 14% increase to the County portion of the tax bill. I know I will be voting no on a city referendum unless the Alders delineate an equal cut to the budget. If they show reductions to the budget of \$15 million, I might consider voting yes on a referendum for the other \$15 million. But the cuts are being framed in terms of all or nothing. To cut staffing alone would mean about 270 positions. To cut departments, it would be an entire department, like the Streets Division's \$27 million budget. Or a certain equal percentage of cuts across the board. There is another way. It's not the easy way, but it's the way that makes the most sense. And I think it's what we should have been doing all along. Throw the "--" () out the window and start over! Instead of just taking everything the city has ever done and is doing and adjusting for the cost of inflation, it's time to start with a - . Go back to the drawing board. Start at \$ and build in what we need, not what we've always done and are doing and adding from there. This incremental budget just bakes in all the inefficiencies and adjusts for inflation. One example: The Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Monitor. Where are the Measurables? After 3 years of heavy city spending, they don't even have a process established to submit a complaint. Why keep throwing money at it? There should be an input process that is open to public scrutiny. But last night, the Finance Director said that every year they do a "Cost- to-Continue Analysis," asking each department what it will cost for them to keep doing what they're already doing. ? Instead, look at every program, service, grant, and contract the City has been spending money on and do a review of that spending. What were the goals? Were they goals (were they specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-Based)? Were they accomplished? Are they still necessary? Each program should be evaluated for efficiencies before budget time. Say to end large and prioritize what we have. Don't increase wages for city workers, don't generate more upper management positions with new employees making over \$150,000 (Metro Transit hired four for the BRT), and don't give the Alders a 60% raise when their spending led to this deficit. The Mayor, Common Council and Finance Director have known for years that this significant deficit was coming. Yet 2024 was a record spending year for the City. ? Stop using one-time funds on ongoing expenses and new programs. The federal government warned against using covid-relief funds in this way, yet they went ahead and did it anyway. Same for TIF funding and other one-time funds. Debt is a . Of course there is good debt and there is bad debt. But if the City cannot afford the Capital Budget debt, or the matching portion of federal or state grant money, or the corresponding operations cost in the Operating Budget, it needs to count the cost and just say no. Capital Budget debt is paid

through the Operating Budget, funded by the General Fund (which is where the \$27 million, and growing, deficit lies). The second largest expenditure from the General Fund is now debt service, making up nearly 17% of the fund...a red flag. The City has taken on a ton of debt through the city match portion of federal grants, especially for the BRT. Over \$100 million in debt, paid for with interest over 10 or 20 years. It will be paid on the backs of our children, if they can afford to live here. There is also massive (and growing) debt and operating costs for the Public Market, the Imagination Center, the Southside grocery store, the Men's Homeless Shelter, etc. The General Fund general obligation debt service for 2024 is \$54,412,143 in principal and \$9,467,758 in interest for a total of \$63,879,900, a \$2,292,678 increase from 2023, or 3.7 %. The General Fund general obligation debt service for 2023 was \$52,167,662 in principal and \$9,419,560 in interest for a total of \$61,587,222, a \$5,478,898 increase from 2022, or 9.8 %. The more we borrow, the less sustainable the debt becomes. If I got laid off from my job, the last thing I would be asking my kids is what their dream vacation looks like. We're going to have to have a staycation instead. When inflation hits and our taxes rise and our revenues don't, or can't, rise along to accommodate them, we make cuts. We cancel subscriptions and memberships, quit eating out, and we may need to put the new car on hold for a while. These are the cash flow lessons the City needs to learn. We can't just be the slush fund to pay for the City's lavish spending. Many of us can't afford it. No more spending until revenues catch up, no referendum without matching cuts.

**From:** [David Handowski](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** City Budget!  
**Date:** Wednesday, May 15, 2024 11:38:43 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from davidhandowski@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders,

As critical as the current budget situation is to both City residents and to your legacy, the seriousness of which Common Council is addressing budget deficits is wholly disappointing.

Your proverbial 'house' is on fire due to budget deficits with significant impact to residents and agencies on the line. Yet, you are consuming vast amounts of Council time debating issues not part of your core 'job', your obligation to residents, and not within your purview. While you wave your flag and battle for your ideological views for the few (UW protesters, how many from Madison?), the MANY, meaning your constituents, are waving the white flag of surrender over the precipitous costs of inflation, housing, food, child care, gas, utilities, etc.. The glaring, and evident need of the many is being ignored for the very few. This smacks of elitism to the people you are functionally responsible for. Your single highest priority, EVERY DAY, should be the BUDGET.

Mathematics is absolute and cannot be influenced by ideology or good intentions. Paying little attention to its' realities in budgetary finance will be a painful lesson, as you are about to learn. Ask any constituent who has to budget for mortgage, rent, food, child care, transportation, utilities, insurance, etc etc. We do not have the luxury of gleefully running deficits in our household budget. When we can't pay our mortgage we certainly are not putting non critical spending on credit cards! Which is analogous to what Mayor and Council continue to do. For us, the bill ALWAYS comes due. Your bill for past and current decisions is now in your mailbox. Your bill(s) are now due. Welcome to the adult world of reality.

Key considerations

Almost \$12M owed in municipal fines going back to 2019? Yet the City is looking at a \$27M in budget deficit? One would think receivables of this amount would have had some attention? This does nothing but advertise to the public that municipal codes and laws irrelevant and consequences non existent. How does this create best practices, respect for following codes and laws, and a safe City in any stretch of the imagination? Is this \$12M in addition to, or included in the "Revenue" of \$14M highlighted in Figure 6 of the 2024 Budget Brief? Of the \$14M or \$26M what is the forecast and process for collections in this calendar year? How will lack of collections already impact the \$27M shortfall?

For all that is sane, and quantitatively proven successful with metrics and measurements (not), could you please finally dissolve the disastrous Police Civilian Oversight Committee/Office of Independent Monitor? Or, mathematically prove its' success. Over \$2M plus in budget and studies and it has yet to provide a functional deliverable to make the City, or residents, safe. Imagine a rollout of something that could have done exactly that. BODY CAMERAS.

Now the difficult decisions.

Cancel raises, offer early retirement, cut administrative staff, terminate the bottom X% of employees who have the worst performance evaluations. Do you cut affordable housing initiatives, city staff, Health and Human Services (700% over average), Metro (400% over average AND declining ridership)?

If you are counting on the good nature of the citizenry to continue to support your tax and spend initiatives at their own expense, I would remind you of the famous quote by James Carville back in 1992 when Clinton won office and why. "It's the economy, stupid". Housing, rent, food, child care, transportation, basic standard of living, and



quality of life will always win over political ideology in the privacy of ones own home.

I am a voter and solid Independent seeking some sanity in the middle that is bounded by reality.

David Handowski  
SW resident since 2003

**From:** [DJ Downing](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Higher Property Taxes  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024 1:47:51 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [deej.downing@gmail.com](mailto:deej.downing@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I oppose all higher property taxes because the City of Madison cannot budget correctly. I live within my means. The City of Madison needs to live the same way. Fire several of the deputy mayors, the new communications manager and hire one good accountant.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Patricia Elson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** I oppose higher taxes  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024 5:44:33 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from pattysel45@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I oppose higher taxes. Clean up city government and get thing running again the way they used to run. Don't kill our beautiful city.

No New Taxes

Patty Elson

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: West Area Budget meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024 9:24:13 AM

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Alders,

The message below was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thanks,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

-----Original Message-----

From: [jhirsch@chorus.net](mailto:jhirsch@chorus.net) <[jhirsch@chorus.net](mailto:jhirsch@chorus.net)>  
Sent: Tuesday, May 21, 2024 7:16 AM  
To: council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
Subject: West Area Budget meeting

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Thank you for putting together the public budget meetings.

I, along with a lot of my neighbors, attended the West meeting last Thursday. It's the consensus that we LOVED the change in format to allow the live Q & A in lieu of the small group discussions. I hope that you will continue this vibrant opportunity to communicate directly with the alders at the future meetings.

Janet Hirsch  
District 9

**From:** [Lynn Hummel](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Tax Levy  
**Date:** Monday, May 20, 2024 2:54:15 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from lynn.hummel@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders: I oppose any tax increase in the City of Madison budget.  
You will need to cut positions in the mayor's office and at the social end of the spectrum

**From:** [Sue Hunt](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Balance the Budget  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024 10:03:19 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from susankayhunt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please cut unnecessary positions and ineffective programs to balance our budget.

Please stop development at any cost. And please listen to neighborhood concerns including stopping housing on Old Sauk Road to a density inappropriate for the location.

Sue Hunt

**From:** [Darlene Johnson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Taxes  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024 7:37:28 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from udjr446@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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No more raising our taxes! Enough! We are elderly! The mayor came into this position and threatened shutting down a firehouse if she didn't get an extra wheel tax. Don't even get me started on the new bus system! No advantage to us! Figure something else out!

Darlene Johnson

**From:** [Grace Kwon](#)  
**To:** [Guequierre, John](#); [All Alders](#); [Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Madison's residents rally against possible tax hike | News | wkow.com  
**Date:** Sunday, May 19, 2024 8:18:49 PM  
**Attachments:** [Budget.png](#)  
[6646ceef57dab.image.png](#)

Some people who received this message don't often get email from gskwon22@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alder John,

I'd like to thank you, the other alders, the staff and finance director David Schmiedicke for hosting the finance meeting 5/16.

Sharing this article on how to fix the deficit.

I think Amy is "Right on the Mark!"

Sincerely,  
Grace Kwon  
District 19

MADISON (WKOW) -- People living on Madison's west side are coming together to tackle their city's budget issues head-on. A big group gathered at Vel Phillips Memorial High School with one aim: to stop a plan that could raise their taxes, which they believe would continue to put the city in a tough spot financially.

"We believe that we pay so much for taxes," said Amy Kell, who has lived in Madison for over 20 years. "The talk about the increasing levy is of great concern to people, in particular seniors who are living on fixed incomes."

-



Kell thinks the city should cut programs that were funded by the American Rescue Plan Act because that money has run out. In addition, she's calling on city leaders to evaluate how the current dollars are spent before investing more into a system that might not be working for the majority of people living in Madison.

"Now since ARPA funds have been expended, all of those programs and services that were funded through them need to stop," she said. "That's an easy way - not the happy way - but an easy way for everyone to cut cost."



With more than \$27 million in surplus in the 2024 budget, taxpayers don't see the need for a tax increase. They want that money to be used to reduce the deficit in 2025 and want elected officials to rethink where they're spending money.

City alders organized the meeting and invited the finance director, who said using the surplus to lower the deficit would only be a temporary solution. But residents disagree, saying it's essential to be careful with spending.

City leaders admit that expenses are higher than revenue, leaving few choices on the table. Meanwhile, residents worry about what this will mean for the city's financial future.

The city plans to hold more budget community engagement meetings in the near future.

[https://www.wkow.com/news/madisons-residents-rally-against-possible-tax-hike/article\\_84ace786-13fc-11ef-9a41-2777948a60e6.html](https://www.wkow.com/news/madisons-residents-rally-against-possible-tax-hike/article_84ace786-13fc-11ef-9a41-2777948a60e6.html)

**From:** [Wendy Sundby](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** oppose higher taxws  
**Date:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024 6:08:18 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from wsundby2124@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Who do you think you are fooling? I oppose higher taxes to clean up the budget mess you have made.

I am appalled by the number of staff in the mayors office and elsewhere. Before you think about saddling the people of Madison with higher taxes to balance the budget think first about reducing the staff in the mayors administration. Good Grief!!

Wendy Sundby

Long time City of Madison resident opposing higher taxes.

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Irresponsible not to propose cuts  
**Date:** Thursday, May 23, 2024 2:32:06 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Thursday, May 23, 2024 – 2:29pm

Chris Wolf

4617 Eldorado LN

Madison, Wisconsin. 53716 Yes, by email. [1wolfchris@gmail.com](mailto:1wolfchris@gmail.com) All Alders Irresponsible not to propose cuts Voting NO on referendum to raise taxes above levy. You have NOT proposed cuts to solve you and mayors extreme spending. Instead, you continue spending, even with spending for food at public meetings to discuss the budget deficit!! Sorry, but spending on staff and nonprofit organizations must be CUT! Not garbage, not libraries, not police and fire. Cut the staff in mayors office, transportation, planning, and community development. Who runs the city? You? What a joke! You follow the long term civil servants and the mayor! You are all beyond your ability, as recently demonstrated.

**From:** [Latimer Burris, Amani](#)  
**To:** [council](#)  
**Cc:** [Matthias, Isaac L](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Feedback from Constituent for Data Collection  
**Date:** Thursday, June 6, 2024 2:43:05 PM

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Recipient: District 12: Amani Latimer Burris  
Thursday, June 6, 2024 - 6:56am  
Margie Burris  
1742 Winchester St  
Madison, Wisconsin. 53704 Yes, by email.  
[mburris13@charter.net](mailto:mburris13@charter.net) District 12 A new Referendum? Hello. I like that we have the same name! I would like to express some concerns with this new proposal to put on the Fall election ballot a referendum to raise property taxes. WTF? I'm sorry that the city can't meet their budget...but, the mayor is a big reason for that. My house assessment went up \$20,000 this year...and it's a freaking shack. That will already mean a property tax boost for me; and I think most home owners were subjected to the same thing. You probably have a way to investigate that. This is outrageous. We as senior citizens can barely afford to stay in our homes now, and moving into an apartment somewhere is out of the question, because my mortgage payment (and no, not all senior citizens own their homes) is lower than rental prices. Every year, MGE goes up, the water bill goes up, Spectrum bill goes up (my only recreation), insurance bills go up, etc. I struggle just to "break even." Thank you for reading this long story, but I'm hoping that you do not vote to allow the proposed tax increase referendum on our upcoming fall ballots. Thank you very much.

---

**Alder Amani**

**Amani Latimer Burris**  
**City of Madison Alder, District 12**  
**Contact: 608/345-8747 text/cell (preferred)**  
**City Council Office: 608/266-4071 (main line)**  
**City Council Fax (608)267-8669**  
**Madison Common Council**  
**210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, #417**  
**Madison, Wisconsin 53703**

*"Please excuse any typos or errors, human here"*

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: city budget  
**Date:** Thursday, June 6, 2024 11:11:25 AM

---

Alders,

Below please find an email that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Punky <punky@punkyegan.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 5, 2024 10:01 AM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** city budget

You don't often get email from [punky@punkyegan.com](mailto:punky@punkyegan.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Council Members,

I can't be at the meeting tonight on the Northside, so I want to express my views here.

I am very disappointed in both the mayor and the Council for letting this known budget deficit drag on without doing the hard work to fix this until now when you all throw up your arms and say the only option is ANOTHER tax increase for the citizens. NO WAY!

You all knew for years that the state wasn't giving Madison the money it could have. So instead of working in that reality, you plowed ahead anyway with spending more than you knew you had. It's such a cop-out on all of you. Why do you even want to be on Council if you're not willing to take the difficult stand to say NO MORE to the mayor?

And no, that doesn't mean the easy way out with "across the board" cuts. Some project budgets are obviously padded and fat. Please tell me why the Administration needs \$30.7M. It is the 4<sup>th</sup> highest category in the budget. And why \$28.4M for Planning and Development, the 5<sup>th</sup> highest category? Of course, the mayor's favorite trope is to basically say, nice library you got there, be a shame if we had to cut services.... Tell her to cut her own budget!

We are being egregiously taxed because you all aren't doing your job. Your job is not to blackmail us with threatened cuts to services that the majority of us use, like the library, but to budget within the city's means. If some jobs need to be cut and programs put on hold, so be it.

You have used up the good will of your citizens and we will NOT vote for a referendum so you can keep sending indiscriminately. Don't underestimate Madisonian's ire at being taxed beyond what we can afford.

Sincerely,

Punky Egan  
1321 Burning Wood Way

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [Erik Paulson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#); [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** two posts on the budget that you might find helpful  
**Date:** Thursday, June 6, 2024 1:11:16 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from epaulson@unit1127.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Alders -

I've been working on a series of blog posts on the budget, parts 1 and 2 are up, and I'll post parts 3 and 4 next week.

Part 1 is here:

<https://posts.unit1127.com/p/madisons-budget-challenge-part-1> - you will all know much of this but it is helpful to have in one place. I also pulled out the Metro numbers - if you get folks who ask you about how much Metro contributes to the structural deficit, you can answer "not much" - the 2019 pre-COVID/pre Satya number was (inflation adjusted) \$17.4M, the 2024 budget is \$22.5M total (15.75M general fund + 6.8M wheel tax), so the increased support to Metro is only \$5.1M, much less than the structural deficit.

Part 2 is here:

<https://posts.unit1127.com/p/madisons-budget-challenge-part-2>

In part 2, since finance staff projections only went to 2029, I wondered what happened in the 2030s and beyond, so I went through all of the budget PDFs and presentations and pulled out the numbers and the assumptions finance staff makes and made my own budget model and projected forward to 2059.

- In 2037, the budget deficit (\$162M) is bigger than that year's projected police budget (\$152M)
- In 2054, the budget deficit is more than 50% of the operating budget

Health care is a big part of that. In 2025, health care is 7.9% of the budget and is 14.4% of the growth. In the mid 2050s, health care will be 20% of Madison's budget and will make up about 33% of the annual growth.

Obviously a 2059 projection needs many grains of salt, so this is just more evidence of how unsustainable the system of financing local governments is in Wisconsin and the legislature needs to change it.

My Excel files and code are linked to in the post. It should go without saying though - trust any number you get from Dave and Christine more than anything in my post, but I think all of my numbers are in the ballpark.

Part 4 is my suggestions for a referendum, but I'm waiting to see the cost-to-continue numbers, which I think are at Finance on Monday? But assuming they're not wildly different, my plan closes the gap in 2025, 2026, and 2027 and somewhat softens the blow to taxpayers, at the cost of being somewhat hard to explain.

Thank you for your service and have a nice weekend,

-Erik



**From:** [Art Pratt](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Guequierre, John](#)  
**Subject:** Madison City Budget Shortfall  
**Date:** Thursday, June 6, 2024 9:37:39 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from pratt99@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am sure you are receiving lots of emails so I will keep it short. Some topics to consider for the Madison City Budget shortfall.

- 1) Think Regionally - What is the City of Madison doing that Dane County should be doing? What partnerships are we considering with surrounding communities?
- 2) Think Balance - To solve the immediate budget crisis we need a balance between staff cuts, rainy day fund spend down and tax increase. None of these items alone can address the shortfall. **Using just a tax increase referendum will fail.**
- 3) Think Managerial layoffs - The reduction in budget and staff cannot be wholly basic services. What Department consolidations and Managerial staff reductions will there be?
- 4) Think Sales Tax - Long term a local sales tax (Dane County) would be beneficial. Work with Senator Dianne H. Hesselbein and Representative Alex Joers on legislative approval.

Best regards,  
Art Pratt  
District 19

**From:** [jeffreycprice@gmail.com](mailto:jeffreycprice@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Verveer, Michael](#); [Latimer Burris, Amani](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Increased special event parking fees  
**Date:** Sunday, June 2, 2024 1:20:28 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jeffreycprice@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

[https://captimes.com/news/government/madison-to-nearly-double-special-event-parking-in-big-venue-garages/article\\_4ad93ad6-1f8d-11ef-ae73-5757c8bd615f.html](https://captimes.com/news/government/madison-to-nearly-double-special-event-parking-in-big-venue-garages/article_4ad93ad6-1f8d-11ef-ae73-5757c8bd615f.html)

I'd rather deal with the congestion than pay this nearly doubling of fees to park downtown.

Honestly, having spent a considerable amount of time and money attempting to operate a business on State Street, this is as insane as the city spending \$70,000.00 on bus shelters in the early 2000's that have now been torn down and replaced.

Don't come at us with "structural budget shortfalls" when these kind of decisions are allowed to flow through.

Jeffrey C Price  
17/3 Sherman Terrace  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Cynthia Archer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** City spending  
**Date:** Thursday, June 13, 2024 7:00:18 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from cyn.archer22@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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You are correct that the City has used onetime stimulus money to fund ongoing costs. Bad budget policy.

Also, there was recently an article that said City workers were going to start rummaging through our recycling bins to determine if the contents are consistent with recycling rules! How ridiculous is that? How many other programs like this exist? The mayor and budget staff need to do their jobs and balance the budget within the confines of existing resources.

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Solving Madison's Projected Deficit  
**Date:** Saturday, June 8, 2024 3:07:08 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Saturday, June 8, 2024 – 3:03pm

Melanie Foxcroft

5710 Hammersley Rd

Madison, Wisconsin. 53711 Yes, by email. [melfox47@gmail.com](mailto:melfox47@gmail.com) All Alders Solving Madison's Projected Deficit As a long-time Madison resident, I support using the unexpected \$31.2 million end-of-year surplus from 2023 to cover the projected \$27 million deficit for 2025.

Yes it is a "short term fix". However, a small new Madison sales tax or small property tax increase, if passed by referendum, are unlikely to change the City's long term fiscal outlook. I still remember Mayor Satya Rhodes Conway's claims that the (highly regressive) new \$40 wheel tax she implemented shortly after being elected would solve Madison's projected budget problems. Yet it did not. And here we are again.

So, what to do? I vehemently oppose any cuts to libraries, police, fire, garbage and waste, neighborhood centers, violence prevention efforts, homeless services, and other municipal services. Such cuts would severely impact Madison's highly attractive quality of life. I also vehemently oppose a new city sales tax, which would be highly regressive. New fees, such as those now attached to the water bill, and Mayor Satya Rhodes Conway's wheel tax are all highly regressive, and I oppose all of them.

I support using the unexpected 2023 \$31.2 million end-of-year surplus to cover the expected \$27 million deficit for the projected 2025 budget shortfall. If a deficit is again projected for 2026, and the Wisconsin State Legislature still has not increased state revenue sharing, then that is the time to consider property tax or sales tax referendums.

Melanie Foxcroft

5720 Hammersley Rd

Madison Wi 53711

[Melfox47@gmail.com](mailto:Melfox47@gmail.com)

**From:** [Erik Paulson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** additional budget blogposts  
**Date:** Thursday, June 13, 2024 7:39:57 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from epaulson@unit1127.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello all -

I wanted to share the 2nd set of posts, in the hopes that they are useful for you or your constituents.

The first one is (thankfully) shorter than the others:

<https://posts.unit1127.com/p/madisons-budget-challenge-part-3>

It covers the surplus from 2023 and some of the downsides of the surplus, namely that interest rates, while good for the city on the 'revenue from investment' side, are also bad for the city because we'll wind up paying higher interest rates on our bonds.

The other problem the surplus is masking is saving money from staff vacancy is bad news, because it's stressing out the now-shorthanded staff, and that this is a long-term problem. Hopefully the compensation study will help with some ideas on how to move forward, but I worry that much of the answer will be "invest more money."

The last piece wraps up the series, and is unfortunately very long:

<https://posts.unit1127.com/p/madisons-budget-challenge-part-4>

The gist of this piece is my recommendation - a \$28M referendum in Nov, but use some of the reserve funds to ease it over the next few years, so between the new revenue authority and one-time funds you'll close the gap in 2025, 2026, and 2027. There's an alternate plan for \$16M that closes the gap in 2025 and 2026 but then has gaps returning in 2027 and growing in 2028.

It also covers how the legislature is unlikely to be of much help in the next few years, and how I worry that the \$100M operating referendum the school district is eyeing up may not pass and might take the city referendum down with it.

I also suggest that a referendum would be more likely to pass if accompanied by some cuts. My suggestion is to pause (not cancel) the Imagination Center when it finishes the design phase and not send it to bids. I know many of you will disagree with this option and that's OK - I just ask that you take a look at my reasoning, and to remember that part of your calculus will have to be "how do we best position this referendum to make sure it gets at least 50.1% yes"

Finally, you're in good company for referenda. Both Fitchburg and Monona are heading towards a referendum this fall, and Sun Prairie projects that they'll need to go to one in 2027. (And Middleton/Cambridge/Shorewood Hills/Maple Bluff have already gone - probably more, I just got bored of looking after a while)

-Erik

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Opinion section 6/16 cap times article  
**Date:** Sunday, June 16, 2024 3:42:07 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Sunday, June 16, 2024 – 3:38pm

Linda Warsek  
1118 Risser rd

Madison, Wisconsin. 53705 No, do not contact me. All Alders Opinion section 6/16 cap times article If you as a group can not figure out how to do our 2025 budget without a tax increase ,then please follow this woman's ideas, I believe it would be received with rounds of applause by the taxpayers of our city.

[https://madison.com/edition/page-b4/page\\_5109d930-9d71-586a-ab12-2d4f498e4705.html](https://madison.com/edition/page-b4/page_5109d930-9d71-586a-ab12-2d4f498e4705.html)

**From:** [Andrea Welch](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Share a vision for sound fiscal future for Madison  
**Date:** Sunday, June 16, 2024 7:50:27 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from andrea.welch@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good morning,

Ginny White's op-ed in the Sunday, June 16, 2024 Wisconsin State Journal is spot on (see below). My husband and I are about to retire and unfortunately have to seriously consider leaving Madison because of the property taxes. We are happy to contribute even though we don't have children but the thought of being on a fixed income and the ever-increasing property taxes makes it unlikely we will be able to stay in the place we call home. Then again, maybe that's the plan, drive out the old folks so there's housing for the young who can afford to live here.

Sincerely,  
Andrea Welch

*"Madison's mayor has dispatched city staff and City Council members to "budget engagement events" where residents are asked to share their vision for Madison. Here's what I envision:*

*City government ("the city") lives within its means to avoid tax and fee increases that could price residents out of their homes.*

*The city focuses on providing basic services for the safety and well-being of current residents.*

*The city acknowledges that discretionary spending has helped fuel the current budget crisis.*

*The city stops budgeting as though one-time federal dollars are still available and matching grants are free money.*

*The city identifies and eliminates inessential positions and ineffective programs.*

*The city stops conducting public relations campaigns to try to convince residents that overspending was someone else's fault.*

*The city defers spending on a north-south bus rapid transit route until we know how well the east-west route is working.*



*The city spends on social services and transportation in line with other Wisconsin cities of comparable size.*

*The city curbs its aspirations and spending to be a player on the national and international stage.*

*The city plans for the long-term by prioritizing green space and tree canopy over development at any cost.*

*Share your vision with [allalders@cityofmadison.com](mailto:allalders@cityofmadison.com).*

*Ginny White, Madison"*

**From:** [Larry and Ginny White](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Conklin, Nikki](#)  
**Subject:** My 10-Point Plan for Solving the Budget Crisis  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 18, 2024 9:39:35 AM  
**Attachments:** [LTE 2424-06-16.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from lgwhites@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear City Alders:

I'm attaching a pdf of my letter to the editor that the *Wisconsin State Journal* published on June 16th. I hope you will consider my suggestions for addressing the \$22 million budget deficit.

Getting taxpayers to pass a referendum could be difficult and would only be a short-term fix. Madison's spending problems are broader and deeper. I and my friends and neighbors are not inclined to agree to raise our taxes to bail out the mayor.

Respectfully,

Ginny White  
71 Oak Creek Trail  
Madison 53717  
608-821-0056

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Stop library funding cuts - rethink service cuts  
**Date:** Thursday, July 11, 2024 9:17:08 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Thursday, July 11, 2024 – 9:13pm

Elliot Haugen  
415 W. Gilman St  
Apt 604

Madison, Wisconsin. 53703 Yes, by email. [elliecharishaugen@gmail.com](mailto:elliecharishaugen@gmail.com) All Alders Stop library funding cuts - rethink service cuts Hello Council Alders,

I am a new resident of Madison who moved here to work at Epic. Growing up, public libraries allowed me to become a strong reader which led to greater educational opportunities that brought me to the success I have today. My family could not afford new books in poverty and the library was a source of hope and joy in our lives. I have been enjoying Madison's public libraries since moving and appreciate the safe space to access resources on what's happening around town.

I was horrified to learn that budget shortfalls are leading to divestment in the library system here. If the plan to cut evening and Sunday service goes through city wide, I will only be able to visit the library on Saturdays, as I work full time. I do not think these cuts are necessary, or being carried out with the people of Madison in mind. It is difficult to see cuts to libraries as anything but an attack on intellectualism and community when hours are being cut at times when libraries are needed most. The library being open can keep kids off the streets after school and on the weekends. The library being open after school and on the weekends allows those with full time schedules to have convenient access to its resources.

I hope to begin my civic engagement in this new city with this issue and would love to speak with officials about financial details, as well as with those in the libraries who are also involved in decisionmaking. The city must attain fiscal stability in the coming years without sacrificing the social services investments that underlie Madison's economic success as much as benefits to business.

I look forward to hearing from whoever among you found this letter intriguing.

Thank you,  
Elliot Haugen

**From:** [jeffreycprice@gmail.com](mailto:jeffreycprice@gmail.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [mayor@cityofmadison.com](mailto:mayor@cityofmadison.com)  
**Subject:** Biden's Visit Costs 7/5/2024  
**Date:** Friday, July 5, 2024 7:00:54 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jeffreycprice@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please, someone, tell me what we as a city spent on Biden's visit here today, and if any of those costs are reimbursed by the Biden campaign or by any federal agency requiring such security measures.

Police presence on Aberg Avenue at Northgate was incredible, as was the presence of occupied Streets trucks blocking entrance driveways into Northgate from Aberg Avenue but NOT at the entrances along Sherman Avenue. (What sense did that make, anyway?)

Where in city our budget do we have money to pay streets workers to sit in their trucks blocking driveways into operating businesses? Or dozens of our folks in blue to stand on street corners obstructing and/or directing traffic into and out of Maple Bluff?

Thanks in advance to any who can provide logical answers to these expenditures, in light of our anticipated budgetary shortfalls this year.

Jeffrey C Price  
17/3 Sherman Terrace  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 3 Referendums To Increase Property Taxes - November The Cause — The Mayor & School Board Members Fiscal incompetence - Its Time To VOTE NO  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 17, 2024 9:32:35 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

## Wisconsin State Journal - July 16, 2024

MADISON: At a crossroads in the struggle to balance Madison's budget, the city will either rely on \$22 million from a property tax referendum or \$6 million in cuts to city services, according to two versions of a five-year budget unveiled by Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway.

Rhodes-Conway is touting the referendum plan as a long-term fix to the city's budget, which has faced a mismatch between revenue and spending for over decade amid declining support from the state and limits in state law on how it can raise money.

Both versions of the five-year budget count on raising millions from new charges billed to residents every month to further close the budget gap. Twenty-five million dollars from the city's reserves, or so-called "rainy day fund," will be spent by 2030 under the plans, though a referendum could reduce the need to dip into that fund. Ongoing budget efficiency measures will make up what's left of the gap in both versions of the budget.

"This is a problem the state created and this is a problem the state needs to fix," Rhodes-Conway said in an interview. "I'm trying to make sure the city has the time to work with the state to find that solution."

With or without a referendum, residents are going to have to pay more money to the city in the years ahead, under both plans, which the mayor presented to the City Council on Tuesday.

If passed, the \$22 million referendum would raise the annual property tax on the average Madison home — valued at \$457,300 in 2024 — by \$240, or \$20 a month. That is a fraction of the increase in taxes on the same home under a pair of Madison School District referendums set to go to voters in November, which would raise annual property taxes \$1,370 by 2028.

The City Council will vote on Aug. 20 whether to put the city's referendum to voters.

Under both scenarios, millions raised from new special charges included on residents' municipal services bills would contribute to balancing the budget.

What those new charges will be is undetermined and they would have to be approved by the City Council. Possible charges could include an infrastructure charge, a park charge or a library charge, the mayor said.

"It is a per household cost," the mayor said. "It's a more regressive way to get revenue than even the property taxes."

Over the past decade, the city has enacted new special charges and fees to bring in more money. An urban forestry charge and a resource recovery charge generated \$7.1 million and \$3.4 million, respectively, in revenue last year. A vehicle registration fee generated \$6.8 million in revenue.

## **Austerity budget**

The failure of a referendum would trigger \$6 million in permanent cuts to city services, according to the mayor's plans.

What that sizeable dose of austerity would look like and what city staff or services would get eliminated or reduced is still unknown. Reduced park maintenance and library hours, delayed repairs to infrastructure, less support for nonprofits and fewer staff in the Department of Civil Rights are possibilities, the mayor said.

To evaluate potential cuts, Rhodes-Conway in June directed city departments and divisions to propose budgets that slash spending by 5%.

"I expect to see a lot of really painful options from agencies when they submit their budget proposals to me," she said.

But even the \$6 million in cuts only postpones a reckoning with the structural challenges in the city's budget. By 2027, the city expects the budget gap to return and grow every year without a referendum or more cuts. By 2030, the budget gap would stand at \$22 million again.

Without an injection of more property taxes from the referendum, the city would be more reliant on new special charges. If the referendum fails, the city will need \$10 million in new special charges in 2025 and \$33 million from them in 2030. With the referendum, the city wouldn't need to rely on new charges until 2027, when they would add \$10 million in revenue and reach \$25 million by 2030.

## **Role of the state**

Both plans leave open the possibility of a more-amenable state Legislature changing laws so the city can bring in more money, either in the form of a local sales tax, changes to shared revenue administered by the state or a regional transit authority. A sales tax would generate at least \$50 million in revenue, according to the city.

But tweaks to shared revenue wouldn't be a gamechanger for Madison's budget until 2026 at the earliest. It would be 2027 before revenue from a sales tax could hit city coffers.

"If we do get it, that's great," the mayor said. "We can change our approach. We can adjust and it can be not as painful, but given the realities of state government it's really important for us to have a plan to balance the budget out five years."

Under the 2023 shared revenue law, Madison gets about \$29 per resident, roughly \$8 million in 2024, the second-lowest of any municipality in the state. Excluding Milwaukee, the statewide average for municipalities with more than 20,000 people is \$114 per resident, according the Wisconsin Policy Forum.

Changes to laws under former Gov. Scott Walker bar the city from raising the property tax levy beyond what is added to the property tax base by new construction.

"It's important to acknowledge that Madison has many advantages compared to less wealthy communities, and also that state law does not allow elected officials to tap that property wealth without going to voters in a referendum," said Jason Stein, the director of the



Wisconsin Policy Forum.

## **The 'rainy day fund'**

The city plans to deplete its fund balance, or so-called "rainy day fund," by \$25 million under both plans.

Without a referendum, the city would tap \$5 million from the rainy day fund each year between 2025 and 2029. With a referendum, those reserves wouldn't be touched until 2027 and be fully expended by 2030, giving the city time to lobby for more relief from the state government.

Use of the rainy day fund to balance the budget poses some danger to the city's overall financial standing. Keeping reserves high helps the city maintain its AAA bond rating, which keeps interest rates on its debt low. As a result, the city keeps its fund balance at at least 15% of the overall budget.

By the end of this year, the rainy day fund will reach \$92.8 million.

Thanks to an unexpectedly positive showing for the city's finances last year, the city added \$16 million to the rainy day fund, which would go toward the budget over time under both versions.

Of what remains of the rainy day fund surplus, the city has earmarked \$5 million as a contingency for future downturns in the economy that could impact the city's investments. Another \$2 million was used to create an endowment for the city's new commitment for homeless services such as operations at the permanent men's shelter slated for the Far East Side



Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Referendum to raise taxes  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 17, 2024 8:57:07 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 – 8:55pm

Scott Budzinski  
718 Greystone Ln

Middleton, Wisconsin. 53562 Yes, by phone. [6082196758](tel:6082196758) Any time All Alders Referendum to raise taxes To whom it my concern,

I am already at a point where I've made budget cuts to be able to afford to pay my basic bills. I've eliminated cable tv, I've stopped all subscriptions, I've reduced my 401k contributions to a minimum, we haven't gone out to eat in nearly a year among other things. Now you want to raise my taxes so you continue to provide me with basic services? You already have my home valued on your tax roll for 15-20% more than we can sell it for but yet you want more tax dollars. How about you reduce the staff in the city offices? Did you ever consider cutting some of the many social programs you continue to add? What in the hell is wrong with you people? You are breaking us financially. My taxes have tripled since we moved into our house. For what? I get garbage picked up, my street plowed most of the time (yes, you skip my street on occasion) and my leafs picked up. I get no other real services from you. Nobody on our street has seen a police car drive up our street in 10+ years so we aren't getting that. Stop and think about what you are asking us. We are broke. It's time for you to start cutting items that led you to this financial mess. We have all been hit with inflation but what do we do, we cut our budgets to make ends meet and nothing left to give. Our wages go up by 3% per year. Your taxes go up by more than that each year. Couple that with the US inflation and we are flat broke. Please make some tough decisions by finding other ways than taxing the hard workers in this city even more than you already are. You can continue to point fingers at the state legislature and any other group you disagree with but at the end of the day, this is on you for not finding other means for reducing costs. If you pass this referendum, we will be forced to move because quite simply, we cannot afford it.

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Goodman Pool  
**Date:** Friday, July 19, 2024 9:03:21 AM

---

Alders.

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** jhfordii@yahoo.com <jhfordii@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 19, 2024 7:39 AM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Goodman Pool

You don't often get email from [jhfordii@yahoo.com](mailto:jhfordii@yahoo.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

All City of Madison Alders:

Good morning. In the summer of 2006, the Goodman Pool opened on the Southeast Side of Madison with support from a generous donation by Irwin and Robert Goodman. Built by Daniels Construction and supported today by John Hayes of Goodman Jewelers, the Goodman pool accommodates a large percentage of the Black community on the southeast side of Madison, offers scholarships to qualified families through MMSD, and swim lessons through MSCR. Home to the Goodman Waves, the pool hosted the 2023 All-City Swim Meet.

Now this valuable asset within the city is being threatened. In response to the mayor's request to develop a proposed budget that reduces expenses by 5%, the Parks Division will be proposing to outsource the entire operation of the pool. The shortsightedness of Parks Division staff to single out in the Goodman pool is wrong. The idea, as promoted by Parks Division staff, that "they'd rather not impact all and just impact a few areas" is appalling.

This approach raises serious questions about Madison's vision towards equity and inclusion. Removing pool funding and moving to a vendor/private option would be detrimental to a large portion of the community that is already marginalized. The last thing the Madison area needs is another private pool and to remove a resource that accommodates all.

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to this plan by the Parks Division and urge the Common Council to reject this proposed budget cut.

Sincerely

Jay Ford

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Budget Shortfall  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 17, 2024 8:47:10 PM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 – 8:43pm

Marty Groskreutz

605 whitehall dr

madison, Wisconsin. 53714 No, do not contact me. All Alders Budget Shortfall Mayor states a budget shortfall, what happened to the wheel tax? Tax increase needed to cover budget where's the budget cuts, every taxpayer has a wish list and can't get what they want. The schools and the city all need money when inflation is at it's highest ever prices haven't fallen everyone needs to get in the real world.

**From:** [Tish Johnson](#)  
**To:** [Mayor](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum or Service Cuts?  
**Date:** Thursday, July 18, 2024 11:16:26 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from tish.johnson920@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor Rhodes-Conway,

As I watch and read the recent communications coming from your office, I'm very, very concerned with the "either-or" messaging around the budget and structural deficit. Either vote yes for a referendum to generate \$22 mil in the form of increased property taxes Or expect a \$6 mil cut in services.

Your messaging is coming across as a threat more than a researched, well thought out plan and it raises concerns over trust, fiscal responsibility and the future of our community that have begun to keep me up at night.

I understand the structural deficit is real and it must be solved/resolved. But please know there needs to be more information, communication and engagement with the community to help us understand how we got here and how you've reached these options as the only answer.

Here are a few of the questions that come to mind as I think about the recent messaging from your office:

- What process did you use and who did you include in that process to reach the conclusion you must raise taxes (again), cut services or both?
- What specific services do you plan to cut?
- Where, exactly, does the amount of the structural deficit stand and what are the specific projects, debt, operating budget line items that create it?
- Has other revenue/funding been masking a budget deficit?
- If other funding has been masking anything, what, specifically, have you been using this money to cover in the budget?
- BRT is a very large project and I've seen some high paying positions for it in the operating budget.
  - How much will BRT cost our city to operate and what was your plan to fund the operating costs?
  - Is BRT creating a large part of the structural deficit?
  - Does BRT have a break even point or become profitable? How/when?
- Have you looked at all viable solutions to the deficit that do not include raising

taxes and/or cutting services?

- If so, what are those other potential solutions and what analysis has been done to assess their impact?
- Have you truly considered the negative impacts that increasing property taxes and decreasing/eliminating services will have? (They increase the cost of home and property ownership and will be passed on in the form of rent increases. It will hurt and burden folks on or already over the financial edge and price people out of our housing market - both renting and owning.)
- Have you considered and are you concerned that what you propose is on top of the MMSD board coming out with referendums that, if they pass, will result in extreme increases to property taxes?

At the current time, I plan to vote against these city and MMSD referendum questions if they appear on a ballot.

There has to be more than the “either-or” you are presenting. There is no better time than now to build a foundation of trust, confidence and engagement within our community so I implore you to engage and partner with the right people/experts, as well as the community at large, to do the work needed to find other viable solutions to the structural deficit.

Sincerely,  
Patricia Johnson  
5505 Tolman Terrace

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Proposed referendum and tax increases  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 17, 2024 11:11:34 AM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Wednesday, July 17, 2024 – 11:08am

Dennis Moungey

17 Payson Ct

Madison, Wisconsin. 53719 Yes, by email. [dmoungey1@gmail.com](mailto:dmoungey1@gmail.com) All Alders Proposed referendum and tax increases Mayor Conway Rhodes and Common Council

Kick the can down the road all that you want. If you and the City Council would be responsible this current shortfall wouldn't be a problem. Continue to overspend on bike paths, busing, and housing and compound the problem. We can't expect the City employees to do more if staff is cut, but we would certainly expect you to correct your poor choices. You will find that your referendum to increase taxes this fall will fail. You spend money on what affects the minority, not the majority. How many paid bus riders are there and what deficit does the bus system carry annually.? Bikers have more rights in this City than motor vehicles. Drive around the Capitol or any place in Madison and observe how bikers do not follow the rules. The City continues to spend millions of dollars on housing. What rate of return is there for the City or the taxpayers? The City seems to be able to find money for your pet peeve projects, but then wants to increase taxes. I don't believe the City is being responsive to the majority of its taxpaying population.

Respectfully,  
Dennis Moungey



**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: 2025 Madison Public Library Funding  
**Date:** Monday, July 22, 2024 9:45:57 AM

---

Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** HANNAH STOCKLEIN <stocklein@wisc.edu>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 21, 2024 2:28 PM  
**To:** mpl-libraryboard <mpllibraryboard@madisonpubliclibrary.org>; LI Administration <administration@madisonpubliclibrary.org>; Figueroa Cole, Yannette <district10@cityofmadison.com>; council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 2025 Madison Public Library Funding

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [stocklein@wisc.edu](mailto:stocklein@wisc.edu). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To whom it may concern,

I would like to voice my support for Option C for the 2025 Madison Public Library budget moving forward, to continue to fund youth services and the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park. MPL is an absolutely crucial component of Madison, to cut the library's funding is to directly harm the community, especially those who rely on the library's free access to books, wifi, and youth services the most.

I have lived in Madison most of my life and I began using MPL as soon as I learned to read. As a child, I spent many hours at the Sequoya library in the old strip mall doing the scavenger hunts and reading Lemony Snicket books. Cutting Sunday hours would take this joy away from children who are unable to go to the library during school hours. To this day I continue to rely on the public library to read new release books in print and digitally through the Libby app. As a veterinary medical student, it is nice to use weekend and night hours to get off campus to study. Many other members of the community rely on the library as a safe place outside of the home to work.

Please consider how harmful cutting funding to MPL will be to the community.

Sincerely,

**Hannah Stocklein** (she/her)

Co-president of Pathology & Lab Animal Medicine Club (SLAC)

Class of 2026 DVM Candidate

School of Veterinary Medicine

University of Wisconsin - Madison

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: District 5: City budget, Development Updates, Public Information Meetings, News & Events  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 30, 2024 10:20:37 AM

---

Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Jerry Darda <jerryxdarda@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 29, 2024 8:46 AM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Fwd: District 5: City budget, Development Updates, Public Information Meetings, News & Events

You don't often get email from jerryxdarda@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Jerry Darda** <[jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Mon, Jul 29, 2024 at 8:41 AM  
**Subject:** Re: District 5: City budget, Development Updates, Public Information Meetings, News & Events  
**To:** Alder Vidaver, District 5 <[noreply@cityofmadison.com](mailto:noreply@cityofmadison.com)>

Alder Vidaver:

The 2023 Community Development Division (CDD) spent \$33,192,094 on programs. \$105,000 went to FREEDOM INC. a group that bullied police officers from Madison public Schools thus denying students first hand educational experiences of what police officers actually do for them and the community.

So before asking folks to support Madison's referendum for increased spending I suggest that we are given more information on just where the city can CUT unnecessary spending on idiotic groups like this one. I don't know whether this is disinformation or misinformation but certainly no information can be found about what part of this \$33 million is tax dollars

and how much can be cut because certainly a significant amount of this is waste. These projects should be reduced to those which are the most important and ACCOUNTABLE. And it would be most efficient to fund the good ones through foundations rather than tax dollars.

My wife Bonnie and I will support the school referendum, but until we get convinced that what we perceive as city waste is in fact not we cannot support this referendum .

Jerry Darda  
608-219-1623

On Sun, Jul 28, 2024 at 10:55 PM Alder Vidaver, District 5 <[noreply@cityofmadison.com](mailto:noreply@cityofmadison.com)> wrote:

[View this email in your browser](#)

## City budget, Development Updates, Public Information Meetings, News & Events

Hello neighbors,

Recently I attended a conference in which the difference between misinformation and disinformation was described:

- Misinformation is false or inaccurate information—getting the facts wrong.
- Disinformation is false information which is deliberately intended to mislead—intentionally misstating the facts.

I have seen both misinformation and disinformation regarding the City's budget, and I want to do what I can to dispel both. There are multiple, accurate sources of information, which I would like to draw your attention to. I encourage you to read these thoroughly, even though they take some time to absorb:

[Madison by the numbers](#)

- [City budget outlook](#) (includes map of other areas with referenda past or future)
- Alder Field's [July 21 blog](#)

The City's budget is a serious matter. The impact of the state's lack of investment in our municipalities and schools is being felt across our cities, villages, and towns. We have limited options for ensuring that residents' basic needs are met. If we can't raise revenues, we will have service cuts, and those will be felt most by those who have the least. I sincerely hope you will keep that in mind as you study the issue.

### Development updates:

Two items before the [Plan Commission on Monday July 29 at 5:30pm](#) are in our district:

- [Redevelopment of the McClain Athletic Complex and Randall Sports Center](#)
  - [Demolition permit](#)
  - [Rezoning](#)
- [3535-3553 University Avenue](#)
  - [Demolition permit](#)
  - [Rezoning](#)
  - [Conditional Use](#)

### Public Information Meetings

- [Metro Public Hearing Scheduled, Wednesday, July 31](#): On **Wednesday, July 31**, Metro Transit and the City of Madison Transportation Commission will hold a public hearing at 6 PM to review and discuss proposed new service to Monona as well as Metro's updated Service Equity Analysis.
- [I-39/90/94 Corridor Study](#):
  - The virtual public hearing will be held **Monday, July 29**, 2024, via PIMA/YouTube Live at [www.tinyurl.com/InterstateVirtualPH](http://www.tinyurl.com/InterstateVirtualPH). If interested parties do not have internet access, they may call (608) 571-2209 and enter Conference ID: 588 603 889# to listen to the virtual public hearing. The virtual public hearing will begin at 5 p.m. and will end when all interested persons have provided testimony or 7 p.m., whichever occurs first.
  - The Madison in-person public hearing session will be held **Tuesday, July 30**, from 4 to 7 p.m. at the Madison College Truax Building, Conference Room D1630, 1701 Wright St., Madison, WI 53704.

### News & Announcements

- [Lane Closures -- King, Wilson and Butler Street Intersection](#): Starting Friday,

July 26, R.G Huston will be performing underground utility work within the King St, Wilson St, and Butler St intersection.

- [West Dayton Street Westbound Traffic Lane Reopens](#): The westbound traffic lane of West Dayton Street, which had been closed since October of 2023 for a UW steam tunnel project at the Park Street intersection, is now reopened.
- [Pertussis \(Whooping Cough\) Cases Rising in Dane County](#): Public Health Madison & Dane County is alerting the community about an outbreak of pertussis, also known as whooping cough.
- [Madison Celebrates Installation of First Air Quality Monitor](#): The City's air quality monitoring network will measure particulate matter concentrations in neighborhoods throughout the City. This project is funded by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- **Vel Phillips sculpture [unveiled](#)** at Wisconsin State Capitol.

Please [visit the City news webpage](#) to find additional news and announcements and to subscribe to receive notification of news releases as they are posted.

## Events

- **In-Person Absentee Voting Begins, Tuesday, July 30:** Absentee voting sites begin opening today. Check our [In-Person Absentee Voting website](#) for locations and hours. The last day to vote absentee in person will be Sunday, August 11.
- [Lunch Time LIVE! 7/30: Old Oaks, Tuesday, July 30](#): On Tuesdays - June through August - a FREE outdoor concert series will take place from noon-1pm on the King Street walkway of the Wisconsin State Capitol. Chairs will be available, and blankets and lawn chairs are welcome on the lawn nearby. And don't forget to grab 'to-go' lunch at [dozens of downtown restaurants](#).
- [Capitol View Farmers' Market, Wednesday, July 31](#): The Capitol View Farmers' Market is held weekly on Wednesdays (3:00-7:00pm) from late May through mid-October.
- Sunset Village Community Association Ice Cream Social, **August 3, 1-4pm**, Lucia Crest Park.

## Parks Alive Dates!

Parks Alive builds stronger neighborhoods and connects neighbors to their parks through fun, family-friendly activities, music and free food. Events are held in parks across the city and throughout the summer. Connect with your neighbors and engage with your community at a Parks Alive event near you! Events start at 5:00 p.m.

- [Parks Alive at Elver Park on Monday, July 29](#)
- [Parks Alive at Worthington Park, Tuesday, July 30](#)
- [Parks Alive at Warner Park, Wednesday, July 31](#)

- [Parks Alive at Owl Creek Park, Thursday, August 1](#)

Please find additional upcoming City of Madison Parks events listed on the [City parks event calendar](#).

Additional upcoming events can also be found on the [City events calendar](#).

- Save the date: [Madison's Black Restaurant Week](#) will be **August 11-18**.

Take care,

Regina Vidaver

[View full blog post](#)

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**City of Madison**  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53703

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**From:** [Katherine](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Property tax referendum  
**Date:** Friday, August 2, 2024 1:33:56 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from scoop45@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good afternoon,

I do not support the passage of the upcoming referendum to raise taxes.

I am annoyed because I believe we should be much more vehement in our protests to state government about shared revenue. Are there continuing lobbying efforts on this? I am aware that Republicans don't like Madison, but I also do not like losing our shared revenue.

I appreciate our city services. I have a few ideas about reducing costs. But most of all, we need more revenue from the state and a sales tax.

The sales tax would affect people who spend money. Some of us have little to spend. Put the onus on those for whom an extra percentage will matter much less.

Think about it. I bought a house in 1993 for 72K. My income never was over 45K, and that for only six years. So, I am penalized just because my house has appreciated (and which value I cannot access).

Meanwhile, many residents have the same home value or more, **AND** can afford to build an addition; buy a new car; travel extensively; eat as expensive restaurants (or any restaurants).

Seriously, I cannot afford those things. I must hoard my small savings for necessities and retirement.

This tax situation is wrong.



I vote NO.

--

Kathy

a/k/a/

Katherine Esposito

137 Talmadge Street

Madison, Wisconsin 53704

608.509.1988

**From:** [michael Oliver](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Mayor  
**Date:** Thursday, August 1, 2024 7:24:42 AM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from mmo4671@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Our current mayor has made a fiscal mess of our city spending plans and now she wishes to pass the bill onto already struggling Madison taxpayers. She has turned out to be a terrible leader for Madison and we need the council to stand together to reign her and her spending in.

MMO

Madison resident

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Susan Adib](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Property Tax Measure  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 9:23:31 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sladib@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

The City of Madison and those who govern the City, have embarked on [extravagant](#) spending without having "the money in the bank" to fund the projects or positions.

As most people learn along the way, [as](#) there are precious few classes addressing finances and economics until students reach college-level coursework, [one](#) should plan [ahead](#) for expenditures and ensure [one](#) can cover the costs [before](#) making purchases.

The comment keeps being repeated: "everything costs more due to inflation", as [a justification](#) for the referendums asking the taxpayers to pay more.

It should be [obvious](#) that "the taxpayers" are experiencing the same "everything costs more".[phenomenon](#). Yet, they are expected to adjust their household budgets accordingly in order to not go into debt and still provide for their family's needs.

As [an example of communities' adjustment efforts](#), fast food restaurants have introduced their "\$5 "meal deals" [in an attempt to bring](#) customers back who could no longer afford [higher](#) fast food prices.

It is the opportune time for the City of Madison and the people who administer it, to adjust their expectations and finances accordingly by "downsizing" services and positions in an effort to conserve financial resources. Going forward the motto should be a "balanced budget" that does not rely on further taxation of the taxpayers, who have their own financial challenges.

Regarding the proposed school referendum, it should first be determined what facilities could be consolidated. There is currently an overwhelming trend of families with school-age children moving to the surrounding suburbs of Madison, leaving MMSD with decreasing enrollment. For the same reason that taxpayers should not be relied on to fund deficits in the City budget, they should not be relied upon to fund a \$600 million project for MMSD. As the Dane County birth rate continues to decline, now is the time for statisticians to determine what the MMSD projected student population will be over the next 10 years. Only by doing this one can make reasonable plans for the required number of facilities and personnel.

Respectfully,  
Susan Adib,

It is time that the City Council and City government realize that they need to "downsize their expectations", and, like households have had to do, cut spending.

It is quite possible that the United States is entering a recession, and now is the time to

**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Nino Amato](#)  
**Cc:** [Scott Milfred](#); [David Wahlberg](#); [Robert Chappell MSN 365](#)  
**Subject:** Mayor Satya proposed city budget cuts which include all city funding to the Goodman Pool, reduction in snow removal & other city services if property tax hike doesn't pass by referendum in Nov.  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 10:18:20 AM  
**Attachments:** [apple-touch-icon.png](#)

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

TO: Fellow Property Taxpayers

From: Nino Amato, 64 Oak Creek Trail

In one of the most stunning acts of politically Cowardliness by Mayor Satya —who refuses to cut her mayoral budget or cutting the city council budget, or shutting down the crime ridden, Dairy Drive illegal drug sanctuary, or eliminating all out-of- state travel for the mayor, city council members and Dept. heads & staff, or by rolling back mayoral staff and city council salaries to 2024 salary levels, or by putting a freeze on all bike paths and bike path city staffing — the Mayor has instead, threaten to make deep cuts to city snow removal, cuts to Madison's only community pool for economically disadvantaged children of color (Goodman Pool), cuts in road maintenance, cuts in water usage in Madison's public fountains — if residents don't approve her \$22 million dollar property tax increase referendum this November.

Other Proposed City Cuts by Satya are:

- Eliminating Sunday and some evening hours at city libraries.
- Reducing water use in decorative fountains at Capitol Square, State Street and Peace Park.
- Eliminating the police department's Gang and Neighborhood

Crime Abatement Team.

**FISCAL FACTS:** Since 2019, the Mayor and the vast majority of this Common Council have refused to accept their responsibility in the financial mismanagement of the city's capital and operating budgets since 2019. • The City's \$27 million dollar structural budget deficit for 2025 was caused by poor policy decisions made by Mayor Satya and the vast majority of this city council, when they:

(1) spent the entire \$47.2 million it received in federal pandemic aid, on increase wages and none essential city services,

(2) by increasing the City's operating budget by 22.1% and the capital budget by 27.5% since 2019,

(3) by giving costly employee bonuses to all city employees and by increasing city employee wages and benefits in 2023-24 with a total increase by 25.2% and 37.7%, respectively, since 2019, and by

(4) passing Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway's \$250 million dollar costly signature BRT initiative — a Bus Rapid Transit system, that leaves the city on the hook for at least \$70 million.

**NO SHAME:** Instead of accepting their responsibilities for creating this crisis — the Mayor & City Council President are blaming their self-induced financial crisis on the state legislature — which is intellectually dishonest and utterly disingenuous.

Worse yet, the Mayor and the Common Council is abdicating their elected and fiscal responsibilities — by passing the fiscal crises they created, onto the voters, by asking them to bail them out.

We Tge Taxpayers can register to voice our opinions against a tax increase referendum in person or virtually, at tonights city council meeting. Please use the link below to register your opposition and let your Voice Be Heard. — Nino Amato

**Council to hear Referendum  
Comments and Meeting and Event  
Highlights for the Week of August 5,  
2024**

[cityofmadison.com](http://cityofmadison.com)



Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Brenda Baker](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget!!!!  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 1:05:26 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from brendaleighbaker@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am writing to let you know how angry and upset I am about the budget cuts that are being suggested for this next year, especially the cuts to the Parks department and basic city services.

It is such a tiny investment to keep our beaches open, and staffed with lifeguards, and our hockey rinks and skate rentals, and ski rentals open for the winter!

When we start cutting things that make a community seem worth living in, I guarantee, other problems will quickly come.

This is the time for some creativity and ingenuity, not slashing the very things that keep our community feeling alive.

I suggest that our city focus on creative solutions to this shortfall, rather than these draconian measures that suggest that our city is dying, or rotting at its core.

Instead of thinking small, think BIG about the community we want to live in, and embrace the challenge to meet those needs. We need leadership here, not death spiral thinking.

Brenda Baker  
Avid park user in all seasons

While the time to start thinking of new ways to generate revenue was years ago, it is not too late!

Take a look at Theodore Wirth Park in Minneapolis if you need inspiration on how to generate revenue AND serve the community through increasing park services!!!!



**From:** [Jennifer Bastian](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item: 68 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:20:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [Bastian Library board letter.pdf](#)

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jenniferhbastian@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing in support of Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison. I am attaching a letter I wrote to the Library Board last month regarding the library budget specifically, and I would also like to add that the cuts to city services across the board look bleak, to say the least. All marginalized people, especially the very young and the very old, will be harmed if we don't put this referendum on the ballot and get it passed. Please do the right thing and move forward with the referendum.

Thank you,  
Jennie

--

Jennifer Bastian  
414.748.8127  
<http://jenniferbastian.com>  
Pronouns: she/her/hers

Hello, Community..

My name is Jennifer Bastian. I am an interdisciplinary artist, and cofounder of Communication, a Madison nonprofit arts and music organization founded in 2018.

As a young child, I was watched over by city librarians during the summers while my mother worked as an alder and later, mayor, in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. I have worked in public and university libraries and archives for a great portion of my adult life. You get it - I love libraries.

When I moved to Madison in 2016, my first jobs were working at the Fitchburg Public Library, and as a teaching artist for the Bubbler at Madison Public Library. Bubbler Team members introduced me to \*every single artist\* I met my first year here. Over the years, I have been an artist in residence at the Central branch, exhibited my work at multiple library branches, collaborated with librarians and Madison Senior Center staff, worked with library staff on the annual Print & Resist Zinefest, taught in the juvenile detention center and the men's jail. This Fall, I will begin a year as artist in residence at the Thurber Park Studio, an incredible opportunity to collaborate with the city of Madison, the libraries, and the Town of Blooming Grove. **Library staff have helped me to have a holistic and realistic view of the community I am a part of and that I seek to support and serve with my art practice.**

When Communication opened, Bubbler staff helped us to form community partnerships all around Madison with their already established relationships. They shared out our events, our flyers and calls for exhibition. **I cannot emphasize enough how much stronger Communication is as an org today because of the support the libraries and Bubbler have given.**

As you can see, I am a living example of the impact our libraries, and the Bubbler, can have. By supporting me as one individual artist, they've made it possible for me and the other Communication team members to support hundreds of artists in turn. That ripple of opportunity, creativity and equity must continue to grow. **Every staff member at the Bubbler is an essential part of the fragile web of arts infrastructure that our republican majority state legislature has attempted to repress over and over again.** As cofounder of Communication and a working artist, I do not take lightly how much the Bubbler has made possible for the arts in Madison.

I can think of one city agency that could easily take the library's budget gap out of its budget. This entity does not support the marginalized in our community, and in fact commits regular harm against them. The Bubbler's Making Justice program, in all its iterations, has worked toward reducing some of that harm by bringing art and care to children in the detention center and men in the jail. The Madison Police Department should voluntarily reduce its budget to accommodate the needs of the Library budget (I won't hold my breath).

Whatever the library board decides, I know that this issue will move on to other policy makers at the city. **Please know that I and many others are ready to demand that our libraries remain fully funded, that the Bubbler will remain in its current formation, and that NO STAFF of any kind at the library are eliminated.** We will not accept anything less than full library funding, and we are ready to work for it. Thank you.

**From:** [tom Beck](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Over budget \$\$  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 12:15:21 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from cnse55@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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to solve the budget problem, stop scare tactics about cutting FD & PD cuts. Start common sense , reduce the unnecessary positions.

See below, why does the mayor need to travel overseas?

Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights

**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** tom <cnse55@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** June 19, 2024 at 10:05:37 AM CDT  
**To:** City of Madison <district10@cityofmadison.com>, district1@cityofmadison.com, district11@cityofmadison.com, district12@cityofmadison.com, district2@cityofmadison.com, district3@cityofmadison.com, district5@cityofmadison.com, district6@cityofmadison.com, district7@cityofmadison.com, district8@cityofmadison.com, district9@cityofmadison.com, City of Madison <district4@cityofmadison.com>, district14@cityofmadison.com, district16@cityofmadison.com, Mayor <mayor@cityofmadison.com>, Our Rep <district15@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Over budget \$\$  
**Reply-To:** tom <cnse55@yahoo.com>

Easy fix:

1. eliminate both asst.mayors
2. Mayor takes 10% pay cut, travel budget cut 20%
3. Alder's take 10 % pay cut
4. All DEI positions cut

**Tom,**  
**Protect the 1st amendment, stop the censorship Google, FB, Twitter, MSM!**



**From:** [Clifford Blackwell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** public comment on agenda item 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:15:07 PM  
**Attachments:** [STATEMENT OF CLIFFORD BLACKWELL.docx](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from ceblackwell3@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Attached, please find my comment with respect to the above referenced agenda item.

I welcome any questions, thoughts or comments.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Clifford E. Blackwell, III

**From:** [Dorothy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** council meeting 8/6/24 - agenda item # 84443  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 9:23:29 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from dborchardt1@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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**DATE:** 8/5/24  
**TO:** Madison City Council  
**FROM:** Dorothy Borchardt  
**RE:** \$22 million referendum

I'm opposed to adding a larger property tax burden on the Madison taxpayers. Many life long Madison residents can no longer afford to live in Madison. You have forgotten about the middle income residents, many of them living on limited incomes. Many of my friends and all of my family have moved out of Madison.

The last five years budgets have been leading to this crisis. When you approved the budgets you were aware of the state's shared revenue system, but you went ahead and approved them anyway. You can't blame it on the state.

Did you ever meet with your state representatives and try to work out a better system? Don't blame it on the Republicans or the Democrats if you didn't try to make changes by working with them.

Stop putting wants in the budget, only needs. Stop building subsidized apartments to increase the density of Madison for the BRT. Madison needs more middle income homes.

**Save our middle income residents from having to leave the city they love by NO to the referendum.**

Dorothy Borchardt

**From:** [Dan Boyer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum Resolution: Agenda Item 84443  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 1:17:09 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from boyer.dan@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

I am writing to voice my strong concern for the proposed cuts to Madison parks, including closure of all shelters, restrooms, and the elimination of winter rentals and rinks. Madison's parks are a major part of what makes this city so great and active, and to cut that piece out would be a real shame. My family – and countless others – use these beautiful spots and services weekly and very much hope that a different solution can be proposed that is not at the expense of recreation and health of Madisonians.

With thanks for your consideration and understanding.

Warmly,  
Dan



**From:** [James Braun](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget cuts  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:43:39 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from losbrauns@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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One proposal I have is not to raise taxes, but to examine leadership and remove unnecessary or redundant positions. Start with those putting in the million dollar bus stops where 3 riders wait, and the leaders who pay transit operators overtime to stand around the Capitol trying to explain a transit system put in place with neither driver nor public input. Millions and millions aiding Parisi Construction and giving the Mayor a Bus Rapid Transit badge in a city where "20 is Plenty". Don't ask taxpayers for more money: spend their tax money helping all taxpayers.

James Braun

**From:** [Randy Bruegman](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Letter on the Proposed Referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 1:30:17 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[No on Placing the Tax Referendum on the November Ballot.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from rbruegman@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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*Chief Randy Bruegman (Ret.)*  
*PRESIDENT + FOUNDER*



<https://www.theleadershipcruciblefoundation.org/>

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## **No on Placing the Tax Referendum on the November Ballot**

### **Item number 84443.**

With the 31.2 million dollar surplus in this year's budget, there is no need at this time to call for this referendum. From my calculation the city would only be in an approximate six million dollar deficit for the next fiscal year, not accounting for any other gains realized from the city investment funds for the remainder of this fiscal year. This could be made up by use of one time funds from the "rainy day fund," and leave the city well within the guidelines of the GFOA. This would provide over a year for the Mayor and Aders to develop other strategies that could balance the budget. The mayor has stated "a referendum is not my preferred solution. But it is the most progressive and realistic option for Madison given the current political makeup of the state government." The fact is, that property tax is the most regressive on people that own homes and rent who are in low to middle income.

There are other strategies that are far more progressive and realistic than driving people from their apartments and homes due to increased taxes. The city has over the past five years used federal ARPA funds not for one time expenditures, but those that create long-term operational cost. The use premium, the additional money that is paid to a lender to service funding when doing borrowing, has contributed to the deficit, and then rolling that into the ongoing operational budget is also an issue. Continuing to use the cost-to-continue budgeting approach enables and even encourages the mayor to overspend, and stifles innovation. The mayor is not compelled to exhaust the entire property tax and other tax windfalls each year. According to the city's admission, spending on transportation is 320 percent higher, and on human services is a staggering 700 percent higher compared to our peer cities. One of the troubling issues in this budget process is that the city appears to have rolled a significant amount of the one-time COVID relief money of 47 million dollars into its ongoing budget. If that is the case, that raises a host of questions regarding proper budget practices, ethics, and transparency. In addition, debt service should be in the area of 12% of the operating budget. Presently it's over 16% and is heading toward a 20% threshold. A high ratio threatens the AAA bond rating of the city which, if lost, will increase borrowing cost.

The city ordinance requires a fiscal note on major projects which seems to be no longer in use. The fiscal note should provide the total cost of the project, the annual operating cost, and the revenue source for the initial cost of the project and its long-term operating cost. As an example, has there been fiscal note provided for the operating costs of the new Bus Rapid Transit system?

It is recommended that you place this referendum on hold and take the following actions over the course of the next year to resolve this deficit.

1. You have an exceptionally talented core of department heads and senior staff, ask them how they would innovate services and reduce cost. The city has done business the same way for many years. If you promote the need and desire for innovation, which starts with you, the elected officials, you may be surprised with what they come back with.
2. The consolidation of services across the entities of this county would not only be cost effective, but would likely improve serviced delivery to all resident of the county. I know

this to be true, as I have consolidated several agencies in the past, and each time it improved services and saved money for the taxpayer. It is time to stop being so parochial and become an innovative organization.

3. Take a page out of Milwaukee playbook and revisit the State Allocation Policy. Milwaukee was successful because they brought the Mayor, Alders, Chamber of Commerce, Labor, and business together to collectively lobby the State Legislature for the changes that were passed last year. The city of Madison should do the same, but it will require leadership to bring those factions together toward a common goal of meeting and lobbying our State Representatives. Yes, that will require you to speak to Republicans and develop a professional relationship with them. The city should seek changes to the shared revenue formula, authorization for a sales tax for the city and/or a transit district covering the Madison metro service area, and an increase in the state payments for municipal services for state office buildings and the University of Wisconsin.
4. The city should also exercise more fiscal discipline by:
  - a. By not using one time revenues to create long term operational expenses.
  - b. Discontinue the use of premiums when borrowing money.
  - c. Reduce the amount the city is currently borrowing.
  - d. Properly providing fiscal notes on projects that are proposed within the city.
  - e. Examine all contracted expenditures, particularly in social services, for proven results.

I believe that these efforts are necessary before you ask your constituency for more money. The other point to keep top of mind is this. Property tax hurts those that can least afford it, the most. People in lower to middle income are disproportionately impacted by property tax whether an owner or renter. The city has said “well it is only going to 20 to 30 dollars a month on the average value of a home”. But for many people, that is often money they don’t have. Couple with that with the two other referendums that are on the ballot, if all three were to pass, that would likely put many people on the streets or into a subsidized housing situation. I think it is your responsibility to get your fiscal house in order first before you ask the taxpayers for more.

Randy R. Bruegman

Madison Resident

**From:** [Susan Bruegman](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** NO on agenda item #84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:27:57 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from susan.bruegman@att.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To the Madison Alders,

I oppose the proposed Tax Levy Referendum.

Given this budget's \$31.2 million surplus, there's no immediate need to pursue a referendum. With an anticipated approximate \$6 million deficit for the next fiscal year, utilizing one-time funds from the "rainy day fund" could provide a window of over a year for the Mayor and Alders to explore alternative strategies for balancing the budget.

While the Mayor sees a referendum as the most viable option, realizing the property tax disproportionately impacts low to middle-income individuals, including homeowners and renters, is important. Using "scare tactics" to advocate for the referendum may not be in the city's best interest.

Exploring the consolidation of services across the county's entities could yield cost savings and potentially improve service delivery for all residents. You have a highly skilled core of department heads and senior staff, and seeking their input on innovative cost-saving measures would be valuable. Encouraging a culture of innovation and openness to change could lead to positive outcomes for the city's financial future. It's important to make decisions that address the budget deficit now, prevent future shortfalls, and put the city on a path to financial stability without excessively burdening taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Susan Bruegman

Susan Bruegman  
313 Sauk Creek Drive  
Madison, WI 53717  
559-999-0287  
[susan.bruegman@att.net](mailto:susan.bruegman@att.net)

**From:** [Tamara Bryant](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support referendum resolution 84443  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 1:21:57 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from bryant.tamaraj@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Madison City Alders,

I am writing in support of the referendum resolution number 84443. I am an outdoor enthusiast and value the services provided by Madison City Parks. I like to hike at Elver, play tennis at Odana, Nordic ski at Elver and Odana, and bike on our bike trails within the city. Our city parks and trails are part of what makes our community such a great place to live in. We all can agree that our connection to the outdoors is crucial for our physical, mental, and social wellbeing, so I do not want to see cuts in services to the Madison Parks (or the other agencies of the city).

I have watched the Mayor presentation on the 2025 budget issues and I appreciate the information made available to our city residents. Thank you to our Mayor and staff for a thoughtful proposal to address this issue for 2025 and the years following. I hope our residents will support a referendum and I also hope the State of Wisconsin will make the needed changes in the allocation of funds for the future -- it is quite unfair that Madison city only gets 18 cents for every dollar collected in State taxes!

Thanks you for considering my comments. I appreciate your service to our city.

All the best,

Tamara

Tamara Bryant  
2254 Keyes Ave  
Madison, WI 53711

**From:** [Ann Conroy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** referendum 84443  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 3:36:11 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from annjconroy@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I am very upset to see the budget cuts that would affect winter sports in Madison. This is exactly the time of year when we need to get people outside and moving. Not filling ice rinks, having warming shelters open, and all the other cuts affecting winter parks is one of the saddest things I can think of. Madison needs to do better. Please find a way to add these back in so that the mental and physical health of our citizens can be met.

Ann Conroy

**From:** [Liz D.](#)  
**To:** [Sally Young](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:00:48 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [liz.winter.dannenbaum@gmail.com](mailto:liz.winter.dannenbaum@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Excellent! ♥♥

On Tue, Aug 6, 2024, 11:41 AM Sally Young <[sallyryoung@gmail.com](mailto:sallyryoung@gmail.com)> wrote:

To: Madison City Council

In the past, Madison residents have been generous with voting to voluntarily increase their property taxes. However, I would like to go on record as being against the city's upcoming referendum. I am on a fixed income that is not keeping up with inflation. We have an ambitious mayor and I have not seen the city council doing much to restrain her ambitions. It is no surprise that the state has unfairly targeted us with a paltry amount of state funding. It is no surprise that the pandemic funds would end soon. So, why did this 'crisis' materialize in the past year? Why were we not working harder to balance the budget by forgoing wonderful, forward-looking but unnecessary projects two, three, four years ago?

Sally Young

4112 Major Ave.

**"One of the most dangerous illusions of the climate crisis is that the technology of modern life makes us invincible...our bubble of invincibility is far more fragile than we know."**

**Jeff Goodall author of *The Heat Will Kill You First: Life and Death on a Scorched Planet*.**



**From:** [Liz D.](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:54:21 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from liz.winter.dannenbaum@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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We have rarely, if ever, voted no on a city referendum, but we believe this administration has squandered money on unnecessary projects, like the public market, and especially on salaries for upper echelon city posts (how many deputy mayors do we really need?).

Don't even get us started on the failed BRT.

Time for Madison to focus on essential services and do \*those\* correctly!

Liz Dannenbaum  
Donna Winter  
4313 Major Avenue

**From:** [c.d](#)  
**To:** [Rummel, Marsha](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget shortfall  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 11:15:33 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from kashkakat99@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Ald Rummel (cc all alders)

Could you discuss use/possible mis-use of TIF. Is there any part of the city today that can be called truly "blighted" or is lacking in investors/developers ready and willing to pounce upon any available square footage that comes up for sale? It's not unreasonable to expect that investors/developers many from out of state share in the cost of providing services/infrastructure to thousands of their future residents who arent even here yet. Why does that fall on our shoulders? Madison does not seem to realize that its an attractive city in the proverbial catbird seat - we can pick and choose to do business with whoever will bring the most benefit to our city.

Secondly, the Mayor needs to lead by example. What cuts are occurring in the mayors office?

Thank you for your consideration

Cathy Debevec /1885 E Main Street

Rummel, Marsha <[district6@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district6@cityofmadison.com)>: Aug 06 01:35AM

We will be discussing the potential referendum at Tuesday's Council meeting. Lots of details in the blog including today's posting of city agency's proposed 5% cuts to make up for the \$22M budget deficit if the referendum fails in November. We are seeking your input.

**From:** [davedesign@tds.net](mailto:davedesign@tds.net)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** city referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 7:52:35 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from davedesign@tds.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Totally against. WITH THE SCHOOL REFERENDUM. both will be hard on seniors with set income. Delay a year

**From:** [Joan D.](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [tctvoice@captimes.com](mailto:tctvoice@captimes.com)  
**Subject:** Re: financial options for Madison for Tuesday's meeting and letter to the editor of The Capital Times  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:43:40 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from joandowns911@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I strongly believe that Madison should first use its \$31.2 million end-of-year surplus from 2023, to counteract the projected \$27 million shortfall for the 2025 budget. It is unacceptable not to use the money available to Madison and instead put yet another onerous burden on Madison's citizens. This is a matter of common sense and simple mathematics.

Joan Downs  
765 West Washington Ave.  
Madison, WI 53715-1486

Cell (for identification purposes only):  
608-669-5510

**From:** [Jess Draws](#)  
**To:** [Latimer Burris, Amani](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** No Cuts to Libraries: Support Option C  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 11:38:25 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [jessicalyndraws@gmail.com](mailto:jessicalyndraws@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello to Alder Amani Latimer Burris and all Alders of the Common Council,

My name is Jess Draws and I have been a resident of Madison and a user of the Madison Public Library system since 2012. I currently live in City of Madison Common Council District 12, but have lived in various districts in the 12 years I've lived here. I am writing to you to express my strong support for the libraries in the face of potential budget cuts for the next fiscal year.

I am aware of Option A and B as proposed by the Madison Public Library Foundation. I do not find either of these acceptable. I want Option C. I support the proposal for a \$22 million referendum that would increase property taxes by about \$20 a month to balance the budget rather than taking \$6 million in cuts from city services. This is agenda item #84443 (Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison) at the Common Council Meeting tomorrow (8/6/2024). I have already registered my support, although I will not be able to attend the meeting.

Libraries are essential to marginalized communities, providing free access to resources such as books, internet, educational programs, and safe spaces. They serve as a lifeline for low-income families, the elderly, immigrants, and people experiencing homelessness. Cutting library funding would disproportionately impact these vulnerable populations, deepening existing inequities in our city. Furthermore, maintaining robust library services is a smart financial choice; libraries contribute to the local economy by supporting workforce development, literacy, and lifelong learning, which in turn fosters a more informed and connected community.

Thank you for your time,  
Jess Draws  
1630 Fordem Ave, #110  
Madison, WI 53704

--

Jess Draws  
(920) 428 - 9137 || [jessicalyndraws@gmail.com](mailto:jessicalyndraws@gmail.com)  
[Pronouns](#): she/her/hers

**From:** [Deuce Dubs](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** NO on the 22 million dollar extra tax on homeowners real estate tax bill!  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 4:52:50 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jrwan53593@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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We do not support the additional real property tax burden as our taxes are the highest in WI already. We need fiscally responsible people administration our city budget, and people who understand that means you spend no more than revenues coming in. Did you ever consider having a surplus for once? We have "X" dollars coming in our household budget, we can only spend no more than X, actually less because of unprecedented inflation and ALL living costs like home maintenance, insurance and food--who needs those, right? Our household income has gone up a total of 5 percent over the past five years, but costs of living and taxes maybe 20 plus percent--hence we are in the red, and you want to burden us more for taking care of everyone else, at our expense so we cant take care of our own needs and responsibilities.

No doubt you know well of the proposed MMSD referendum which will ask an extra 1300 a year on property taxes on an average Madison home, a half billion dollar school rebuilding program. No doubt the county will ask and MATC...and costs of everything else will go up. But you do not care...remember, the city has NO MONEY, you extract it from taxpayers..it must be nice to have a bottomless checkbook that feeds off others. Shame on you! We believe in pay our fair share, but not funding all things that pop into our leaders minds and paying for all these needy people who move here and bring nothing with them and do not pay their share of living costs and just live on the system...in a perfect world, we would not care...but the world and the politics and fiscal mismanagement at all levels of government are a complete mess, and we can't bare the burden of this over taxing anymore.

So please, learn to define, spell and live within a budget, prioritize and spend no more than you can afford. Its tough that you can't fund every social program YOU FEEL needs to be addressed, but we say don't lay it on us. Show some real leadership, and stop running us out of this city. We used to patronize local businesses many times a week...not the past 5 years, we pay too much just to live and pay taxes...tell the businesses what they can do when none of us will come out to support them!

NO on you ask for additional special taxes from we two taxpayers. We know we will be ignored, because thats how our leaders are. We are retired and on a fixed income and now are looking to leave our home and life here because of you!

**From:** [Terry D](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 84443 comments  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:04:59 PM  
**Attachments:** [Comments84443.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from tprong91@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please find attached file for my comments on the agenda item.

Thanks!

Terry Durham  
402 Acewood Blvd  
Madison, WI 53714

First, I would like to express my appreciation to the council for the time and work it puts in for the city. I realize it's not an easy job, and it takes a lot of time and effort. Thank you for your service.

I don't claim to be an expert on city budgets, I probably know very little. My father was a county board supervisor for many years, however, and I have at least a little concept of it (at least I think I do!). I'm merely giving you a perspective on the current budget situation from a common property owner's point of view. I have attended the budget event and followed as much as possible the information given to us via the city website, alders' blogs, etc.

While I've been a strong supporter of city services, public services, school referenda, etc. in the past. I cannot come to be supportive of a referendum regarding the current budget dilemma. I will try to explain my point of view.

I'm a firm believer of the saying "we make our own beds". I simply find it hard to believe, given there are well qualified financial advisors, planners, budgeters, etc. in the city that this could not have been foreseen and avoided years ago. How could the deficit been allowed to balloon to such a large amount, only to now be dumped on property owners at a quite inopportune time?

I'm well aware of the "causes". One of which we hear is/was the COVID-19 pandemic. Please keep in mind the pandemic was just that, a pandemic. It did not exclusively affect the City of Madison. It was worldwide. Personally, I was furloughed multiple days per pay period. This significantly affected my revenue. So, I had to make both lifestyle and budget changes to compensate, which wasn't by any means easy. I did not have the luxury of dumping my financial burdens on my neighbors. Millions of other people had to do the same.

Then, there's those mean Republicans. I get it. Rarely, if at all, do I ever agree with anything that our state Republican majority does or says. In 2010, Act 10 significantly impacted my budget and take-home pay. However, all the ranting, raving or protesting I did was futile. Again, I had to make difficult lifestyle and



budget changes. Again, I didn't have the luxury of dumping my financial burden on someone else.

Madison is becoming ever increasingly ridiculously expensive to own a home or even rent an apartment. The city's budget woes and proposed tax increases won't make it any easier. Given the city's history, I certainly don't see this as being the last time property owners will be forced to shoulder its budget woes.

"It's only a dollar a day, though". Sure, doesn't sound like much, but neither do those late-night TV commercials that state the same thing. Let's look at it. Let's take someone making an average salary of \$50k/year. If (and that is a big IF) they are lucky and receive an annual 3% cost of living increase, that's nearly 25% of that increase automatically taken by the city. And that's before taxes. Even more if the school district gets its money. That's a big deal, given the a cost of living increase is typically fully needed for all the other "Only X amount a day's", such as increases in medical insurance, medical bills, auto insurance, auto repair, groceries, water, heat, electric, home maintenance, child care, vet care, clothing, home insurance, pharmaceuticals, phone bill, internet... just to name a few. I find it hard to imagine someone trying to live here on a fixed income.

Personally, I can realize that if large property tax increases continue each year, it's not a question of if, but when I will be taxed out of my house. And I understand it's happened before, in other cities, this city, to probably many other people. And someone wealthier will be able to buy my house and afford it. But then what exactly has happened? Yeah, gentrification. Can the city then continue to boast about equality and opportunity for all? Or will you have to add the stipulation "Only if you've got the money."?

I also have concerns for what it may do for the future. Will future city councils look back and say "hey, we can really spend as much as we want. If we get in a hole, we'll just pass another referendum!".

Thank you for taking the time to read. Again, please realize these are just some of my viewpoints, and not meant to be insulting or attacking. I generally am supportive of city services and have been in Madison for nearly 20 years because

of its attributes. However, I need to be aware of my own wellbeing. I've spent a lot of time and hard work making my house my own. It should be realized that property owners are not a bottomless well of funding. Unfortunately, I also have no easy solutions, other than responsibly reducing services and/or staff of the city.

Again, I do thank you for your service to the city and appreciate the time you all take to serve on the council.

Terry Durham

402 Acewood Blvd

Madison, WI 53714

**From:** [Liz Ellis](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please support the Madison budget referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:07:06 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from imaginarybrassica@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good morning,

I am writing in support of the proposed \$22 million city budget referendum. The proposed budget cuts would harm almost every city resident, but especially those with the fewest resources. This is not what our city stands for.

Liz Ellis  
3149 Stratton Way #309  
Madison WI, 53719

**From:** [Bob Entwistle](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Proposed Property Tax Referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 9:49:28 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from baentwistle77@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Madison Alders,

My feedback on the referendum is that I'm not voting yes at this time. There are too many things going on that show that even a modicum of fiscal restraint is present. And while the city talks a good game in housing affordability, approval of this referendum essentially jacks the rent for every resident of the city, in addition to adding to homeowners' tax load. You're not being "inclusive" by affecting housing affordability in a negative way!

1. Imagination Center at Reindahl - the city has continued to push this forward despite knowing full well there is no money to support ongoing operations. While it's a good idea, maybe it needs to wait until after other city priorities (BRT, new homeless shelter, etc) are completed.
2. City Market - we are probably too far along with this at this point but there were other ways to support small producers (work with existing grocery outlets to increase share of local products?) that didn't require a huge investment in a new facility that has issues (not enough parking, competition from existing grocery outlets)
3. Could we have put the brakes on the second BRT line? Yes, I know that 75% of the initial cost may be funded federally. But there is a huge operational cost coming.
4. While land banking for the south side parcel that the city is purchasing for future development of a park and housing is a good idea in the best of times, some of these things may need to be turned down in times of fiscal issues.
5. We need to review what funding the city provides to NGOs for things like food pantries, community health, services of homeless and other endangered populations. How many organizations are we funding that are doing the exact same thing but all with their own overhead? All the needs are there but it seems like our approach is to fund any organization doing good work rather than trying to leverage the best of the current providers.
6. There is no money for a total redesign of the Lake Monona waterfront unless you can establish that there is significant private money committed. It's a nice plan but needs to wait.

Thanks for your work on the budget!

Bob Entwistle  
2709 Center Ave, Madison (District 15)

**From:** [Natalie Evans](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please adopt the resolution allowing a referendum in November  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 10:41:03 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from evansnatalie15@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Thank you.

I am from Alder District 5, ward 67.

--

Natalie Evans

**From:** [John Fons](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Truth and Consequence  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:57:00 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jefons@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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All Common Council Members,

Your referendum to increase property taxes in Madison guarantees higher rents in Madison. Landlords will not donate their income to your budget or subsidize your deficits with money that must stand in line for mortgages, insurance, utilities, maintenance or improvements to their property.

Rents will increase because you increase taxes.

No one believes you represent the needs of low, moderate or fixed income residents when your actions provoke higher rent and drive up the cost of living in Madison.

We watch you build a complicated bus system with a down payment of Federal dollars. We watch you spend hundreds of millions of dollars yet fail to balance the city's operational budget.

We endure disrupted traffic, impeded emergency vehicles, extravagant bus stops located dangerously in the middle of busy boulevards made all the more hazardous by constricted traffic lanes, not because we required it, but because someone wanted the city put on a perverse Road Diet.

Increased property taxes will be your next mistake.

John Fons  
4634 Tokay Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53711  
608-236-0844 Hm  
661-917-0850 cell

**From:** [Joanna Frasch](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Common Council Meeting - Agenda Item #68 Public Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:41:59 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jefra1313@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Council Members:

I am writing in support of approving the referendum option on the November, 5th 2024 ballot. I encourage to the Council to approve the resolution to put forth the \$22M property tax levy increase for the voters to decide.

It is an unfortunate circumstance that we are in, since city tax levies in Wisconsin are tied to the rate of new construction. For quite a while in the late 2010's, that rate didn't even keep up with inflation. Many cities and municipalities have similar issues since most states limit the capacity of their revenue-raising abilities. See: <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/issue-briefs/2021/07/local-tax-limitations-can-hamper-fiscal-stability-of-cities-and-counties>. Although Madison has attempted to remedy the situation by making cuts and increasing fees for over a decade, it's come to the point where we've cut and increased as much as we feasibly can - which is why I support bringing the referendum.

I had the opportunity to attend previous council meetings and the East Side budget workshop - it's clear to me that fellow citizens of our city do not want to see their services cut, nor do they want to lay off a mass number of their friends and neighbors (my union siblings) working for the city who provide these services. When asked for ideas, most people couldn't fathom cutting the number of services it would take to make up the shortfall. Madisonians, including myself, enjoy a lot of the city's amenities like: clean streets, nice parks, great libraries, public transport, the CARES program, and fantastically convenient garbage and recycling services! The citizens of Madison, although disheartened at the thought of further property tax hikes, understand that to maintain the level of services as they are, will choose to fund them.

Going forward, I would suggest the Council and the Mayor's office work to lobby against the State's restrictions on the fundraising abilities of cities and municipalities. Hopefully, with the November election, it will provide a greater opportunity to present legislative changes so that the city has more control over their financing abilities to work toward alternate means of revenue-raising. I think people see that there is something amuck with the budget shortfall our city is facing (due in part to the distribution system of shared revenue), and the massive three-billion-dollar State budget surplus - and I hope that will inspire them to act accordingly by voting in favor of this referendum while choosing their state legislators at the same time. The referendum is a temporary solution to a problem that we - the Council, the Mayor's office, and all citizens - must be willing to fight to find a permanent solution for.

Thank you,

Joanna Frasch

Resident of D17  
Proud AFSCME Member  
3348 Ambassador Dr #3

Madison, WI 53718

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [Will Friedrich](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Resolution 84443  
**Date:** Saturday, August 3, 2024 6:53:40 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from will-friedrich@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Madison Common Council,

You have my full support to adopt resolution 84443, and place the referendum question on November's ballot. I am actively engaged in Canvassing and political outreach activities in Madison, and if this resolution is placed on the November 5<sup>th</sup> ballot, I will work hard to increase voter turnout and inform Madisonians of their crucial need to get to the polls and pass this referendum.

I am extremely frustrated that the State legislature and the long-lasting impact of Scott Walker's governorship has let the irresponsible and irregular nature of shared revenue in Wisconsin hamper our thriving and noble city. Madison does not deserve to have only 18 cents on the dollar of state taxes returned to it. I first recently became aware of the issues of shared revenue while viewing reporting from Dan Shafer from the Recombobulation Area as he reported on Milwaukee's recent sales tax increase which was a means to stave off a similar budget crisis. This referendum must pass, and further Wisconsin legislators must rigorously and honestly take up the issue of shared revenue once again to invest in our state meaningfully and consistently. It is simply unacceptable policy at the state level. I applaud all the work the Common Council has done in the past thirteen years to level the budget and navigate the ever-increasingly difficult financial waters imposed by this shared revenue policy.

Sincerely,

Will Friedrich – resident of Mansion Hill neighborhood, Madison.

**From:** [Aedan Gardill](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Harrington-McKinney, Barbara](#)  
**Subject:** Common Council meeting 8/6 -- in support of #84443  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 12:23:34 PM

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Hello alders,

I want to email and express my support of agenda item #84443 for this upcoming Common Council meeting on Aug 6.

I agree that we should put the decision of who to bear the Madison deficit (either the residents or the public services) to the residents themselves.

Personally, I am happy to provide the ~\$20/month extra in property taxes to reduce the amount of budget cuts to public services, like the library. In the end, I think \$20/month per resident will have a MUCH smaller impact than cutting \$6 million to public services (and not to mention that the cuts to the public services will disproportionately affect low income residents).

I urge you all to vote yes to push this referendum forward.

Aedan Gardill  
1110 Chapel Hill Rd

**From:** [david gebauer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:10:00 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am writing to you to let you know my opinion on the proposed referendum. I oppose a referendum. So far all we have heard from the mayor's office and the city council is threats of what cuts that would have to be made to services and programs. What we have not seen from the city is how the city can decrease budget costs now. Starting in the mayor's office, the mayor could sort out the necessary from the nice to have. For example, unnecessary staff positions, staff benefits, and unnecessary services. Myself, I can certainly live with a fair number of the proposed cuts in services and programs. Many are nice things to have as a city but not necessary. I will not bother going through the list of what those are, for I am sure that all of you can pick your own out.

Thank you.

--

David Gebauer

**From:** [Mary Jo Feeney Gebhardt](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendums that will raise property taxes  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:05:50 AM

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Please do not vote for the passing of such referendums. It is not fair to continuously raise our property taxes when this Mayor and this Council have put the city in this position by making poor decisions on how City money is spend and thinking that it grows on trees.

The City is in such dire straits now with what has been going on, especially with the rapid bus transit that has completely disrupted traffic in this city and will only be worse when buses twice the size of the regular city buses are trying to operate on the streets where lanes have been cut out and corners of streets will be too narrow for the buses to be able to make the turns.

Further more, having people getting on and off buses is an unbelievable dangerous idea and leaves everyone, bus riders, vehicle drivers and pedestrians in a very vulnerable state.

No More Referendums!

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] 2025 Budget Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:01:25 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Tuesday, August 6, 2024 – 12:00pm

Sharon Genthe

92 OAK CREEK TRAIL

Madison, Wisconsin. 53717 Yes, by email. [stgenthe@gmail.com](mailto:stgenthe@gmail.com) All Alders 2025 Budget Referendum Mayor Rhodes-Conway and Alders

Excessive spending by election officials should not affect tax paying citizens. threats of cutting snow removal, road repairs and essential services is unprofessional and inappropriate. You should be able to find \$22 million worth of fat to cut in the large over \$500million budget. Spending federal government money is still spending our money. More prudent spending methods should have been implemented because you knew of this eminent calamity years ago. Statistics show and it will be proven in a short time that the BRT is a boondoggle. Yet, with a flick of the hand you expect taxpayers to pay for it. Taking away children's recreation, such as the Goodman pool, which was a donation from the generous Goodman brothers should not be held hostage by your inappropriate spending. Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and the City Council should do everyone a favor and recognize the wrath of the voters should this ridiculous referendum go through to November. There will be hard fought opposition. This ask of taxpayers reflects very poorly on your stubborn inability to manage money and arrogance that Madison tax paying citizens will just have to pick up the tab. I wholeheartedly vote NO.

Thank you, Sharon Genthe

**From:** [John A Gerold](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum Resolution Scheduled for August 6th.  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 11:54:34 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from jagerold39@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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To all the Alders:

I am strongly opposed to the \$22 million Proposed Referendum. Alongside the proposed School District's referendum, this will impose a very high additional annual property tax burden on a large majority of the city's population. I can stand the hit but a large majority of the population can not. Of the \$315 million plus that is being spent on BRT, the city will pay \$70 million. Since that is not complete and parts like the North/South route are still in the planning stage, those types of items should be postponed or stopped, until the City can get its financial house in order and probably saving a large part of the \$70 million, that then can be applied to supporting the highest needed city services and likewise reducing the need for the referendum at a full \$22 million. I also believe the rainy day fund should be tapped to the fullest extent possible as another first step. I realize that can affect the City's bond rating, but in the meantime the city can continue to get its financial house in order. If that type of move puts a strain on the city down the road, then at that time, cures for that problem can be determined.. One area where the city could raise more revenue is a MUCH stricter enforcement program related to our traffic laws. Speeding, lack of proper license plates, unlicensed and uninsured drivers are a major problem. Maybe in the total scheme of things, stricter enforcement won't bring in that many more millions in dollars but it may be enough to not cut back on certain emergency services to a fuller extent.

John A Gerold  
214 Saratoga Circle  
Madison, WI 53705  
[H] 608-833-5121  
[C] 608-234-2253

"The greatest menace to freedom is an inert people." Justice Louis Brandeis.

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Library funding  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 11:51:49 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Monday, August 5, 2024 – 11:47am

Ari Gochberg

They/he

5416 eastland way

Madison, Wisconsin. 53716 No, do not contact me. All Alders Library funding sample language:

My name is Ari Gochberg and I have been a resident of Madison and a user of the Madison Public Library system since 2016. I am writing to you to express my strong support for the libraries in the face of potential budget cuts for the next fiscal year.

I am aware of Option A and B as proposed by the Madison Public Library Foundation. I do not find either of these acceptable. I want Option C. I support the proposal for a \$22 million referendum that would increase property taxes by about \$20 a month to balance the budget rather than taking \$6 million in cuts from city services. This is agenda item #84443 (Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison) at the Common Council Meeting tomorrow (8/6/2024). I have already registered my support, although I will not be able to attend the meeting.

Libraries are essential to marginalized communities, providing free access to resources such as books, internet, educational programs, and safe spaces. They serve as a lifeline for low-income families, the elderly, immigrants, and people experiencing homelessness. Cutting library funding would disproportionately impact these vulnerable populations, deepening existing inequities in our city. Furthermore, maintaining robust library services is a smart financial choice; libraries contribute to the local economy by supporting workforce development, literacy, and lifelong learning, which in turn fosters a more informed and connected community.

**From:** [Eileen Goode](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum opposition  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:21:03 AM

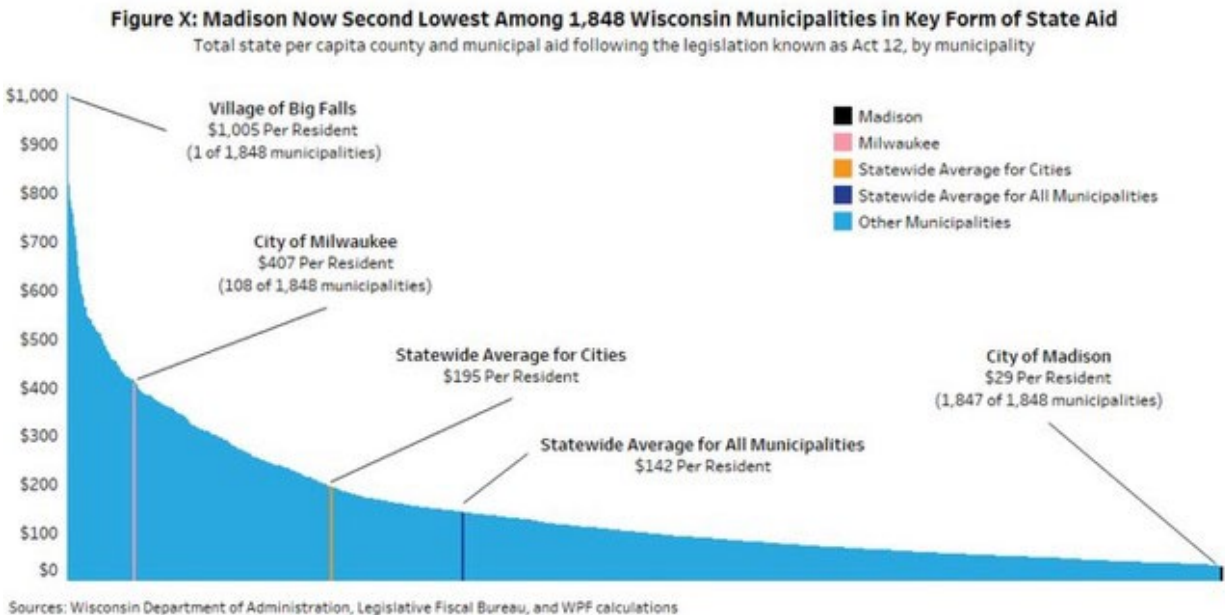
You don't often get email from eileen@ecg812.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Alders,

Can you explain the HUGE deficit that City of Madison receives with regard to state aid? Why is Madison so different from Milwaukee another large city? Why not review this discrepancy before going to homeowners once again for another big hit on taxes.

I would love to see some answers on this topic. I cannot attend Tuesday 8.5 City Council meeting.



\*\*\*\*\*

Eileen Goode  
21 Southwick Circle  
Madison WI. 53717



**From:** [nancy53703](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget referendum resolution feedback  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 2:37:03 PM

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Hello,

To help lower costs to taxpayers (especially those of us who are trying to hold onto our homes), please save \$16 million by stopping design and construction bidding on the Imagination Center until a better budget situation develops. The Madison Market is a boondoggle, too, but already in development, so...

If you haven't read former Alder Erik Paulson's 4-part series about ideas to fix Madison's budget deficit, please do so!

## **Option 1: More short term risk, more long term benefit**

My preferred option, we should maximize the amount of revenue authority the city has and increase the levy by \$28M in the November of 2024 referendum, which would close the budget gap for both 2025 and 2026, and leave a \$8 million gap for 2027.

To ease in the levy increase and to close the gap through 2027, the Common Council would commit to using \$11M in one-time funds in 2025 and \$5M in 2026 to reduce the levy impact. This means that for taxpayers, rather than a \$28M extra increase landing all in 2025, there would be an extra \$11M levy increase in 2025, an additional \$12M increase in 2026, and an additional \$5M increase in 2027. The remaining \$8M in one-time funds can close the 2027 budget gap.

(We can do this without impacting our future levy. I explain how and show the math of the overall increase at the bottom of this post in the “nerdy details” appendix)

This option has the obvious downsides of:

Having a big number (\$28M) actually on the ballot, making it less likely to pass

Being very difficult to explain

[Madison's Budget Challenge, Part 4: We should do a City of Madison budget referendum. Here's how.](#)



Kind regards,

Nancy Gores  
District 13

**From:** [kindley graf](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 4:26:50 PM

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Oppose a referendum to increase property taxes to meet the alleged budget deficit. Correct the deficit by reducing spending. Madison already sticks it to taxpayers by separately charging for municipal services then also hanging an additional charge on vehicle registration renewals.

Vote no. Do not proceed with a referendum.

**From:** [Julia Greenberg](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please support resolution 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:30:41 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from juliargreenberg@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi,

I am writing to urge you to support resolution 84443 in order to place a tax levy referendum on our ballot. I am particularly concerned about how the proposed budget cuts would affect Madison Public Libraries and I have read their statement on what services would likely be impacted. Like many parents of young kids, I take my children to the Hawthorne, Pinney, or Lakeview library at least once a week, sometimes more. Their programming is terrific and they allow for interaction among diverse members in our community in a way few other services do. Lakeview's Sunday hours during the school year provide a particularly important spot for us and many kids on the Northeast side during the cold winter months. Please support this resolution so that voters can weigh in on whether we feel a small tax increase is worth ensuring funding for our libraries and for other community services.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Julia Greenberg

**From:** [Austin Griesbach](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Agenda Item 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 7:59:10 AM

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Hello,

I am writing as a City of Madison resident and homeowner in support of agenda item 84443, Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum.

I have no interest in austerity measures and reduction in services. If I disliked the services, or thought that the services weren't worth the taxes, I would have settled down in a town that didn't have them in the first place. If we are forced to go through with even half the service cuts that are currently on the table, we will be much worse off as a community.

Austin Griesbach  
District 4

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Budget/Referendum  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 8:36:46 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Sunday, August 4, 2024 – 8:32pm

Lori Groskreutz

Prefix

605 whitehall dr

madison, Wisconsin. 53714 Yes, by email. [magpack1@charter.net](mailto:magpack1@charter.net) All Alders

Budget/Referendum I recently saw on the news that 1- City of Madison looking into a referendum for MONEY 2- The Library has over a 20 million dollar short fall. subject 2- Library how can that be since we just completed the month of July. Where is the comptroller to over see the budget? Did the Head of the Library see the monthly statements that budget short fall? subject one- Where is the money going? did you all think covid money was never-ending? I checked past meetings and not ONE OF YOU that I can tell has stated - let's work on a budget (like the taxpayers) cut was in not a necessity, Freeze any pay raises, have employees pay more into insurance cost, also maybe the Convention Center, has that every turned a profit? maybe sell that to stop the money snowball. You are asking the taxpayers to pay more as they are receiving less in their income, paying more for living expenses, more for insurance cost, cut back to try to stay even. But you as alders have not proposed that for the city. 20 million here, 2 million short fall for shelter, WHEN does this stop? Referendum, after Referendum ? Please lead by example, for the TAXPAYERS. I am almost certain that no response from any one, but by goodness you will want me vote for alder and vote for a SPENDING referendum, I am betting no response from any alders .

**From:** [Samantha Cora Christian Haas](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Finance](#); [financecommittee@cityofmadison.com](mailto:financecommittee@cityofmadison.com)  
**Subject:** Comment in Support of Referendum: We need thriving libraries and parks  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:09:55 AM

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Hello,

I have called Madison home for the last 10 years, and ever since starting a family during the pandemic I've become more aware of the importance of city services. At the top of the list are the beautiful libraries and parks, which would suffer tremendously by the proposed budget cuts. I support the \$22 million referendum, because I recognize how vital services like libraries and parks are to connecting our community with local resources and each other. We need "Third Places" like libraries and parks that are multicultural and multigenerational for our city to thrive. Please do not cut funding to the programs and people who make these spaces wonderfully welcoming, accessible, and inclusive.

Thank you,  
Samantha Haas  
5717 Hempstead Rd, Madison  
920-248-2676

**From:** [David Handowski](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); [Finance](#)  
**Subject:** 2025 Budget Comments - Voting NO on referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:19:42 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from davidhandowski@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Alders, Mayor, and Mr Schiemdicke,

I am absolutely AGAINST, and will vote NO to any referendum that seeks to increase the levy or burden residents with additional property taxes.

First, I would like to thank, and acknowledge, Mr. Schiemdicke for all the public forums he conducted regarding the City of Madison finances. As always, he was knowledgeable and informative and gracious with a difficult task and forum.

However, he was not the person who should have been presenting to the public. That responsibility should have fallen to the owners of the budget which are Mayor and Council. Given Councils' lack of true participation in budget details for years, the Mayor should have been present to understand and address resident concerns.

The primary reason for a NO vote on the referendum is that you have lost all credibility in being fiscally responsible in managing our money. I personally feel you don't feel true ownership over every dollar the City is spending, questioning with passion what, why, where, how, if spending meeting a specific, quantifiable and measurable objective. When you plan to have work done in your own home, I assume you pay attention to details, you want bids to be competitive, you want the work to be guaranteed, you will follow up with the work to make sure it met contractual objectives and are personally satisfied with the work done. The single biggest question and priority is do you have the money budgeted to perform the work.

Many of us feel its simply a rubber stamp process with no true sense of



ownership. Plus, in our own homes, if we are over our budget, we are not continuing to spend and putting it on a credit card! This is what Mayor and Common Council have been doing for years.

There are very specific, and significant issues, that Mayor, Council and Finance have not addressed:

<!--[if !supportLists]-->1. Use and application of ARPA (American Rescue Plan ACT) and other “one time” use funds – Rainy Day Fund, Bond Premium

<!--[if !supportLists]-->a. Likely a significant amount of the budget shortfall is in how ‘one time’ funds have been incorporated into the normal annual operating budget. ARPA (and other funds) were never intended to be a liability transferred to a municipality’s constituents.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->b. The transfer of this liability into annual operating budgets is “highly irregular” and is usually bound by specific rules. When and why was this initiated?

<!--[if !supportLists]-->c. Lack of transparency in where these funds were applied, when, how much, why,

<!--[if !supportLists]-->2. <!--[endif]-->While at a critical juncture in City finances, there is \$10M (at one time \$12M) in ‘uncollected revenue’. When the City is starved for funding leaving monies uncollected is unfathomable.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->3. <!--[endif]-->Lack of clarity around BRT funding. Portraying grant monies from any governmental agency does not make it ‘free’ money. Capital assets require maintenance and repair (operating expenses) whether it’s a building, elevator, fire alarm/suppression system, bridge, road, bus, bus stop, bike path, etc. Any ‘net new’ asset drives maintenance as well as requiring funding (reserves) for future replacement. A \$200M grant will eventually require funding sufficient capital reserves, which will be a net new obligation for City and taxpayers. When ridership is falling this is a huge risk, and obligation, to citizens. What is the ridership model for the next 5 years, what happens if ridership declines, what

are mitigation plans if BRT is under water?

4. Threatening “layoffs” of City staff and a reduction in core services, when that is unnecessary. The City does not have an FTE problem but a services spending problem. I thank the City for releasing the latest “5% budget cut” model that makes the point.

a. Are members of Common Council requesting to see an FTE model from 2019 to current day for city staff. How much has staff grown as compared to City growth? A \$20M shortfall in 2025 is 200 FTEs at \$100K salary for round numbers. At \$75K that’s 266 FTEs. Where is staff growing? Shrinking? Does it align with core city services?

b. The core spend areas are in “purchased services” (from the budget release last night) which are vague, undefined, and lacking detail. These spends are significant, yet vagueness surrounds the details. Does Common Council understand where we are spending, with who, are they meeting measurable objectives with our funding? How often are those being audited for results, efficiency? Useful and actual information around where ‘one time funds’ (point #1) have contributed to net new operating expenses over time is critical. Who is asking those questions? Where are answers for the general public who are paying the bill? If you are not asking these questions WHY NOT?

c. From a professional standpoint asking for a flat 5% cut across all agencies was unnecessary. And you spun up staff when it was not required. If you have a department of 10 and all are ‘outstanding’ or high achievers, you are going to willingly cut good talent? You take 5% of all the bottom performers based on performance reviews. Private sector does this periodically and it typically increases morale, because your better employees have been picking up slack for poorer performing employees, and the general attitude is ‘it was about time’. And this is done at each layer. Where is the information about people, and department overtime? Does

anyone remember the bus drivers make more that \$225K a couple years ago? If Common Council is passing budgets you should be asking for information that is useful when evaluating budgets!

<!--[if !supportLists]-->d. When Chief Barnes has to remind you that a 5% cut will violate the principles of Act 12 and would cause the City to repay hiring grants tells me little thought was actually given to selectively and with purpose reviewing how budget reductions were requesting through City staff.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->e. Laying off City staff is the choice of Mayor and Council only. Staff reductions are likely not necessary. However, this appears to be the path of least resistance which is disappointing. It also highlights that City has no real interest in managing in a responsible manner. If staff reductions are preferable to cutting other spend and commitments, that is your choice. Not the choice many citizens would make. Your choice.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->5. <!--[endif]-->You continue to blame the state for lack of funding!

<!--[if !supportLists]-->a. This has been known for years.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->b. If Council has been applying one time funds for ongoing operating expenses then you knew years ago, what you know today. You are not the US Govt and you can't print money. And at some point this was all going to catch up with reality.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->c. Negotiations with the State should have been initiated years ago in preparation for this day. Madison is a key economic engine for the entire state. As dysfunctional as our state government is, they know this. Plus, you have Evers! Why have you waited?

<!--[if !supportLists]-->6. Last but not least – the Civilian Police Oversight Committee. For the millions spent to date there is still NO actual process in place to run the program. HOWEVER, do I see in file # 83848 that this body is proposing that the City will actually pay up to \$15,000 towards complainants attorney's fees to.....litigate against

the City of Madison? So, we are going to pay for both sets of attorneys in the same case? And there is no mention of a limit to the number of instances, whether the person wins/loses the case with prejudice? I mean, wow. How can this not be a conflict of interest? How does this make any rational sense to a taxpayer that we will pay for both the defense and prosecuting attorneys in the same case? The City is actually incentivizing court actions against itself? Mind boggling. If this is representative of what happens in other areas of our City government we have bigger problems than just the budget. If this is your money, how about each member of Council pay the first 20 \$15,000 bills personally. Would this make you look at situations like this differently in the future? I would hope!

I will not support a referendum. I would support having a member of Common Council sit in every exit interview for an employee who is cut, and to be present for every agency or supplier or person who has benefited from a service that can no longer be afforded. Perhaps then, it will make decisions more personal when funding issues come before Common Council.

I will be a NO vote until I see reason, personal responsibility and common sense in financial decisions.

David Handowski  
District 1 resident

**From:** [Amelia Hansen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Agenda Item #84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:32:43 PM  
**Attachments:** [240806 Madison Common Council Public Comment AH.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from amhansen97@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hi,

Please see the attached PDF for my written public comment for today's Madison Common Council meeting.

Thank you,

--

Amelia Hansen  
(she/her)

There is a genocide of Palestinians happening right now.  
From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.

August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024

To: Madison Common Council

From: Amelia Hansen

18 South Bedford Street

Madison, WI 53703

Dear Madison Common Council members,

I will support the referendum to increase the percentage cap on raising property taxes (agenda item #84443 on today's Madison Common Council agenda) to fund Madison public services, if the purpose of the increase is to fund all Madison public services except the Madison police. To clarify, I will support a referendum that clearly states that the increased percentage cap on raising property taxes will not allow any revenue collected from increased property taxes beyond the current percentage cap to be given to the Madison police department budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Amelia Hansen

**From:** [Drew H](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 8:59:43 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from drewhansiii@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Developers could have helped avoid the city's budget issue if allowed to build more housing. But the city puts up too many barriers to new housing like the restrictive West Area Plan. So this government employee will be voting no on the city referendum.

Sincerely,  
Andrew Hanson  
Rolla Ln  
53711

**From:** [Stacy Harbaugh](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Love my city, but voting no on the referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 3:18:01 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from stacyrharbaugh@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I appreciated the recent article in the Cap Times on the referendum on this fall's ballots. I vote in every election and typically am an enthusiastic cheerleader for referendums that approve funds for our public schools and city services.

The question on this fall's ballots is too soon after our last school referendum and comes at a time when taxpayers cannot afford an additional hike. Inflation is still impacting our pocketbooks at the grocery store. I'm in the process of trying to buy a home with a mortgage that may be around 6.5% interest. An additional tax hike while we're already dealing with corporate price gouging and an unreasonable housing market is too much.

I've no doubt our state legislators have carefully crafted laws to make this impossible, but perhaps if property tax increases could be applied only to single-family homes that are worth \$500,000 or more, voters would rush to vote yes to place more tax burden on the wealthiest members of our community. Those of us making five-figure salaries simply cannot afford another hike at this moment.

Stacy Harbaugh  
336 Norris Ct. #3



**From:** [Lisa Hempstead](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Public Library Board's Letter in Support of Referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 3:01:37 PM  
**Attachments:** [MPLB letter to CC 8-5-24.pdf](#)

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please read the attached letter from the Madison Public Library Board to City Council Members explaining our support of a referendum (item #68) on the August 6th meeting agenda.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lisa Hempstead  
MPL Board President and MMSD School Representative



Dear Members of the Common Council,

The Madison Public Library Board is writing to advocate for a referendum that would support our beloved library system.

At the July 11, 2024, Madison Public Library Board Meeting, the Library Board passed a preliminary 2025 Operating Budget that would continue the current service levels at Madison Public Library and provide a pathway forward for the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park if certain conditions are met. However, the Board also approved a 5% budget reduction scenario that offers required reductions in priority order:

- \$120,692.63 - elimination of Sunday hours
- \$323,793.35 - elimination of 3-3.5 full-time equivalent programming staff and some program services & supplies, *with directions to prioritize the reductions of services/supplies over staff*
- \$644,205.12 - elimination of the equivalent of our evening hours, *while requesting that some evening hours be preserved over morning hours so we have a mix of daytime/evening hours for the community*

Now that the preliminary 2025 Operating Budget has been approved by the Library Board, it will go to the Mayor's Office to be incorporated into the City of Madison's budget this fall. **As the City of Madison works to draft a 2025 Operating Budget in the face of a \$22 million structural deficit**, the Library Board wants to express strong support for a referendum option that:

- funds the operational cost to continue, enabling the Madison Public Library to maintain its current service hours, staffing levels and programming.
- includes the funding needed to open and operate the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park

**The Madison Public Library Board believes in the power of strong libraries to transform communities.** As a board, we make budget decisions through an equity and access lens, and we know that libraries serve as critical lifelines for neighborhoods. Because of this belief, we are committed to seeing the Imagination Center move forward, as the Reindahl Park area has long been considered a service desert—not just for libraries, but for many other City services that libraries can help bring to the neighborhood. The Imagination Center at Reindahl Park has been in process since 2014 and funds have already been committed from both the City of Madison and the Madison Public Library Foundation for the construction of the library. While the Board would like to see the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park open and operating, we don't want it to happen at the expense of existing services without a deeper discussion of impacts across the city.

"The harsh restrictions imposed by the state legislature in 2011 have severely limited the City of Madison's ability to increase revenue through traditional means. This situation leaves us with no viable option other than a referendum to secure the funding

201 W. Mifflin St.  
Madison, WI 53703

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608.266.6300 ph  
608.266.4338 fax



201 W. Mifflin St.  
Madison, WI 53703

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608.266.4338 fax

needed to maintain library services,” said Lisa Hempstead, Madison Public Library Board President. “Without the funds provided by the referendum, we will inevitably be forced to make difficult decisions that will lead to reductions in programming, staffing, hours of operation, and essential services.”

**The Board recognizes that the City of Madison has worked creatively for the last 13 years to help lessen the effects of an increasingly difficult structural problem** caused by strict levy limits imposed by the Wisconsin State Legislature in 2011. As a result of these limits, Madison residents and businesses get back only 18 cents for every one dollar of State taxes paid. In addition to the growth of the city, high inflation rates, and lasting impacts to City revenues from the Covid pandemic, alternative options are limited. While a referendum *would* increase property tax rates across the City, under the current proposal for a \$22 million referendum, the average impact to homeowners would be a total increase of \$240/year or \$20/month.

Prior to approving a preliminary 2025 Operating Budget, the Library Board heard from more than 60 citizens who expressed what they value about the services provided by Madison Public Library. Among those services were free and engaging programs, library books and collections, meeting spaces, technology and WIFI, research resources, voting, the Dream Bus, the future development of the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park, and so much more.

“This referendum represents a pivotal opportunity to invest in the heart of our community—a place where knowledge, culture, and community spirit converge,” said Hempstead. “The Madison Public Library is a cornerstone of our community, where worlds connect and dreams are built. Libraries offer invaluable resources and programs that support lifelong learning, cultural enrichment, and social engagement.”

The Madison Public Library Board encourages the City of Madison to add a referendum option to the November 5, 2024, ballot.

Lisa Hempstead, President and MMSD Representative

Mathias Lemos Castillo, Vice President

Tom DeChant, Secretary Treasurer

Alder Sabrina Madison, City Council Representative

Jolynne Roorda

Salúd García

Plumer Lovelace

Genevieve Carter

**From:** [jhirsch@chorus.net](mailto:jhirsch@chorus.net)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Finance Committee](#); [budget@cityofmadison.com](mailto:budget@cityofmadison.com)  
**Subject:** #68 84443 Referendum Resolution  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 9:02:56 AM

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Alders:

I ask you to **OPPOSE** the proposed referendum to increase the property tax levy limit.

You can't continue to use the same scare tactics that were used when the \$40 wheel tax was implemented. Reductions to "...police, fire, garbage collection, parks and library operations..." have already been taken.

It's time to take a hard look at all other expenditures. There are plenty of "*nice to have*" items in the 2024 Budget, the proposed 2025 Budget and on each Common Council agenda. In a budget crunch, they are not "needs" and should be rejected or put aside until funds are available.

Let's roll up our sleeves. ***NOTHING should be off the table!***

Janet Hirsch  
District 9

**From:** [Lori](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Parks  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 12:50:39 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from lhouse2112@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Please prioritize the parks system. We use the cross country ski trails and Goodman Pool. It is the parks that make the quality of living in Madison high.

Thank you,  
Lori House

Lori Wendricks House  
(608) 843-3265

**From:** [irenierenie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 22 Million Dollar Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:54:14 AM

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First of all, we should not be in the position of cutting services that are expected by tax payers. Especially life saving services like Police and Fire. The City budget needs to be run like the budgets Madisonians have too. We first budget by expenses that are necessary such as mortgages or rent, utilities, food, credit card bills, etc. THEN we look at additional spending.

I am extremely dissatisfied in the spending decisions being made. Make sure you have the money necessary to cover expected City services BEFORE considering other expenditures. An example is the BRT. This is putting us in debt, and is not benefitting the majority of Madison taxpayers. Roads are a mess with Red paint, turns disallowed where needed, and traffic backups will occur causing road rage.

I am against a 22 million referendum and cutting expected life saving services, such as Police and Fire. I also expect my garbage to be picked up. Money was spent irresponsibly, now do what we have to do as Madisonians and don't take on projects and spend before expected services are paid for.

Thank you,  
Irene

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

**From:** [Fred Jaeckle](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on Referendum Resolution  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 1:10:15 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from fwjaeckle@msn.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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I am opposed to asking voters to approve a referendum to allow city to increase spending beyond state limits. This covers the entire city deficit with no real spending/program cuts.

It is time to take a look at spending reductions. Prioritize budget items. the city clearly has to many "nice to have" projects on their plate. Focus on spending on "must have projects". It is also time to look at how many positions are actually needed to to operate the mayors office, and other departments in the city. For example, I see no benefit in even having the Police Oversight board or whatever it is. NOTHING has been accomplished since it has been started. Although the budget is not that large, no benefits have been received by the citizens of Madison except for the board members and chair getting paid.

Time to tighten your belt, or there will indeed be a taxpayer revolt, and it will manifest itself at the ballot box.

**From:** [Dustin Johnson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Concerned Northsider  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 8:52:50 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [dustinjohnson1995@gmail.com](mailto:dustinjohnson1995@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Hello! I haven't ever submitted anything to an alder before (or any public government figure) but I figured this is the time to share.

I moved to Madison in 2013 to attend UW-Madison and moving from central Wisconsin to a city 4x the population of my hometown, I was thrilled by the potential opportunities. I don't have to tell you how much I absolutely love Madison - you all live here too!

Fast forward to the pandemic, we're all stuck inside and contemplating how both my girlfriend and I will work out of our studio apartment. It made for some comical times since I was constantly on the phone and there were no walls separating the 600 sq ft we worked/lived.

We moved from the Autumn Lake apartments off Lien Rd. To the Marling on East Wash. A great upgrade to get a 1 bedroom + den, and it was perfect until it wasn't. We needed more space. We knew we wanted to stay in Madison, contribute to the community, grow our roots, and thrive here in this city.

We bought our house on Longview St. in 2022, with the most amazing luck of closing before interest rates rose. I'm only saying this to emphasize that there are people in MUCH tougher financial position than I am due to the interest rates that their lenders charged them and are charging them, of which we have no control over.

I want to see Madison's communities thrive. I want to see Madison grow! I love this city, now spending almost half of my life here. We NEED more homeowners, we need more investment into the people that build this community.

I moved out of apartments to get more space, but I can't underscore enough how big of a deal it was to get out of the rising rent cycles. I NEED my housing payment to be consistent and I'm sure many of new, first-time homeowners would agree.

None of us have budgeted for property taxes in the first place, but none of us deserve this assault on our new(ish) homes. The money that the city is seeking in all of its efforts to raise property taxes in the next few years is just not the way to get it done.

There is already a squeeze on us first time homebuyers, and to see multiple entities call on property tax increases for means of increasing their budget is disheartening at the least, and bullshit if I'm being an honest community member.

We need to find other ways to get what we all want. We cannot continue to push the burden on the average community member (and NEW HOMEBUYERS!!! - PLEASE DON'T FORGET ABOUT US!!!)

I cannot build a high rise apartment to get the tax credits to cover my property taxes. I don't get any tax credits from the city for living here. I don't have kids, I don't use public transit, and many of the programs that I'm already funding with my property taxes I do not use. I cannot let my monthly housing payment increase. Countless others cannot have their housing payments increase.

Please keep in mind the incredible challenges that a city who prioritizes growth over current residents. We want to be a welcoming community, but not as a burden to the people that live here and want to spend their lives in Madison.



I'll be actively encouraging the northside neighborhood to vote against any future property tax increases on the ballots. I hope you keep the little guys in mind.

-Dustin

**From:** [brian johnson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Why I don't support raising the tax levy  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 10:27:17 AM

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Madison Alders

Before you ask to increase the tax levy to cover the budget deficit, you need to show that you are good stewards of the taxes you already collect and spend

Case in point:

Four years ago, you created the Police Civilian Oversight Board and The Office of The Independent Police Monitor. Since then, you have budgeted almost \$2 Million for these programs – despite the fact that they have not delivered on their mandates.

- The PCOB still does not have a complaint process for citizens to use and as far as I know has not taken on any cases.
- The PCOB and IM have not delivered any of the annual public reports your ordinances mandate.
- There doesn't seem to be a public outcry for the services the IM and PCOB were created to address.
- Portions of their budgets appear to have gone unspent while other city services could have used more funding.

For the past four years, both the PCOB and IM appear in violation of the ordinances you created while failing to deliver any tangible public benefits - yet no one seems to hold them accountable while our tax dollars continued to be funneled to them.

I would be happy to have you correct me if I'm wrong here but I have made polite requests over the past couple years to the IM and PCOB for any information regarding their progress, accomplishments and focus and have never received any answers other than "we are working it".

The continued funding of a program that has consistently failed to deliver every year since its inception, casts a shadow of distrust over the city's ability to manage and hold tax funded programs accountable for success.

Before raising our taxes again, the you need to demonstrate that you have the fortitude to cut programs when they don't deliver and redirect the funds to programs that work.

At this time, I do not support raising the tax levy limits.

Sincerely,

Brian Johnson

**From:** [Tish Johnson](#)  
**To:** [Brogan, Dylan](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Still Concerned  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:45:47 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from tish.johnson920@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Dylan,

It looks like I received the answer to the question I posed a couple of weeks ago asking which services the mayor plans to cut. I see this information in the update finally released yesterday. To say I'm disappointed is beyond an understatement.

Please understand how threatening this looks when the mayor plans to go after such basic services as police and fire and transportation. And to threaten services that support the homeless population is beyond my comprehension.

The interesting parts are these:

- What about the Mayor's office? Are there no cuts that need to be made there? 4-5 deputy mayors is excessive.
- Where is the detailed plan for capturing the unrealized revenue from State utilized municipal services? The same for lobbying for improved shared revenue and an RTA tax? (Would our community tolerate any of this if they knew what revenue potential was involved in these areas?)
- When basic services like this "must" be cut unless we agree to pay even more property tax, it puts everything the mayor says into question. How can we trust the mayor to keep adding large projects (next will be the huge Monona Terrace renovation)?
- Where and when does this stop? If an additional \$22 mil doesn't completely address the deficit it is hard to see this is the end of the demands or threats for cuts.

With this update and it's timing, it is clear the council is prepared to vote to approve the referendum. And unfortunately, when people vote, they will only have part of the picture - by design.

Dylan, please know this only makes me more concerned about the Mayor and Council's ability to effectively and responsibly manage.

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/news/2024-08-05/update-on-2025-budget-process>

Sincerely,  
Tish Johnson  
5505 Tolman Terrace

**From:** [brian johnson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Ideas regarding what to cut from the city budget  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:56:45 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from brian48johnson@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Before you consider cutting heads in important city services like Fire, Police etc - I hope that you are seriously looking at cutting heads first from the Mayor's administrative staff.

I see at least four Deputy Mayors listed - Two of whom have Housing in their remit and one, Rueben Sanon, who has no job description in his bio on the Mayor's webpage. Does a city our size really need Deputy Mayors over positions that more directly impact the day to day needs of our citizens? Consider cutting this number in half by consolidating the Housing & Sustainability and Housing & Human Services positions into one and drop the position held by Rueben Sanon. I'm guessing that would save approximately \$100,000.00+/yr

Additionally, as mentioned in my earlier email, eliminating the Office of Independent Monitor and the Police Citizens Oversight Board (which has delivered zero benefit over the past four years) would free up over \$500,000.00/yr.

By making these moves, you could save over \$600,000.00+/yr.

Sincerely,  
Brian Johnson

**From:** [Amy Kell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Conklin, Nikki](#)  
**Subject:** August 20, 2024 Meeting, Agenda Item 84443  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 10:48:02 AM  
**Attachments:** [Letter to the Common Council Regarding the 2025 Budget and Proposed Levy.docx](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from amykell0450@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Please see attached comments regarding the proposed 2025 budget and budget levy.

Thank you,

Amy Kell  
Madison, WI

August 5, 2024

TO: AllAlders@cityofmadison.com

FROM: Amy Kell, Madison Wisconsin Resident

RE: Item Number 84443  
Proposed 2025 Budget and Levy, Common Council Meeting on August 20, 2024

Alders, there are ways to reduce costs and avoid the proposed levy without austerity. Some combination of the following would be sufficient.

1. The City's solution to the \$22 million currently projected deficit is to raise revenues through an increase in taxes through a proposed levy. The City has proposed minor reductions in costs. For example, the City notes that over the past five years, agencies have underspent their authorized budgets by about 4% annually. But it proposes only a 1% across the board reduction, resulting in a \$3 million dollar savings. By reducing agency budgets by the full 4% that they already do not utilize, that alone results in a \$12 million savings toward the \$22 million deficit – or 54.55% of the projected deficit.
2. According to the Finance Department's "2025 Operating Budget Update", total projected expenses for General and Library Funds are 6.4% higher than the 2024 adopted budget, which includes ARPA funds. The City notes that major factors contributing to a higher budget include a \$14.5 million increase in salary and benefits including a 3% COLA for all employees.

Why aren't salary and benefit increases being foregone and/or limited in 2025 in order to reduce the deficit, especially considering the fact that there have been salary and benefits increases every year this decade? This \$14.5 million amount alone would cover nearly 66% of the currently projected \$22 million deficit.

3. According to the Finance Department's Outlook for the 2025 City Budget, "Madison's Spending in Context", the City of Madison's spending on Health and Human Services is 698% of the average rate of Health and Human Services programming of the 35 largest Wisconsin cities over 20,000 in population. In fact, the City of Madison spends the most of any city per capital on Health and Human Services.

Why can't these expenditures be more in line with other Wisconsin cities? (The math: (\$249 per capita x 270,000 people = \$67,230,000). A reduction of 1/8 (one-eighth) in Health and Human Services costs alone would cover 38.20% of the projected \$22 million deficit or \$8,403,750) (the math:  $(\$67,230,000 \times 0.125 = \$8,403,750) / 22,000,000 = 38.20\%$ ). In addition, the City of Madison and Dane County should work together to find efficiencies in human services delivery that would benefit both municipalities.

4. The city estimates that the current \$22 million deficit is projected to grow exponentially between now and 2030, when the budget gap is estimated to be \$67 million. Note that this project is based on the Cost to Continue model, which means that the City would provide the same level of service each year. The data above suggests that the staffing level is not necessary nor warranted.

A reduction in long-term debt reduces operating expenses by reducing debt service payments as well as the interest on those debt payments. Lower debt also maintains our high credit rating. Debt service payments rose 35.23% from 2018 to 2024 – \$47,239,110 to \$63,879,000. Debt service payments represent the second highest budget function (category) after Public Safety and Health.



**From:** [Shannon Kennedy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda item 84443. Referendum to raise property tax levy limit  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 2:29:37 PM

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The Mayor and Common Council Alders want to have an increase of \$22 million to the state-imposed property tax levy limit.

I suggest you review the projects that were approved and cut some expenditures there! This would be the responsible option.

The Common Council Alder and Mayor are threatening to hold hostage from its citizens, - "funding for police, fire, garbage collection, parks, library operations, and other City services and operations." What were the OTHER city services and operations?

I consider this black mail.

I am not experienced in the processes of city government. I suspect I am not alone, just like some of our Common Council Alders and most citizens of Madison.

What were you and the Mayor thinking when you over budgeted on these projects? Did you think it was going to be easier to ask forgiveness and more funding than permission to overspend? What will the operating costs of all your new projects cost its citizens in the future?

Again, I suggest you review the projects that were approved and cut some expenditure there. This would be the responsible option. CITIZENS will continue to look for more cost cutting in their daily and monthly budgets as a matter of necessity. Now it's your turn to make some cuts.

- Retired people living on a fixed income will continue to struggle paying bills and need to make cuts.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->House sales will continue to dwindle.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->The supposed, Affordable housing locations will continue to have rents raised again. It was not really affordable to begin with and costs keep rising.

<!--[if !supportLists]-->• <!--[endif]-->Brick and Mortar companies continue to close and cut employees.

- <!--[endif]-->There are no new manufacturing jobs here in Madison that I am aware

of. If people need to find jobs and work outside of Madison, they will also be looking for more affordable living arrangements there.

- People are looking for housing as it's been told. Are you building for low to middle income wage earners or high income?

Thank you for your time.

Shannon Kennedy

**From:** [Joseph Keyes](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Oppose Property Tax Referendum  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 8:53:36 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jkeyes1a1@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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To Madison City Council Alders,

I oppose the property tax referendum. The proposed property tax increase referendum will place a great and undue hardship on Madison's taxpayers. 63% of Americans cannot cover a \$500 emergency bill from savings and 37% lack the funds to cover a \$400 emergency bill. This tax increase will force taxpayers to make gut wrenching cuts in their already stretched and thin budgets to cover this increased cost.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Keyes  
District 11

**From:** [Kurt](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item: 84443 - Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:18:32 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from ksensenb@protonmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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My partner and I own and live in a duplex in Madison. We rent out the other unit usually to young couples. My property tax in 2022 was \$5,770.69, in one year it jumped to \$8,667.23. Where do you expect us to make up that \$2,896.54 difference?

In a city that is experiencing a housing crisis and a housing affordability crisis, raising property taxes, especially for multi-family dwellings, will only exacerbate the crisis.

I am against raising property taxes on multi-family properties.

Thank you,  
Kurt

**From:** [neilnewsltr@charter.net](mailto:neilnewsltr@charter.net)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** I support City Budget Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:13:33 AM

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In addition, can the common council and mayor's office help organize a Madison resident campaign to lobby the legislature to increase Madison's shared revenue?

Neil Lerner  
1 Laredo Court  
Madison 53719

**From:** [Eva Lewandowski](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 84443 budget referendum comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 10:14:39 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from elewandowski@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Alders,

Regarding the proposed budget referendum, item 84443, I wish there were an option for a slightly smaller referendum with slightly more budget cuts. There is a pretty big difference between the 1% efficiency cuts needed if the current referendum amount is passed and the 5% cuts needed if not.

I would support moderate increases in property taxes with cuts to things like water in city fountains, the library's Kanopy subscription for online movies, Arts Grants program, and Sunday hours at the streets drop-off site. There are many programs like this that are nice luxuries, but are not essential to the health and wellness of our residents or our community.

Thank you,

Eva Lewandowski

--

Eva Lewandowski

**From:** [ALLEN R LIEGEL](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [ALLEN R LIEGEL](#)  
**Subject:** resolution 84443  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 9:15:48 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from arliegel@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear City of Madison Council Members,

My name is Allen Liegel and I live on Madisons west side. I think that it is important for the City of Madison to have the mayor, city attorney or someone in a city department look into why our city has not challenged a 2023 state law that says that Madison only gets about \$29 per resident in shared revenue from the state when the statewide average for municipalities with more than 20,000 people get \$ 114 per resident, according to the Wisconsin Policy Forum. Why are we being penalized? Is there no recourse for us to seek to overturn this decision? Does it have anything to do with the liberal bent of our community? I do support the increased levy of \$22M extra for 2025 but currently do not support this every year going forward until we find out why we are treated so unfairly when it comes to shared revenue and have exhausted the cities efforts to have this injustice corrected. Ideally it would be good to have this corrected before the 2025 budget is finalized but I realize that this may be an unrealistic request.

Sincerely,

Allen Liegel  
6 Southwick Circle  
Madison, WI 53717-1415

**From:** [Beverly Louis](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Property tax increase for deficit  
**Date:** Friday, August 2, 2024 11:14:33 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from tigerlouis@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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A number of things that have been outlined should take place (reduce services, remove positions in department budgets that are not currently filled, cuts in department budgets, put a hold on any projects that have not started, no new projects created, minimal property tax increase, etc.) Tax payers and renters should not have to absorb the total deficit. The current governing body should have been able see this coming and had a decent plan to present so this city would not be in this situation.

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)



**From:** [Kay Lum](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum resolution 84443  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 12:30:49 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from kayserbaser@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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The city of Madison is growing and we need to keep up with infrastructure. Our parks and park services are one of the things that bring people to Madison, keep them here, and keep them happy and healthy! I love the bike trails and the hiking and ski trails, the pools, skate parks, pump tracks... all of it keeps kids busy and active and healthy and out of trouble! It also keeps their parents happy and healthy... I don't have kids, and it keeps ME happy and healthy! why have splash pads if the water is not turned on? Why have ski trails and grooming and snow making if they cannot be used? why have bathrooms if they are locked? If we want Madison to be a place that tourists want to come to and people want to move to, then we need these services!

Please vote for this resolution. Thank you!

--

**Have a Golden Day!**

**Kay Lum**

**608-225-3578**

**Check out my websites**

**For my graphic design work go here:**

[kaylumdesign.com](http://kaylumdesign.com)

**For wild lycra clothing go here:**

[absurdudeez.com](http://absurdudeez.com)

**From:** [James Mand](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** ITEM 68 ON AGENDA  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 10:08:17 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jimmand1948@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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In all good conscience, I cannot support a referendum by the City of Madison asking for an extra \$22 million dollars per year above the mandated levy limits. The city keeps making one expensive mistake after another.

First spending several hundred thousand dollars to remodel the Fleet service bldg. as a men's shelter during covid.

Close to downtown and the Beacon and other homeless support services. Then deciding instead to build a brand new facility on the far northeast side away from most support services.

And the cost keeps going up. What is it now, \$21,000,000?

Instead, deciding to create a new City Market, using the Fleet Service bldg. When Soglin first proposed it, it was to cost \$1,500,000. And be self-supporting.

And paid for by private fund-raising. I donated some funds to it. Mayor Satya was against it, until she got elected. Now she is for it.

Why do we need a pie-in-the sky vanity project?

There are farmer's markets all over the city. And on the Capitol Square. And the Feed Kitchens on Sherman Avenue, which has spawned several successful food related businesses.

Such as Beef, Butter, BBQ.

In the meantime, the cost of the City Market keeps going up. What is it now, \$13,000,000?

And worst of all is the new BRT system.

After abandoning all the transfer stations around the city, including by the new apartment complexes behind Oscar Mayer.

And the large transfer station across from Woodman's on Milwaukee Street.

So, most of the start-up cost for the BRT system, electric buses, and entire new infrastructure of stations is being paid with Federal \$\$\$.

But Madison still has to cover a substantial amount of the cost. And the cost of operations after startup.

The City of Madison seems to have no limit to spending on grandiose projects, with constant construction cost overruns.

Sincerely,

James F. Mand  
49C Golf Course Rd.  
Madison WI 53704

[Jimmand1948@gmail.com](mailto:Jimmand1948@gmail.com)

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [geri marsh](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [geri marsh](#)  
**Subject:** 84443  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 5:24:01 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from gerimash57@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I oppose this referendum of \$22 million ongoing tax levy.  
Geri Marsh

**From:** [J.M.](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please put the referendum on the general election ballot  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 9:21:53 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from joseph.c.matte.3@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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The people of Madison should be able to vote on whether they want a tax increase or not.

**From:** [Aaron McGee](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Gartler, Marc](#)  
**Subject:** Reduce garbage collection, not library hours  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 11:33:50 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from aaronmcgee@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

Please don't allow the mayor to close libraries early or reduce library hours. Madisonians value our libraries. We should be expanding weekend hours at all libraries not reducing them. And closing libraries early on weekday evenings would eliminate patrons' ability to visit after work hours. Please do everything possible to expand library hours.

If revenue is needed, please consider increasing local sales taxes (not property taxes). Property taxes are making Madison too expensive to live in.

Also, while libraries are essential to a smart and healthy community, weekly garbage pick up is not. Garbage collection could easily be reduced to bi-weekly pick up to save money without reducing the quality of life.

Thank you for considering the importance of accessible library hours in a progressive community.

Aaron

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"The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated."  
Mahatma Gandhi.



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**From:** [Sara Meredith](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [council](#); [Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Agenda Item #84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:38:10 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from smeretactics@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good morning Alders, Common Council Members and City Finance Department,

Emailing to let you know of my support for having a \$22 million referendum to increase property taxes \$20 a month rather than cutting city services - including the library, parks, and elimination of arts grants ( to name a few)

I'm also emailing in my capacity as an artist AND full time volunteer of arts non- profit Communication. We believe cuts to many of the city services like the library would have an unfair impact on the city's poorest and disabled residents.

We want our city to be accessible and if that means those who can afford homes and properties pay a bit extra to ensure vital and most accessible city services remain available - then that is what needs to happen.

Thank you for your time and dedication!

photo



**Sara Meredith**

Communication Shop Manager, Artist Smere Tactics

She Her Hers| [smeretactics@gmail.com](mailto:smeretactics@gmail.com)

[www.smeretactics.com](http://www.smeretactics.com)



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**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] VOTE NO ON REFERENDUM  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 10:31:29 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Sunday, August 4, 2024 – 10:29am

Paul Nelson  
1805 Spaight St  
Madison , Wisconsin. 53704 No, do not contact me. All Alders VOTE NO ON  
REFERENDUM I plan to vote “NO” on any referendum to raise property tax revenue to  
address the budget shortfall.



**From:** [Ed Niles](#)  
**To:** [Rummel, Marsha](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on proposed \$22m property tax referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:52:02 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from eniles@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Madison Common Council Members & staff,

I am unable to attend this evening's Council meeting to provide my thoughts in-person, but I wanted to provide a quick comment related to one item of business (proposed \$22m property tax referendum).

To set the appropriate context upfront, given the situation the City of Madison finds itself in regarding the budget I am personally in favor of a referendum to provide some amount of increase above the state-imposed property tax levy limit to help address Madison's budget shortfall. However, as I've expressed to Ald. Rummel and heard from others during community outreach sessions on this topic, I feel it is extremely important that the council and mayor's office take seriously any past spending increases which contributed to the current size of the structural deficit (regardless of whether that structural deficit is "fair" or not). Thus, I'd like to propose that the council take two specific actions:

1. Request that staff prepare a list of any new or adjusted programs or policy changes voted on over the past decade, which contributed a significant amount of annual increased spending in the operating budget above some threshold (maybe >\$150K/year). This list should be made available to the council members and the public, and reviewed for possible items to cut before deciding on a final budget referendum amount. I suspect that given our current budget concerns, regardless of how the council members or citizens may have felt at the time about a particular spending item, there are at least a few things with price tags which look rather foolish under the current circumstances.
2. As city finance staff have pointed out during this process, the City's second largest expense is debt service, which is how the City pays back borrowing for capital projects. Going forward, when the council is voting on a capital budget expenditure of a significant amount, an estimate should be made of how much debt service that specific item would add annually for the next 10 years. This could be a relatively rough estimate utilizing some simplified formula, but it would provide a comparative baseline with other projects under consideration as time goes on. Hopefully by surfacing this aspect of the cost, in addition to the overall capital cost for a given spending item, might help the council make wiser decisions in the future and reign in increases in our debt service.

I thank you for your time in consideration of these ideas. My hope is that by taking these actions (or others of a similar nature) that the council & mayor would show that they have some skin in the game and are reversing some past spending into this deficit. Sharing the burden in this manner should make it easier to ask citizens of Madison to add to their property taxes in a referendum.

-Ed Niles

2129 Linden Ave, Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Benjamin Noffke](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Levy Limit Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 1:37:39 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from bnoffke3790@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Alders,

I'm writing to voice my support for a levy limit increase referendum. Cutting city services will have an enormous impact on the quality of life in Madison, affecting our most vulnerable citizens. If we combine this referendum with continued reform to lower the barrier to new construction for incremental density, I would feel much better about Madison's financial future to keep up quality services.

Thanks for your time,  
Ben Noffke

**From:** [Jo Ann Wagner Novak](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** budget referendum  
**Date:** Saturday, August 3, 2024 5:26:35 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from joann.wagnernovak@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I believe I understand and have read enough information on the referendum for weeks. I don't envy the decision you must make.

It really places quite a financial load on those who own a home and pay property tax regardless of age.

In future, I wish the Council could create a method for sending a clear message from the WI state voters to the Legislature. That message needs to be heard in many state municipalities and communities. For any of us who've been paying attention, this last state budget from the state legislature again continued the clear that just a very few cities in this state are being targeted, short-changed on Shared Revenue. .

How can we drive home this severe political division so that all voters see the danger?

The very few communities that are targeted are the same ones who are responsible for serving up safety and health protection

for all of the state citizens who visit to enjoy the highlights of our capitol city.

In the current communication age, we have lost local journalism, who conveyed these issues to citizens across the state.

Until we have the backing of enough voters throughout the state, we'll still be stuck at the bottom of the Shared Revenue barrel. I anticipate you will end up approving the referendum.

Thank you!

**From:** [PJ Nowak](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** New Taxes  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 9:38:54 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from nowak44@sbcglobal.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders:

I am very concerned about the proposed referendum. Between the \$22M you seek, and the forthcoming MMSD referendum you are talking about raising our taxes close to \$1,000 per year. We are retired and living on a fixed income. We recognize that taxes increase each year, but this is a very significant amount.

I would suggest that you find places in the budget where cuts can be made without touching essential services such as police, fire, and library. Please do not raise taxes or threaten our essential services as that would be the easy way out of the current structural deficit. Work hard and find places in the very large city budget where reasonable cuts can be made. We are approaching a point where we will contribute to solving the city's housing crisis as you tax us out of our home,

Thank you,  
Pete Nowak

**From:** [Mary Odell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:43:24 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from odellme@att.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

**Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.**

It appears that the Mayor and the City Council have not investigated possible funding sources over the last couple of years. It is a cheap shot to blame the Legislature for the problem. In your personal budget I am sure you would have asked more pertinent questions to "live within the current rules" and or have sought solutions before things got so tight.

The worst scenario is that this referendum will only solve this year's shortage. I cannot believe that you as a Council continued your spending without any restraint. And more significantly, you adopted the most expensive BRT version and then did not account for an operating budget for it.

The Mayor has front loaded her Administration with 13 advisors; I would recommend that at least 5 of those positions be cut as they never provide any on the ground services such as you propose to cut.

Certainly this situation should cancel any dreams the Council has of becoming full time. And why go with projects like the Monona Lakefront re-do? Grants result in additional costs for the operating budget, in ad finitum!

Another expense that has become habitual is consulting fees. It is obvious that consultants only work from paper drawings and cost a lot of tax dollars. I have a personal anecdote that probably covers a multitude of consultants: Madison Metro person (consultant) stated that the re-design was predicated on the idea that Madison had never has a bus system. We lost a lot of neighborhood service as a result. Yes, the person said this to a group of residents. Seems counter to improving the system.

As a Council, it is important to take pro-active measures to resolve the budget mess. First please own it as a Council as you followed the Mayor in this spending dilemma. Secondly ask the tough questions. Thirdly scrutinize the developers' proposals and protect the neighborhoods from top down planning.

Sincerely yours,  
Mary Odell

**From:** [Harry Richardson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Approve \$22 Million dollar city referendum and work to get voters to approve it.  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:10:12 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from richardsonharry348@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Greetings,

I urge all the Madison city alders in the strongest possible terms to support Item 68 on tonight's agenda, to put a referendum on the November ballot to plug the \$22 million dollar gap in the city budget next year. It is vital that we maintain and improve city services, especially for the neediest among us. We need improved city services, not cuts to the library hours, cuts to the buses (there has already been a decline in bus service in the process of the brt set up with bus stops removed and longer walks to get a bus among other problems) Without this money the city services would likely be harmed by staff layoffs. This would hurt those in need of city services and the affected workers. I understand property taxes would likely go up, media accounts say \$240 for an average Madison home. As a renter I would expect my landlady to pass on this cost to me and I support this. I will willingly pay more to support vital city services. I say this in full recognition of the school district referendum which is likely to be passed onto me as well.

Once this referendum is passed I would urge all council members to use all available means to educate their constituencies on why this referendum is necessary and why they should vote for it. I will certainly do my part and share my concerns publicly, in groups I belong to and with my friends and neighbors. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and for sitting through what is likely to be a long meeting tonight with more work in the several weeks to come.

Sincerely,  
Harry Richardson  
456 N Few St.

**From:** [Kim I. Richman](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item #68 (08/06/2024)  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 7:46:13 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from krichman@pm.me. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Madam Mayor and alders;

Inflation has its grip on us taxpayers. The cost of medical care is up, housing prices are up, insurance coverage is up, gas is up, home energy costs are up, groceries are up, and on and on.

The proposed property tax increases you're considering will add to the already suffering folks we fight for every single day; middle- and lower-class residents, ESPECIALLY those on low and fixed incomes.

If the referendum passes, most taxpayers will be forced to make cuts to their budgets that the city did NOT want to do with their own budget.

Without a doubt this will force some Madison residents out of their homes and out of the city.

**To ignore these facts is one of the most irresponsible things I have seen from ANY Madison common council.** Remember, you work for us we don't work for you.

- A [SecureSave survey](#) found that 63% of Americans could not cover a \$500 emergency expense by tapping their savings.....
  - According to the Fed's 2022 Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households [survey](#), some 37% of Americans lack enough money to cover a \$400 emergency expense, up from 32% in 2021.....
- Yet you're asking for a ridiculous property tax increase.

There are 21 people who got us into this dilemma, you should get us out of it with more responsible spending, accountability of those receiving funding, **and especially listening to constituents, apparently which nobody did after all of those budget meetings on the different sides of town.**

I am registered and advocating in opposition to Agenda Item #68 (84443) to Authorize the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison.

Do the right thing and figure out a way to take the burden off of the taxpayers for your irresponsible spending.

Regards,  
Kim Richman  
16<sup>th</sup> District  
#

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) encrypted email.



**From:** [Elinor Riley](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum question  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 2:36:13 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from elinorandron@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

Please accept this email in response to the question regarding a potential referendum by the City of Madison Common Council. We do not support this notion of increasing taxes to help defray the increasing city budget. Please vote no to the this proposal.

Respectfully,

Elinor Riley  
Ron Towle  
Residents of 6 Springwood Circle, Madison 53717

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Rob And Deb](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda item 84626  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 5:18:10 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from redmanslake@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

This is radically wrong.  
Please fight to keep our skyline from being destroyed forever.  
There is a reason that this ordinance exists and has for a long time.  
I hope there will be much public outcry over this.  
Too many issues like this get pushed through by developers/investors.  
Please do what is right.

**From:** [GERRY ROESING](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Scheduling a referendum for exceeding municipal property tax limits  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 3:57:42 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from garoesing@aol.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Hello Alders,

I am writing with regard to a potential referendum to exceed state municipal property tax limits. I cannot understand how city government and city schools can continually think they can go to the taxpayers whenever there is a budget crunch. As alders, your role is to manage city spending in line with city revenues. You simply must not exceed the amount of monies available in carrying out city services. While it might be painful to reduce services to make that happen it is, simply, your job. This is one of the reasons you became an alder, to manage city government in a responsible way. To go to the taxpayers for more money whenever there is a shortfall is simply mismanagement and failure to carry out your mandate.

Managing my home requires control to meet my needs within my budget. I cannot get a new roof if I do not have the money to pay for it. I cannot improve my landscaping if I cannot pay the landscaper. And on and on. It seems so simple. Why cannot you alders apply that thinking? Do you all have a rich uncle you can call whenever you want some improvement to your homes that you do not have money to pay for? When your kid wants something you cannot afford you tell them that they cannot have it. Do the right thing and manage city services in a like manner. You will feel better about it in the end that you did the right thing.

Sincerely,

Gerry Roesing  
City of Madison resident

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [David Rohde](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Public Comment on Referendum Resolution Scheduled for August 6  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:20:50 AM

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You don't often get email from dbrohde@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I prefer that the City of Madison live within their means and not increase taxes to fund basic services. We have already seen substantial increases in taxes due to inflated property values. Instead, reduce funding in non-essential areas unimportant to the majority of Madisonians, such as BRT and other "fluffy" projects.

From a concerned tax paying citizen in District 7.

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Budget Referendum 8/6  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 1:56:26 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Tuesday, August 6, 2024 – 1:52pm

Rachel Rovinsky  
746 W Main St  
Apt 306

Madison, Wisconsin. 53715 Yes, by email. [rachirovinsky828@gmail.com](mailto:rachirovinsky828@gmail.com) All Alders Budget Referendum 8/6 Hi, I am a graduate student at UW-Madison and Madison resident. I am urging the Common Council to approve the \$22 million referendum that would balance the budget and allow for continued support of public services, including our libraries. This money collected from property tax should go towards services that support our most marginalized communities. This means allocating more money towards libraries, fire department, garbage collection, and parks, NOT police, as police primarily harm BIPOC residents of Madison.

**From:** [Michelle Russell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Madison Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Item 68, Referendum resolution 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 11:58:22 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from mmartellrussell@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello esteemed Alders,

We all wear many hats and hold many roles in our community. I'm a mom, a public school advocate, a neurodivergent parent of a neurodivergent child, a fervent democrat, a covid-conscious reluctant homeschooling family, a teacher. Of the ones I juggle, the role of an advocate for immigrants/English learners is one I would like to speak for today.

Prior to moving to Madison, I worked as an English Language Development coach/teacher for a school district, supporting teachers in learning best practices for working with a growing number of English-learners. After the election in 2016, I volunteered to teach English as a Second Language (ESL) at Sandburg Elementary. It was a need in our community that wasn't being met. The first meeting was standing room only, full of moms, dads, and grandparents, all neighbors who had the need to learn English. All of the members of my ESL class were immigrants, with limited schooling in their home countries. All of them wanted the chance for a better life here in Madison, and they knew that learning English was key to that success.

The Imagination Center at Reindahl is integral to the development of our community to be a place that fully supports our growing number of youth and immigration population. The resources it would provide for people at all stages of life (parents, learners, preschoolers, babies) is a right that not all people in the Sandburg community get. A lot of families do not have the access to a vehicle or time to get to a library in the Madison library system.

The Imagination Center at Reindahl would be a place to gather and learn. (I had many, many challenges in finding availability in time and space to hold my classes at Sandburg.) There is an equity divide from the free programming my kids have access to because I have the means to bring them to another MPL, albeit not convenient. These families are missing out on early childhood development classes, skill-based offerings (such as ESL, taxes), and enrichment. All of this programming would enrich a child's life, English language development, and support their parents in becoming active members of our community. My kids went to school with children who *\*never\** visited the library before. Here, on the Northeast side of Madison, Wisconsin. This is an access issue. This remains an unfulfilled promise for residents of the Greater Sandburg Area.

Please approve the referendum to not delay the building and funding of the Imagination Center again. The success of the children and families of the community here needs it.

Thank you,  
Michelle Russell  
Great Sandburg Resident

**From:** [Suzanne Rybeck](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 7:51:39 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from srybeck@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear City of Madison Alders,

I strongly oppose the property tax increase referendum.

Please see below:

**"The proposed property tax increase referendum will place a great and undue hardship on Madison's taxpayers. 63% of Americans cannot cover a \$500.00 emergency bill from savings and 37% lack the funds to cover a \$400 emergency bill. This tax increase will force taxpayers to make gut wrenching cuts in their already stretched and thin budgets to cover this increased cost."**

Sincerely,

Suzanne Keyes Rybeck  
408 Marston Avenue  
Madison, WI 53703

**From:** [Glori Sabin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Opposition Of Agenda Item #68  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 7:52:42 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [kdietzman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kdietzman@sbcglobal.net). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders,

I implore all of you Alders to NOT authorize or approve any reference relating to exceeding the municipal property tax limits in the City of Madison. Home owners are already struggling with the exceedingly high inflation of daily living without further devastation. We CANNOT pay anymore than you have already authorized by approving expenditures out of the realm reason and necessities. You are jeopardizing our ability to continue living in our homes with out of control spending. Please listen to your constituents who are pleading with you to eliminate any thought of exceeding the municipal property tax limits. Thank you for making sound and responsible decisions.

Glori D Sabin  
10 Jubilee Cir  
Madison Wi 53718



**From:** [Glori Sabin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Cuts  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:01:29 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [kdietzman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kdietzman@sbcglobal.net). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders,

If there are any suggested budget cuts to City of Madison services, the almighty overspending Mayor's office positions and maybe even her salary should be THE FIRST on the chopping block! She should be incredibly embarrassed as she sees no fault in her greediness to ADD high paying positions to her office and budget. How and why were these warranted? Really, all of you need a critical thinking course along with sound and conscious decision making. Shame on you! I'm a disgusted resident of the City of Madison.

Glori D Sabin  
10 Jubilee Cir  
Madison Wi 53718  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Chris Schatz](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FOR MEETING AGENDA  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:48:29 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from cschatz@riseup.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Why would we spend more money on this city, when the city is being treated like a playground for the military and not as the wonderful place to live it once was and definitely no longer is. *Address the elephant in the room: **The F-35s have to be relocated—the question is how, when, and why did you do this to us in the first place?*** Speak for your constituents, and make this right ASAP. Thank you!

Chris Schatz  
2429 Hoard St.

p.s. Noise is a major neighborhood concern in my neighborhood, beyond even the F-35s. The use of public space by city services is contributing to this, so you do not have my support to spend money on those until some improvement (or I move, as seems inevitably the only solution).

**From:** [Keith Schlesinger](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Tax Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 12:44:37 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from keith.schlesinger@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Alders,

I am reading an online story on WKOW and it said the Mayor is listening to residents on how to deal with the deficit.

First of all, listen to your taxpayers when they send a suggestion to the Mayor's office. She has a staff but NOBODY bothered to respond to my email.

I am addressing the park and ride lot at Dutch Mill Road, in southeast Madison. You are giving FREE PARKING to people in that parking lot while they hop a coach to O'Hare or Midway. Dane County charges \$10 per day to park at the MSN airport. The City of Madison is working AGAINST the County of Dane by giving away free parking at Dutch Mill.

Look at how many parking spaces you have there. Yes, go out there and count them. If it is a true park and ride facility, give them a 24 hour in and out policy with no charge. Otherwise , \$10 a day to park there.

You are missing revenue big time. You need to make this a user fee parking lot if parked for more than 24 hours. It is a simple ticket in ticket out system.

I just hope you guys listen to taxpayers. The Mayor's office does not.

By the way, I will vote NO on your referendum to raise taxes. I am retired.

Keith Schlesinger  
District 16  
Madison

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Vote NO on tax referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 8:51:26 AM

---

Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

-----Original Message-----

From: Schoff Brothers <5942southhill@gmail.com>  
Sent: Sunday, August 4, 2024 6:23 PM  
To: council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: Vote NO on tax referendum

[You don't often get email from 5942southhill@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders,

I cannot attend the upcoming council meeting to speak.

I am strongly opposed to the city plan for a request for an additional \$22,000,000 by referendum.

Property taxes for homeowners are already crushing because of steep increases in property values. And, with those increases, the city must be bringing in far more dollars than just 10 years ago.... And yet you "need" more?

The school district has blown through the \$300,000,000 from their recent referendum and is also planning to ask the taxpayers for more.

In the last 5 years, the city seems to readily spend money with reckless abandon on extravagant projects like the public market, BRT, and Monona lakeshore improvements. While each of these projects has merit, none of them is truly necessary or represents a core part of the city's responsibility.

Two former mayors have publicly expressed concern about the city's finances.

Despite considerable financial support from the federal government for the BRT project, the city's share of the cost of these projects far exceeds the \$22,000,000 you plan on asking for.

In light of the many large projects the city is pushing, the decision to cast the "need" for a referendum as the only way to avoid deep service and personnel cuts appears deeply disingenuous.

Please do not approve a referendum.

Please go back to the budget, determine what the core responsibilities of the city are, and construct a spending plan that stays within the available resources without further raising taxes.

Sincerely,  
An increasingly unhappy lifelong Madisonian

**From:** [Christine Schwartz](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support for budget referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 1:34:49 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am writing in support of the referendum for exceeding the municipal property tax limits. One of the reasons that Madison is such a wonderful place to live are our parks, services, good schools, and clean and safe environment. We should have local control to make our own determination about the level at which we wish to tax ourselves for the benefit of the community. I strongly support the proposed referendum.

Sincerely,  
Christine Schwartz  
117 Van Deusen St  
Madison, WI 53715

**From:** [Erin Skarivoda](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FUND OUR LIBRARIES  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 5:33:32 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [erin.skarivoda@gmail.com](mailto:erin.skarivoda@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Common Council Members,

I am a staff member at UW-Madison and a constituent of District 6 here in Madison. **I am writing in support of agenda item #68 (84443)** for the August 6 Common Council meeting. Increasing property taxes is far preferable to cutting library services. **I urge you to take action to support our local libraries and city services.**

Libraries are an essential part of our community. The resources they provide go far beyond books and information. They have free meeting spaces for entrepreneurs, free children's programming for families, and free community events. At the library, anyone can get help filing their taxes, mending their clothes, and learning all different kinds of new skills. Libraries have internet access for people who may not have it at home. They have safe, warm shelter for people who may not have a safe, warm house or home. All of these things are important to the safety, sustainability, and happiness of Madisonians.

If you want safer communities, reduce funding to the Madison Police Department (for example, starting with Matt Kenny) and increase the funding to the Madison Public Libraries.

Thank you for your time. I urge you to vote in favor of this referendum and continue working to find ways to resource our community.

Sincerely,  
Erin

**Erin Skarivoda**

she/her

email: [erin.skarivoda@gmail.com](mailto:erin.skarivoda@gmail.com)

phone: 920-606-1849

**From:** [Jon standridge](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** August 6 referendum meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:21:10 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jonstandridge66@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Since I am on a fixed retirement income, the proposed tax hikes will have an impact on my household. It seems to me that the city has been on a spending spree. I have two suggestions aimed at reducing spending and reducing the size of the referendum amount.

1. Put phase 2 of the BRT program on a permanent hold.
2. Reconsider and eliminate every new position created in the last 5 years, starting with the new communications position in the Mayor's office.



**From:** [john.steines](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: District 15: Meeting and Event Highlights for the Week of August 5, 2024  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:21:11 AM

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You don't often get email from [jsteines@gmail.com](mailto:jsteines@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Regarding # 83. 83601 SUBSTITUTE: Amending Section 27.05 of the Madison General Ordinances to refine lawn and property maintenance provisions.

I strongly support authentic institutionalized guidance toward pollinator-friendly habitat wherever it can be found.

Comments you've already received speak to 'lawn' grasses & care behaviors of people who thrive in maintaining them (not me), lack of a list of unacceptable invasives (potentially including the native invasive pokeweed - all of the parts of which are toxic, and is now spreading adjacent to Fair Oaks Ave/Starkweather Creek. I guess we're stuck with that! Especially if there's no educational program to address & encourage enlightened removal of dangerous species, in favor of care of native habitats (pollinator-friendly & minimization of outdated 'lawn-grass' ethic).

Respectfully, John Steines Chicago Ave, Madison WI.

On Mon, Aug 5, 2024 at 12:03 PM Alder Martinez-Rutherford, District 15

<[noreply@cityofmadison.com](mailto:noreply@cityofmadison.com)> wrote:

[View this email in your browser](#)

[City of Madison](#)



[Front entrance of the City-County Building on a sunny day](#)



# Meeting and Event Highlights for the Week of August 5, 2024

**HOW DO I PARTICIPATE IN COMMON COUNCIL MEETINGS?** The Common Council generally holds meetings twice a month on Tuesdays, starting at 6:30 pm in hybrid format. Members of the public can participate in the following ways:

- Watch Online
- Attend In Person or Virtually
- Register for Public Comment
- Provide Comments before a Meeting

To learn more about how to participate in Common Council meetings, visit: [www.cityofmadison.com/council/meetings-agendas/participate-in-council-meetings](http://www.cityofmadison.com/council/meetings-agendas/participate-in-council-meetings).

## Boards, Commissions, and Committee Meetings

Note: This is not a complete list of meetings for this upcoming week. All meetings and their details can be found at the [Meeting Schedule page](#).

- **Common Council:** The Common Council meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 6, in hybrid format at 6:30 p.m. Agenda items include taking public comment on a resolution authorizing the scheduling of a referendum relating to exceeding the municipal property tax limits, as well as a resolution limiting the granting of “Class A” liquor licenses for the purpose of limiting density and proximity of such licenses to sensitive sites.
  - [Meeting Details](#)
  - [Meeting Agenda](#)
  - [Register for Public Comment](#)
  - [Watch Online](#)
- **Sustainable Madison Committee:** The Sustainable Madison Committee meeting will take place on Monday, August 5, in virtual format at 4:30 p.m. Agenda items include refining lawn and property maintenance provisions of Madison General Ordinances.
  - [Meeting Details](#)
  - [Meeting Agenda](#)
  - [Register for Public Comment](#)
  - [Watch Online](#)
- **Landmarks Commission:** The Landmarks Commission meeting will take place on Monday, August 5, in virtual format at 5:00 p.m. Agenda items include adopting the Northeast Area Plan and adopting the West Area Plan.
  - [Meeting Details](#)
  - [Meeting Agenda](#)

- [Register for Public Comment](#)
- [Watch Online](#)

If you would like more information about becoming a member of a City board, commission, or committee, please visit [the page linked here](#).

#### Public Information Meetings

- [Neighborhood Meeting on the Völker Development Proposal & Deon's Live Bait License Renewal, Monday, August 5](#): A neighborhood meeting to hear more about the Völker Development proposal is scheduled for Monday, August 5, 2024, at 6pm in the Bloom Bake Shop space at Northstreet, 557 North Street. After the development team's presentation, you will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, Madison Petroleum LLC, owner of Deon's Live Bait and Minnows located at 2301 Commercial Avenue, was unable to submit their Class A Beer License renewal paperwork by the deadline. As a result, they have now applied for a new Class A Beer License so they may continue selling beer at the convenience store. If you'd like to hear more about the license application, or if you have questions or feedback to share, there will be an opportunity to do so at the Monday, August 5, 2024, neighborhood meeting about Völker Development proposal.

#### News & Announcements

- [Public Comment on Referendum Resolution Scheduled for August 6](#): The Madison Common Council is encouraging residents to submit public testimony on an important resolution affecting the City budget at its next meeting. *[posted August 2, 2024]*
- [Road Closures - Stevens Street Reconstruction](#) *posted August 2, 2024*

Beginning Monday, August 5, Stevens Street will be closed to through traffic from North Franklin Avenue to Grand Avenue. This is part of the North Franklin Avenue and Stevens Street Resurfacing project that will replace aging and deteriorating... *[posted August 2, 2024]*

- [August Moving Days: How to Set Out Appliances, Furniture, & Other Large Items](#): When placing large items out for pickup, follow these guidelines... *[posted August 2, 2024]*
- [August Moving Days: Daily Collections of Carts in Student Move Area](#): Starting at 6:30 a.m. on Monday August 5, 2024 residents in the downtown moving days area can place trash and recycling collection carts out for daily pickup. The Streets Division will have crews patrolling the move-out area emptying collection... *[posted August 1, 2024]*
- [City of Madison Absentee Ballot Drop Boxes Updated Ahead of Primary](#): Madison's 14 absentee ballot drop boxes are getting an updated look ahead of the Aug. 13 primary election. *[posted July 31, 2024]*
- [August Moving Days: How to Recycle Televisions, Computers, and Other](#)

[Electronics](#): Electronics must be delivered to the Streets Division's drop-off sites, or to a reputable private electronics recycler in the area. All electronics are accepted for free from City of Madison residents at the Streets Division drop-off... *[posted July 31, 2024]*

- [In-Person Absentee Voting Begins Today](#): In-person absentee voting for the August 13 Partisan Primary begins today. "Avoid lines at the polls on election day and visit one of our local libraries to cast your ballot early," said Mayor Rhodes-Conway. "In-person absentee voting has begun. You..." *[posted July 30, 2024]*
- [August Moving Days: How to Use the Large Item Work Order System during the Move Out](#): Starting the week of August 4, 2024 and ending on Friday, August 23 2024, the large item work order rules are different for residents who live in the student move-out area. *[posted July 30, 2024]*
- [Want to Vote by Mail? Request Absentee Today](#): With just two weeks remaining before the August 13 Partisan Primary, the City Clerk's Office urges voters wishing to receive an absentee through the mail to submit their requests today. "Don't lose the opportunity to make your vote count," said Mayor... *[posted July 29, 2024]*
- [August Moving Days: Make a Plan and Donate Today](#): The annual August Moving Days for downtown Madison will soon get underway. Thousands of Madison residents will be changing homes within the downtown moving days area and you will need to decide just what to do with all their stuff. The... *[posted July 29, 2024]*

Please [visit the City news webpage](#) to find additional news and announcements and to subscribe to receive notification of news releases as they are posted.

## Events

- [Hospitalized Voting Begins, Tuesday, August 6](#): Beginning today, voters who are hospitalized can [appoint an agent](#) to:...
- [Blood Pressure Screening, Tuesday, August 6](#): Free Blood Pressure Screening is available to older adults, on the first and third Tuesday, 11:15 - 12:00 pm. Please find additional upcoming Madison Senior Center events listed on the [Madison Senior Center event calendar](#).
- [Madison Night Market, Thursday, August 8](#): The Office of the Common Council is excited to host its resource table at the Madison Night Market on Thursday, August 8. We welcome you to stop by and say hi and share your feedback with Council staff and alders!
- [Dane Dances: Luisito Rosario / V05, Friday, August 9](#): Food and cocktails are available for purchase at 4:30 PM. [Lake Vista Café](#) will be open for your enjoyment along with [La Taguara](#), [Melly Mells Catering](#), and Kipps Kitchen. Visa and MasterCard accepted. Feel free to bring a blanket, chair, and picnic basket Sorry, carry-in alcohol is prohibited. Seating on the rooftop is limited.
- [Ride the Drive 2024, Sunday, August 11](#): It's thousands of happy healthy people coming together to experience parks and open streets in a single,

one-day, free, community event. Since the inaugural Ride the Drive in 2009, this event continues to celebrate Madison's commitment to a healthy, active lifestyle focusing on the environmental and economic impacts and the importance of social integration.

### **Parks Alive Dates!**

Parks Alive builds stronger neighborhoods and connects neighbors to their parks through fun, family-friendly activities, music and free food. Events are held in parks across the city and throughout the summer. Connect with your neighbors and engage with your community at a Parks Alive event near you! Events start at 5:00 p.m.

- [Parks Alive at Hammersley Park on Wednesday, August 7](#)

Please find additional upcoming City of Madison Parks events listed on the [City parks event calendar](#).

Additional upcoming events can also be found on the [City events calendar](#).

[View full blog post](#)

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City of Madison  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53703

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**From:** [Donald Taylor](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Kat Taylor](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum question  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 6:10:27 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from taylorlat@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

It says on the website that you want to raise the spending at 20,000,000 otherwise 150 positions will have to be cut.that breaks down to 134000 per position. That seems very high. What positions would be cut and would it make more sense, I salaries are that high,to give a pay cut so as to afford keeping those positions?  
[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

**From:** [Steve Verburg](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** in favor of budget referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 1:40:19 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from stverburg@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders,

I'm writing to express support for placing the budget referendum on the ballot as a way to protect crucial social services and other city services that mitigate the harm caused by Madison's racial disparities.

Best,

Steve Verburg  
Wendy Ln  
Madison, WI

**From:** [JW](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Input on additional property tax referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 7:25:58 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

We do not support the increase to cover the 22 million so called budget crisis funding. It is only your view that it is a "crisis" but too us its a fiscal mismanagement and refusal to actually live within a budget.

We saw the mayor on the news last night and sensed her vail threat said with a smirk (that just appears as Bully tactics and not true concern). We want to know what to keep and what to cut"! A very smooth move to threaten people to vote yes out of fear!

Our administration has done many wonderful improvements to this city over the past years, and their motives are right for doing so...instead of kicking everything down the road like past administrations have. Thank you!

However, we feel that some things seen as progressive priorities maybe so, but do not all have to be done right away, like the massive metro changes, a rail corridor and station for Amtrak...maybe costs should be put on a time plan and done when the incoming reserves are there, not pushing overspending on taxpayers and threatening them by cutting services. If that needs to be done, then do so. You can't give everything to everyone all the time!

Sometimes sacrifice is necessary to fund priorities, and other things worked in as the city grows and tax revenues. One way to increase revenue is to bring in more small through large businesses...Madison is hard to work with from a business perspective and we have seen many businesses leave, turned away or turned off by the administrative polices and TAXES here...and the surrounding communities got Epic, major retailers, and many more businesses that should have been here.

And stop all the tax incremental financing tax breaks for all these residential developers...they are not paying their fair share and it costs a fortune to build out the infrastructure and maintain it. Its a real boon for T Wall and the many others who are getting rich while you overtax the working homeowners and renters through their rent increases.

We appreciate your social consciousness and wanting to care for your community, but don't pass that burden on us all the time assuming that we agree with all your social good programs...yes, in a perfect world and economy, we would readily say yes to all, but with all the inflation and job cutbacks, slowed wage growth and TAXES, we just can not do it all to fulfill the plans you have..consider that. Yo are driving us out of our homes.



It has gotten so expensive to live here we are planning to sell our home to get out of this city and county, our house value has dropped 60K the past three months according to market stats after you sent us our assessment...the basis for the real property taxes, so we will be paying more taxes than we should if market value is truly fair...!

You say you care about local business and people expect high levels of services and community services, yes, that is wonderful, but not if you no longer have the discretionary income to pay and enjoy them...please explain to the small businesses that people aren't spending and patronizing them anymore or as much because of out-of-control costs of living and your tax increases! And less patronage to business is less county and city taxes for you too...think of that mayor and alders!

We have strong feelings about the fiscal situation and lack of good management and could go on, but you get our point, and no if the vote is 51 to 49, yes it is a majority and politicians like you say the voters have spoken, but not true, you only hear those who support your agenda and ghost the rest of us. So, let the librarians feel anxious, let them cut their hours some...our employer just chopped 20 jobs in one month, and have not filled another ten who left or retired the past six months off loading work on the survivors in the office..now that really causes anxiety! Poor librarians...at least they have a job! And great benefits thanks to the mayors generous raises following covid.

Last, lets not forget inflation continues despite the CPI made up numbers people, lets not forget the school referendum for one half trillion dollars coming up, and lets assume the county, state and MATC will likely increase their taxes too! How much can you bleed out of working people until they collapse.

How much are you taking away from us actually being able to enjoy living in this once wonderful small-town city and all of the High level of services and amenities when we have no money to enjoy them? We guess we can drive by and look at those who enjoy all the subsidies and freebies given by the city on our wallets,

We can ride around and look at all the panhandlers you allow to roam the intersections...and support all those you feel we need to support when they move here with nothing. Again, we'd love to take care of all budget and other peoples needs. But our funds are finite, unlike the City of Madison's tax extraction (and when you use veiled threats and fear its extortion) systems.

We know you may read this. Doubtful, and will sneer and chuckle as you do and ghost us and cancel us as non-supporters and hit delete! That is how we feel when contacting you anyway. Madison Wisconsin is a wonderful place, but we can no longer afford to live here...so you will say.."if you don't like the politics and policies, move...sadly you are forcing us to do so"!

Thank you for at least encouraging us to voice our feelings, but we doubt it matters. Remember too, that a majority of those that vote these referenda are students and short time residents who do not have to pay for and live with the consequences of their votes...that is a hazard of university towns and others who vote for everything that pay little or no taxes to get more free services...our government has weakened Americans through masking social support as a hand up when in reality it makes them weak and entitled and unmotivated to EARN the American Dream—a fallacy today! We love to come home from work to see the news of those who don't work having rallies and marches protesting for more privileges after we work all day to pay for our lives and theirs! Now that is real social justice our council and leaders support.

Warm regards,

Just two meaningless 40-year residents who will hopefully soon be former ones

PS, please forgive any spelling, grammar or typographical errors, I have lost much of my sight, so this took considerable effort to draft!

**From:** [taylor warsek](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum Comment  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 9:11:13 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from taylor.warsek@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

We will not be voting yes on this referendum. The current mayor has been in office as mayor for almost the last 6 years and was an Alder for a few years before that. All during that time, Madison has been "brewing" this budget deficit. And all the while she has started a number of "pet projects" , for what appears to us, to be a way to pad her resume to seek a better job opportunity in DC. The spending on these projects has been what we consider Fiscal Mismanagement in light of the increasing deficit. It also appears the mayor has cunningly developed a core of alders who vote yes on all her project spending to assure her projects always go forward, no matter the cost. And now we ,as taxpayers , are expected to foot the bill. And now the threats have started of what will happen if the referendum is not passed. This seems like a type of "blackmail" to us. Before ANY layoffs or job cuts are instituted, It seems the real pain ought to start at the top of a very heavy and expensive Mayor's staff and all her "pet projects".

Rick Taylor and Linda Warsek

**From:** [dpwaugh@gmail.com](mailto:dpwaugh@gmail.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [bob.klebba@gmail.com](mailto:bob.klebba@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** budget consideration - the referendum question  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 1:22:36 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear city leaders,

My first thought is one of concern about what raising property taxes will do on housing costs. These increases will directly impact those already struggling to pay rent. I think the exercise of a reduced budget is very important and helpful and might be worth trying on. It strikes me that this is an equity issue because while the most affluent among us can afford the increase, we will be making life harder for quite a number of others.

One piece of the puzzle that is missing for me and would like more clarity on is the impact TIF districts have on revenue and services. I understand that those funds have strict use requirements, however, should we be evaluating closing or shrinking geographically some open TIF districts? Do we need to rethink the whole idea of public subsidy to fund development? Should we be having more coordination with county government to better manage competitive development across municipal boundaries?

Plus, please sell the bus barn on East Washington. That type of use is more appropriate elsewhere and is contrary to the nature of transit oriented development planning.

Best  
David Waugh  
704 E. Gorham St

**From:** [Jan Weatherhogg](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** City Budget- URGENT!!!!  
**Date:** Sunday, August 4, 2024 4:39:39 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from downija@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

It's time for the City Council and Mayor to pay attention to the needs of the Madison taxpayers, not how to pass more expenses on to the taxpayers! Your job was supposed to work within a budget, not add additional expenses and misuse funds. Your solution to cover the budget deficit is to increase the property tax. That transfers your lack of fiscal management and responsibility to the taxpayers and that is unconscionable! You obviously do not care that 63% of Americans cannot cover a \$500 emergency bill from savings and 37% lack the funds to cover a \$400 emergency bill. This tax increase will force taxpayers to make cuts in their already stressed budgets! We have always budgeted for our property taxes, that is our responsibility! Now, it's time for you to do your job, you work for us. We're tired of doing your job!

**From:** [Larry and Ginny White](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Conklin, Nikki](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** REJECT Tax Levy Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:58:44 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from lgwhites@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders: After watching the budget briefing given by the mayor and budget director at your July 16th meeting, we remain unconvinced of the need for a tax levy referendum.

The mayor said a structural deficit has existed since 2012 when the Republican legislature and Governor Scott Walker imposed harsh revenue restrictions. We can't help but wonder, "Why has she spent freely during five years in office and only now is developing a five-year plan to address the deficit?"

We understand why she and many alders prefer to use a cost-to-continue budget model. It's easier than having to evaluate the need for and effectiveness of all budget items and make difficult choices.

The proposed language in the referendum is expected to say that it's "for the purpose of funding police, fire, garbage collection, parks and library operations *and other City services and operations*" (emphasis ours). This is a well-known tactic from the bureaucratic playbook: lead with essential services and continue to fund a catch-all category of nice-to-have positions, programs, and projects.

In discussing the impact of a rejected referendum, the mayor spoke in terms of the number of jobs that would be lost. Framing the issue as jobs lost is simplistic and intended to strike an emotional chord. Now she has introduced another tried-and-true scare tactic: deep cuts to popular city services like library hours, the Goodman pool, street repair, Madison Metro Transit service, a police program on gangs and neighborhood crime, and more.

She doesn't mention potential cuts in other areas, for example:

- Tax credits or benefits granted to third parties such as developers and community organizations
- Spending on health/human services programming at seven times the average rate of Wisconsin's 35 largest cities
- Foreign and domestic travel by the mayor, city staff, and alders
- Mayor's Office staffing
- Specific programs and new or planned initiatives and infrastructure.

We've seen no evidence of good-faith efforts on the part of the mayor and alders. You don't acknowledge that you helped grow the deficit, nor will you and the mayor try to make strategic cuts to nonessential positions, projects, and programs. Instead, the mayor recently filled a communications manager position

(approved by alders) at a salary of over \$90K/year. We think he might well have been hired to help convince taxpayers to support the referendum. But, personally, we remain dubious and are planning to vote NO.

Respectfully,

Ginny and Larry White  
71 Oak Creek Trail  
Madison, WI 53717

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Make cuts - quit spending more money  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 9:51:47 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Monday, August 5, 2024 – 9:47pm

Christine Wolf  
4617 Eldorado

Madison, Wisconsin. 53716 Yes, by email. [1wolfchris@gmail.com](mailto:1wolfchris@gmail.com) All Alders Make cuts - quit spending more money Why aren't more cuts being made to planning staff and community development? Instead, you & mayor are threatening cuts for the BASIC SERVICES, such as trash, collection, fire and police. And you're approving MORE spending on items like Reindal Park. Your planning department is the "central power." No cuts to upper management, just the lowest level of staff. Your own personal budgets must be a mess if you just keep spending. Very disrespectful to us city residents.



**From:** [Sally Young](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 11:41:34 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To: Madison City Council

In the past, Madison residents have been generous with voting to voluntarily increase their property taxes. However, I would like to go on record as being against the city's upcoming referendum. I am on a fixed income that is not keeping up with inflation. We have an ambitious mayor and I have not seen the city council doing much to restrain her ambitions. It is no surprise that the state has unfairly targeted us with a paltry amount of state funding. It is no surprise that the pandemic funds would end soon. So, why did this 'crisis' materialize in the past year? Why were we not working harder to balance the budget by forgoing wonderful, forward-looking but unnecessary projects two, three, four years ago?

Sally Young

4112 Major Ave.

**"One of the most dangerous illusions of the climate crisis is that the technology of modern life makes us invincible...our bubble of invincibility is far more fragile than we know."**

**Jeff Goodall author of *The Heat Will Kill You First: Life and Death on a Scorched Planet*.**

**From:** [Jacklyn DaWalt](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:18:22 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from jd.jerome41@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Voting NO on a City Referendum is somewhat foreign to us but we believe this administration has been spending money frivolously on projects and an excessive Number of Deputies to the Mayor - are they truly necessary? BRT is another ego booster for the Mayor and not a necessity. We are well aware of the different pots of City money but it is past time to spend on essential services and do those correctly.

Jacklyn and Judy Da Walt  
4119 Jerome Street

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [James Ford II](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:23:44 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jhfordii@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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The mayor's approach to budgeting, in my opinion, is based on fear tactics. Vote for my referendum or face budget cuts and higher fees. Either approach places most of the burden on homeowners. What about the out-of-state corporate developers getting rich off Madison residents? Let's use four commercial properties to underscore the point - Whitney Point, Whitney Reserve, Hampton Place, and Sequoya Commons. The properties have 48, 49, 59 and 101 units and the property tax per unit are \$3,172.9, \$4,355.19, \$3,911.33, and \$4,469.85 respectively.

U.S. News and World Report puts the average annual cost to educate a student in Madison at \$16,137. For taxes at these properties to cover the MMSD infrastructure, no more than 9, 13, 14, and 28 students can live at each of the four properties respectively. If the student number is greater, these property owners are not paying their fair share to support the city infrastructure.

I raised this issue at a May budget meeting and shared my concerns with the alders and city finance staff. No response. So, I will ask again -how will city leaders ensure that out-of-state developers pay equitable property taxes to support the city infrastructure during construction and afterwards?

Plans to balance the budget need to consider all options including new ways to raise revenues for the out of town and in town developers who are profiting from the residents of Madison without covering the cost associated with the changing infrastructure that their new developments introduce to the city of Madison.

We should not be talking about cuts to fire or olive services or the Goodman Pool, the libraries, or to poll workers. It's time to stand up to the Mayor and say no to her fear based approach to budgeting and make sure that the profiteering out of town and in town developers are paying their fair share and not passing the burden to taxpayers or those who are paying ever increasing rents.

Sincerely

Jay Ford  
5026 Marathon Drive  
Madison Wisconsin 53705

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPad](#)

**From:** [Cam Yang](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** In Opposition of Resolution 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:23:47 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [cyang@freedom-inc.org](mailto:cyang@freedom-inc.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

My name is Cam Yang and I am writing in opposition of Resolution [84443](#). The Madison police department does not need any more increases to their budget, and in addition, this property tax increase will only increase the current cost of living for the most vulnerable communities, especially during economic times such as these. I'm asking that you all rework this resolution, remove the police department from this resolution, and come up with a better economic algorithm/equation that allows vulnerable homeowners (who are living paycheck to paycheck) a better fighting chance to keep their homes.

Best,

--



**Cameron PajYeeb Yang, they/them/theirs/nws**

Development Manager

[cyang@freedom-inc.org](mailto:cyang@freedom-inc.org)

(608) 515-5518

2110 Luann Lane Madison, WI 53713

**From:** [Sarah Hamilton](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:29:25 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am opposed to this referendum to increase property taxes to balance the budget.

The mayor needs to start managing the known existing funds and stop expecting the citizens to bail her out. Before accepting federal funds you should be sure you know if you have the funds to pay the city's share. OR have a referendum asking the citizens if they are willing to pay more taxes before accepting federal funds. Citizens can't continually cover for the mismanagement of funds. We are retired and do not have endless funds. We have a tight budget to cover our own household expenses and can't continually be expected to cover your mismanagement. Stop overspending! Stop expecting citizens to bail you out!

Sarah Hamilton  
401 Blue Ridge Pkwy  
Madison, WI 53705

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**Subject:** Tonight's Comments Before the City of Madison Common Council  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:19:32 PM

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## **Madison Common Council Public Hearing (8-6-24)**

**By: A. J. Nino Amato, former City Alder**

**64 Oak Creek Trail, Madison 53717**

As a life-long resident of Madison who have consistently supported increases in Madison's city budgets and MMSD budgets – Madison taxpayers and renters are feeling the financial crunch of increase rents and property taxes and have reached a “financial threshold” – and worse yet, feel our elected officials and some of our city agencies are taking city taxpayers generosity for granted.

Without question, everyone who has spoken this evening – including myself -- want to solve the City of Madison's historic \$27 million-dollar structural deficit -- but the proposed 5-year budget plan and city referendum is simply “re-organizing the deck chairs on the Titanic.”

Worse yet, Madison's Common Council progressives who got elected on the promise of making Madison housing affordable for all citizens, and for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, by reducing Madison's racial disparities - have failed in delivering their promises.

And by increasing city property taxes, which will lead to increasing people's rents, will make things worse for the people who need our help the most.

**Simply put: We cannot solve our fiscal crisis, with the same policy thinking we used when we created this fiscal crisis.**

Therefore, it is time for the city to create an “Emergency Fiscal Crisis Task Force,” consisting of former city alders, county and city department heads and business & labor leaders – to produce a strategic financial strategy, which will:

- (1) address the current legislative fiscal restraints,
- (2) develop a 2025 restructuring budget that focuses on basic city service and measurable cost-accounting outcomes, and
- (3) to determine what city programs and services are working and those that are not.

The Task Force will report back to the City Council on or before November 1<sup>st</sup> with their re-structuring budget recommendations and services provided by our essential city workers.

Once the Task Force presents their recommendation, the city should then make their case before the state legislature and before the voters during the April 2025 general election.

**From:** [tom Beck](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); [Finance](#)  
**Subject:** cost cutting ideas  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:29:16 PM  
**Attachments:** [A Sustainable Long Term Plan for Madison Budget -- Memo.pdf](#)

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1. outsource janitors
2. sell fancy new electric fire truck, buy a used model
3. Sell fancy new electric garbage truck, buy a used model
4. outsource all IT services
5. stop all green ideas and wasteful spending

<https://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/documents/budget/2025/A%20Sustainable%20Long%20Term%20Plan%20for%20Madison%20Budget%20-%20Memo.pdf>

Thanks,  
Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights  
**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**





## Office of the Mayor

Satya Rhodes-Conway, Mayor

City-County Building, Room 403

210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.

Madison, WI 53703

Phone: (608) 266-4611 | Fax: (608) 267-8671

[mayor@cityofmadison.com](mailto:mayor@cityofmadison.com)

[cityofmadison.com](http://cityofmadison.com)

July 16, 2024

**To: Madison Common Council**

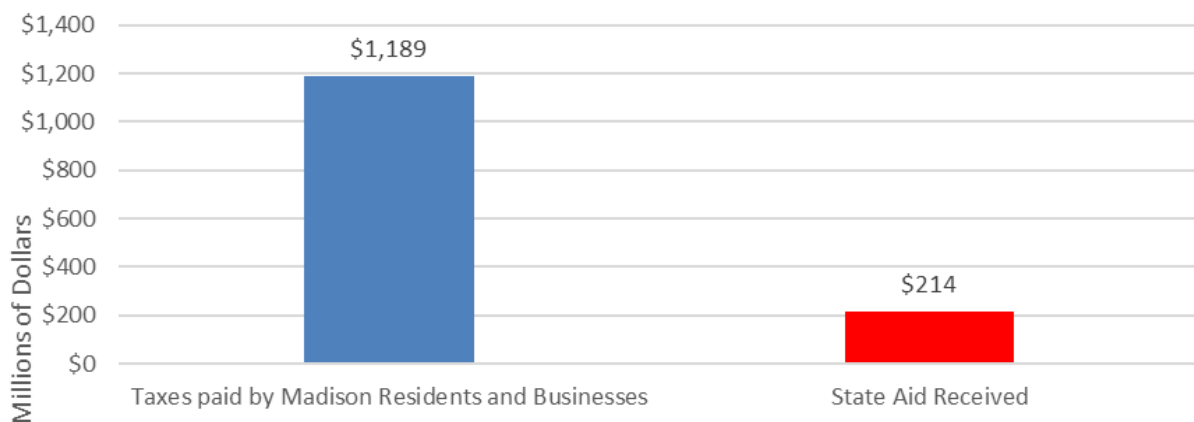
**From: Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway**

**Re: Long term budget plan**

### Introduction

As we have previously discussed, the City's structural deficit is the result of two basic dynamics: a rapidly growing city and harsh restrictions on revenue enacted by the State Legislature and former Gov. Scott Walker. Since 2011, the State Legislature has strictly limited the amount of revenues available to pay for City services. [According to the independent Wisconsin Policy Forum](#), Wisconsin has the one of the tightest restrictions on increases in the entire country.

## State Legislature Shortchanges Madison: We get back only 18 cents for every \$1 of State Taxes Paid



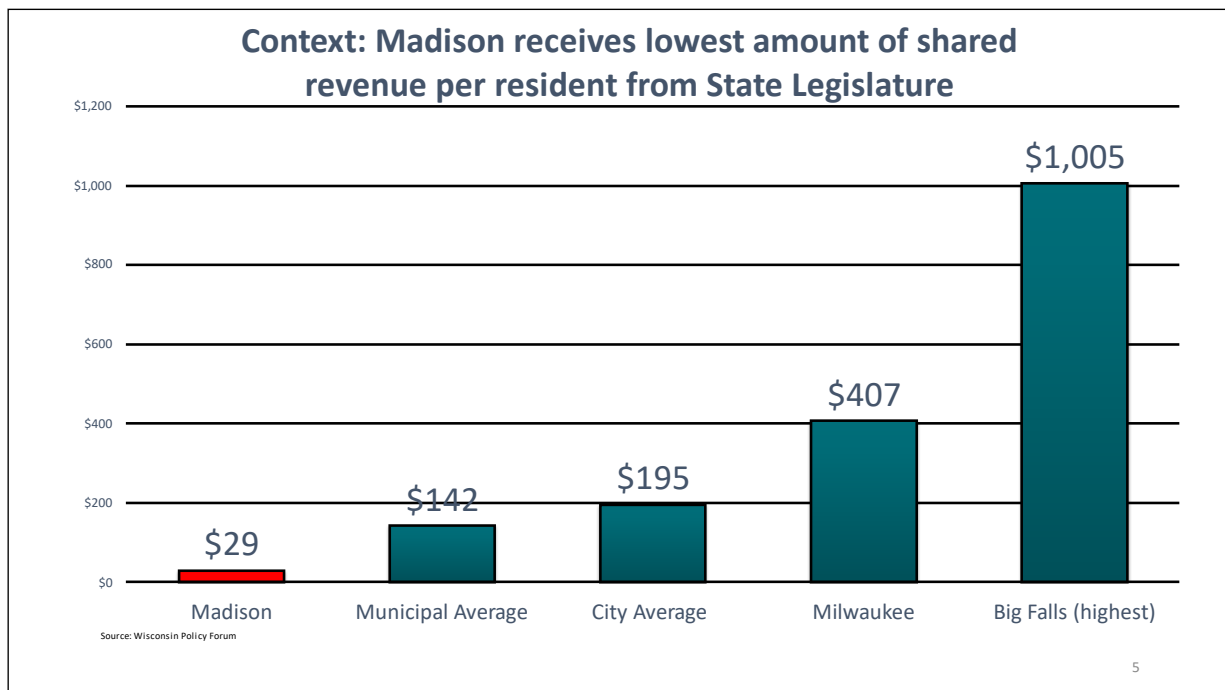
Note: Includes state aid for City of Madison, Madison Metropolitan School District, and City portion of Dane County

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue; City Finance Department analysis

Despite being a primary driver of the state economy and contributing over \$1 billion dollars in state taxes, Madison residents get back less than 20 percent (18 cents) for every dollar they pay in state taxes. And that includes state aid provided to the City, School Districts, and Dane County. I'll say it again because it is so hard to believe – we receive eighteen cents for every dollar in state income and sales taxes paid. It's

not fair and it is why we don't have enough revenue to simply maintain current service levels to residents and businesses.

At \$29 per resident, Madison receives less than 15% of the statewide average. Wisconsin's largest city, Milwaukee, gets 14 times the amount of shared revenue per resident than the state's second largest city, Madison. It is because of these disparities that we are unable to increase service levels as our City's population grows at the fastest rate in the state. If shared revenue had increased at the rate of inflation since 2003, Madison would be receiving nearly \$20 million in 2024. If Madison received the per-resident average for Wisconsin cities, we would get \$54 million, enough to close the budget deficit more than two times over.



However, Madison is at the mercy of divisive politics at the state level, which has chosen to punish the state's largest cities for our politics by constraining our economy. Our ability to provide city services, supported by a vast majority of our residents, is fiscally impossible under the system created by former Gov. Scott Walker and the current leadership of the State Legislature. Wisconsin is sitting on a \$3 billion surplus and yet communities around the state are forced, every year, to balance budgets with higher costs and stagnant revenue. Residents in Monona, Fitchburg, Middleton, Oregon, Maple Bluff, and communities across the state are confronting the same frustrating dilemma and feel the same pain.

As a result, the City has had to close deficits in every City budget since 2011. The City has done many things to balance its budget over the past 13 years: increasing the amount that employees pay for their pensions and health insurance, increasing existing fees, cutting expenses, finding efficiencies, limiting hiring and creating new special charges. With belt tightening, workforce efficiencies, new fees, soon-to-be depleted federal pandemic aid, and other one-time measures we have avoided major disruptions in city services for the past decade. But Madison has exhausted all but two paths moving forward: an austerity budget we can't afford; or a voter-approved property tax referendum that could be easily avoided under a less draconian State Legislature.

Increased interest rates and higher staff vacancies have resulted in a modest increase in the City's general fund balance, or "Rainy Day Fund." While this increase can and will absolutely be part of the solution to the budget gap, it is one-time funding and spending it down will do nothing to address the structural deficits occurring every year or to solve the City's long-term budget situation.

## What has the City done so far?

Madison has faced a budget deficit **every year** since the State imposed strict levy limits in 2011. The problem is bigger in 2025 than before because of the lasting impacts of the pandemic and end of federal recovery funds.

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Debt premium</li><li>• Police and fire pension contributions</li><li>• Premium stabilization surplus</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Room tax growth</li><li>• Ambulance fee</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Room tax – shift from MT projects</li><li>• Building Permit revenue</li><li>• Urban forestry special charge</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Room tax</li><li>• Building permits</li><li>• Urban forestry special charge</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Room tax – shift Overture</li><li>• Urban Forestry Special Charge</li><li>• Health Insurance Plan Design</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Room tax</li><li>• Ambulance fee</li><li>• Transit fund surplus</li><li>• Snow and ice removal budget</li><li>• Urban forestry special charge</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased Room Tax rate</li><li>• Cost Allocation</li><li>• Increased investment revenue</li></ul>
2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TID 32 Closure</li><li>• Increased interest revenue</li><li>• Shift Library Collection to capital</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vehicle Registration Fee</li><li>• Shift Parking Enforcement to Parking Enterprise</li><li>• Increased Forestry staff time to Urban Forestry Special Charge</li><li>• Debt premium</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$8 m in fund balance</li><li>• \$6 million in cuts, Workshare/"furloughs", service efficiencies</li><li>• \$6.1 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)</li><li>• \$2 m in fee increases, Town of Madison fire &amp; EMS contract</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$13.1 million ARPA</li><li>• \$1.5 million Resource Recovery Special Charge (RRSC)</li><li>• \$1.4m in cuts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$6.9 million TID proceeds</li><li>• \$3 million Resource Recovery Special Charge (RRSC)</li><li>• \$7.7 million one-time reduction to Metro subsidy</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$9.2 million in fund balance</li><li>• \$5.6 million ARPA</li><li>• \$3.1 million TID proceeds</li><li>• \$3.0 million reduction to all agencies</li><li>• \$2.4 million savings from vacancies/ salary savings</li></ul>	
Prior to 2012, levy limits had a 3% floor for annual increases rather than 0%; 3% minimum was applied to prior year maximum allowable levy rather than actual levy.						

### The 2025 Budget

Knowing that we were almost out of options, we undertook a series of conversations that began immediately after the 2024 budget was adopted last November. First, the Finance Department developed a comprehensive information series on the budget. This was followed-up by in-depth briefings of the Council in February and March of this year. In April, the Council adopted values, priorities, and guiding principles for developing a budget that is balanced in the long-term using the very limited options allowed by the State Legislature.

The Council established the following values and priorities for the City budget ([Legistar #82456](#)):

1. Maintaining services for residents.
2. Preventing layoffs or furloughs of city staff who deliver those services.
3. Maintaining wage parity for general municipal employees.
4. Meeting the needs of a growing city.
5. Choosing the most progressive revenue options that consider housing affordability for residents.

With these values and priorities as a foundation, the Council provided the following guidance for developing the 2025 budget:

1. Evaluate service levels, staffing and fiscal impact when developing budget requests.

2. Seek ways to increase efficiencies in operations.
3. Develop language for a property tax referendum for some or all of the projected budget deficit, as well as options to replace existing non-property tax revenues, for consideration by voters at the November 5, 2024, general election.
4. Prepare contingency plans if voters do not approve the referendum.
5. Develop a multi-year plan to address the on-going structural deficit, including revenue options allowed under state law.
6. Consider the overall level of borrowing in the capital budget to help reduce the rate of growth in property taxes.
7. Develop a community engagement plan.

Each of these elements has, as much as possible, been incorporated into the City's budget development. To address the first two criteria, the City is implementing the Results Madison initiative, which is a strategic framework intended to align city services with the outcomes that matter most to Madison residents. As part of this process, City agencies are currently in the process of developing performance measures related to the services and activities they provide. City agencies are also audited on a 5-year cycle for review of internal controls and identification of ways to improve efficiency. Finally, all City agencies have been instructed to provide 1% reductions over their cost-to-continue budget to encourage continued savings and asked to identify potential service reductions of at least 5% of their budget.

While the financial fundamentals for the City's capital investments remain strong, as reflected in the highest possible rating on the City's general obligation debt from Moody's Investors Service (Aaa), which ensures the lowest possible interest cost, we have taken steps to address guideline 6 ("Consider the overall level of borrowing in the capital budget to help reduce the rate of growth in property taxes"). This year's capital budget strongly discourages agencies from requesting any additional general obligation borrowing (the kind that contributes to the cities debt burden). In order to be funded, any new requests must demonstrate how they improve the lives of residents who have been historically marginalized and address systemic disparities, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote climate resilience, and align with other long-range planning efforts.

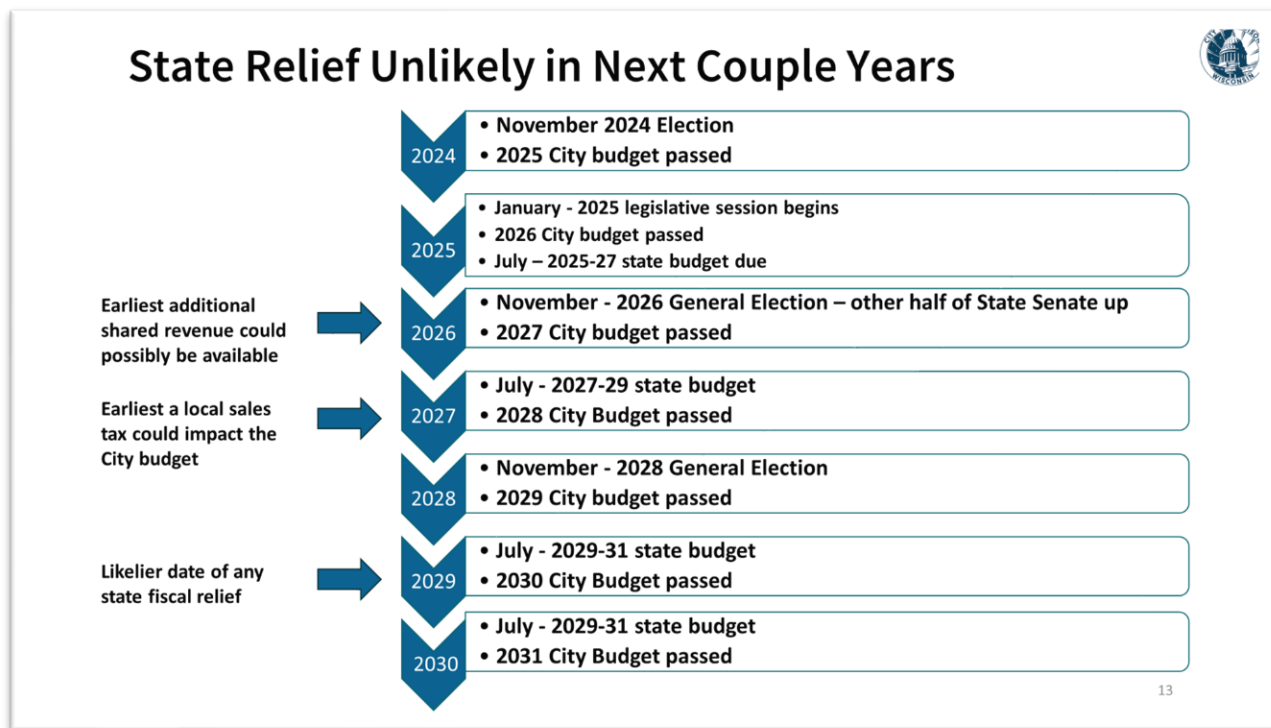
All of these efforts have been guided throughout by extensive community engagement (#7). This began as described above almost as soon as the 2024 budget was complete and include the Finance Department's comprehensive information series on the budget that was presented via a series of in-depth briefings of the Council in February and March of this year. The Council then spearheaded a series of in-person and virtual community budget conversations that were attended by hundreds of residents and generated scores of questions for City staff. We plan to continue this dialogue throughout the fall with continued public budget events and opportunities for community engagement.

Finally, this memo and the accompanying presentation to Council outline "a multi-year plan to address the on-going structural deficit, including revenue options" as well as "contingency plans if voters do not approve the referendum" (criteria 4 and 5). Language for a potential property tax referendum (#3) will be reviewed during the presentation and is being introduced tonight as part of the consent agenda.

## A Responsible Long-Term Plan

As should by now be clear, the ultimate solution to the constant structural deficits faced by all Wisconsin cities has to originate at the state level in the form of returning more of cities' own tax revenues to them in the form of shared revenue, allowing localities to tax themselves via a local option sales tax, or other relief (e.g., finally having state-owned properties like the UW and the Capitol to pay their fair share for the services they receive from the city or allowing municipalities to share transit costs via regional transit authorities). It is important to be realistic about the timeline on which such relief could occur, however.

Even in the most wildly optimistic scenario, wherein the state legislature convened for the 2025 legislative session in January and immediately took action to provide relief to Wisconsin cities – something that is exceedingly unlikely to happen given that they just addressed shared revenue in the previous session and that there will very likely still be a conservative majority in control– such relief would not impact the City budget until the start of 2026. If that relief came in the form of a local option sales tax, it is likely that would require a local referendum (that has been the case in most proposals for granting Wisconsin cities a local option sales tax). In that case, the additional revenue would not impact the City budget until 2027. State action will presumably be more likely after the 2026 mid-term elections when the other half of the state senate holds elections under the lines established in 2024. In that case, shared revenue could come in the 2027 state budget and be available to the city in 2028, while a sales tax would not impact the City until 2029.



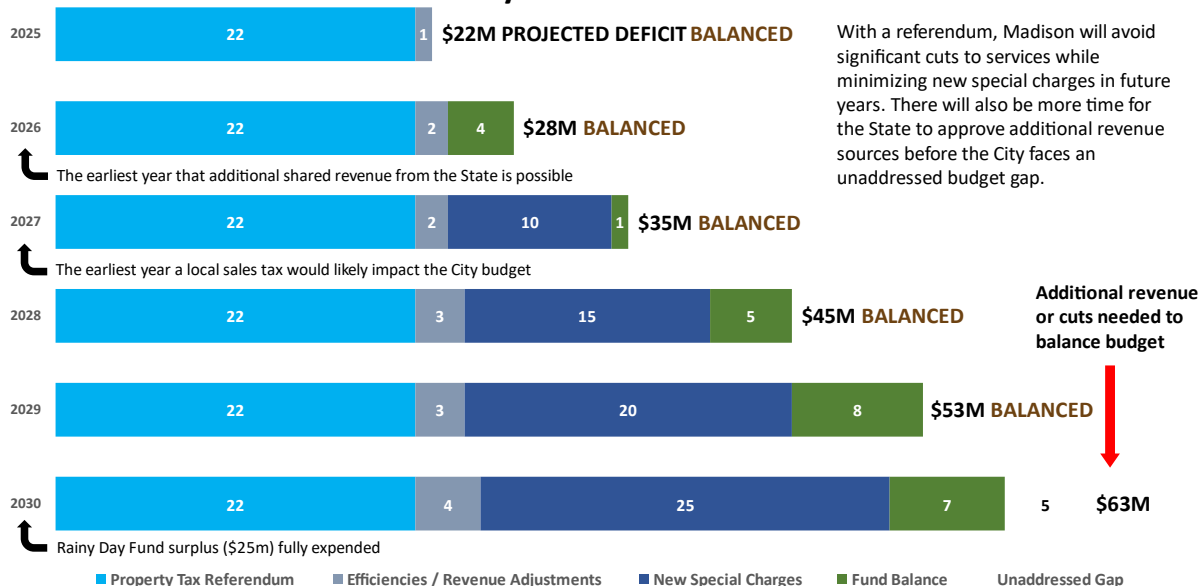
Even under relatively optimistic scenarios that account for changes in state legislative dynamics and assume a massive coalitional lobbying effort, the City must assume and plan for balancing budgets under the current draconian state restrictions for at least the next five years. Thus, guided by Council's priorities

values, and guiding principles, we have worked to develop a responsible, long-term vision for the City budget avoids major cuts or having to increase taxes via referendum a second time, while we fight for a permanent solution to state-imposed structural deficits and continue to address the service needs and challenges of a growing city.

The major elements of our proposed plan

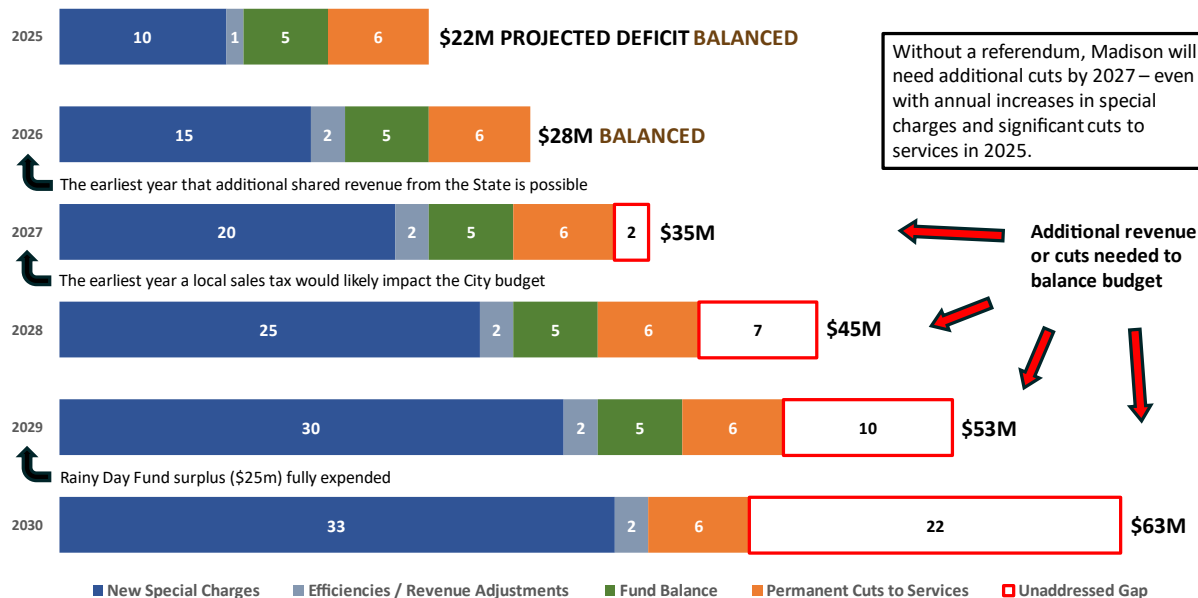
- A \$22 million property tax referendum on the November 2024 ballot. That would amount to roughly \$5 a month per \$100K of home value, or about \$20/month on the average home. The property tax is both the most progressive alternative available and the one that distributes the cost of running city government most broadly, to both residential and commercial properties across the city.
- Responsibly spending down the general fund balance (approximately \$25 million) over 5 years to the recommended 15% (beyond which it would begin to impact the City's bond rating).
- Additional special charges starting in 2027 and gradually increasing to help close future budget gaps.
- Continued constraint on new city positions and further efficiency measures to continue to do more with less.
- No budget deficit or further cuts required until 2030.
- Escalated efforts to advocate for state relief.

## With A Referendum, Madison Can Avoid Significant Cuts or the Need for More Revenue for Another Five years



The alternative is bleak. To balance the budget without a referendum, the City would need significant cuts in 2025 – we estimate roughly \$6 million dollars, which equates to roughly 60 layoffs. The City would also need to begin to institute additional special charges this year, to the tune of an additional \$10 million. And even with those measures, we would start seeing budget deficits again as soon as 2027 with no obvious way to fill them.

## Without a Referendum, the City Would Need Additional Cuts and Revenue by 2027



### Conclusion

The State Legislature has systematically shortchanged our City and cities across the state. The only alternative they have left cities to pay for the services they provide is to ask residents to authorize an increase property tax – that is why so many cities across the state have been turning to that option. The budget outline above does so in the most responsible way possible, both avoiding massive cuts to City services such as police, fire, and libraries and also avoiding the need to return to voters to ask for yet another property tax increase. We want to thank all of you in advance as we move forward together to serve all of our City’s residents in light of this failure of the State Legislature to adequately and equitably support its second largest and fastest growing City. We appreciate your leadership in this challenging process and know that together we will do our best for Madison.

**From:** [Anne Benishek-Clark](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Budget crunch and possible solutions  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:48:44 PM

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Dear Folks! We live in an exceptionally lovely and loving environment. We live in a city with a high quality of life (streets, parks, planning for growth, Equity and Diversity, and more), provided by everyone's taxes and cooperation.

Since 2011, the gerrymandered Republican Legislature has tried to run us ragged, to pinch our City dry in their "Revenue Sharing".

Madison is a huge economic powerhouse for the State. Yet our City receives a much less proportionate amount of shared revenues compared to what we contribute.

Please put the question to us who live here. (And who have lived here for decades.)

Please put the referendum on the ballot. We will stand by our City and its budget. "A Change is gonna come."

Kindest regards,

Anne Benishek-Clark  
District 15  
3528 Atwood Avenue  
Madison 53714



**From:** [Senji Benji](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Senji Benji](#)  
**Subject:** Our public comments on City of Madison budget deficit/shortfall  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 7:26:36 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [senji1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:senji1@sbcglobal.net). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Our comments are as follows:

People need to understand that there is a difference between NEEDS and WANTS in the City of Madison.

The Police and Fire Depts budgets should not be cut at all. The same with Streets division. No cuts there, either. These are NEEDS to run a city.

WANTS would include things like arts grants, etc. Things that are not NECESSITIES.

Also, as senior citizens, please consider the term "affordable housing." What about senior citizens like us, who have lived in Madison for most of our lives, paid our taxes for many years diligently, yet each year our property taxes go up by much, much more than our increases in social security do. What about us? We believe that there should actually be a property tax CAP for seniors who have lived in their house for more than 10 years, or something similar. Otherwise, for folks like us our home that we have lived in for almost 20 years, will soon be "unaffordable." We know we are not the only ones who feel this way, but are perhaps one of the only ones taking the time to write.

Bluntly put, yes, there need to be CUTS in the City budget. Cuts in areas that are not necessities. Sure, it's nice to have libraries open until late in the evening, but once again, this is not a necessity. Also, Metro buses run practically empty during late nite hours or on Sundays. Metro buses should not be running just to accommodate just a few folks. The BRT program is a total waste of money and should be stopped now. Madison already has a robust Metro bus service and even a tiny fraction of the BRT money could have been used to improve a few things in the Metro bus service, such as perhaps more shelters at more stops, etc.

These are our views and we would like them put into the public record. Thank you.

Vaira and Ron Akselis  
13 Julia Circle  
Madison , WI 53705

608 238 4191



**From:** [Dorothy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** BUDGET CUTS  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 9:08:22 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from dborchardt1@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hey alders, which one of you are strong enough to stand up to the mayor and remove the \$1.1 million Police Civilian Oversight Board from the budget?

Stop taxing the middle income folks out of their homes.  
Dorothy Borchardt

CONSPICUOUSLY MISSING from the Mayor's proposal if the referendum does not pass is the \$1.1 million taxpayers spend on the Police Civilian Oversight Board, a do-nothing agency created to solve a non-existent problem.

Five years after its creation, this sop to Defund-the-Cops still can't write up a complaint form.

We retired, fixed income folks are being taxed out of our homes. That is a fact.

Norman Sannes, Madison

**From:** [Randy Bruegman](#)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Tax Referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 1:26:31 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[No on Placing the Tax Referendum on the November Ballot.pdf](#)

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*Chief Randy Bruegman (Ret.)*  
**PRESIDENT + FOUNDER**



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## **No on Placing the Tax Referendum on the November Ballot**

### **Item number 84443.**

With the 31.2 million dollar surplus in this year's budget, there is no need at this time to call for this referendum. From my calculation the city would only be in an approximate six million dollar deficit for the next fiscal year, not accounting for any other gains realized from the city investment funds for the remainder of this fiscal year. This could be made up by use of one time funds from the "rainy day fund," and leave the city well within the guidelines of the GFOA. This would provide over a year for the Mayor and Aders to develop other strategies that could balance the budget. The mayor has stated "a referendum is not my preferred solution. But it is the most progressive and realistic option for Madison given the current political makeup of the state government." The fact is, that property tax is the most regressive on people that own homes and rent who are in low to middle income.

There are other strategies that are far more progressive and realistic than driving people from their apartments and homes due to increased taxes. The city has over the past five years used federal ARPA funds not for one time expenditures, but those that create long-term operational cost. The use premium, the additional money that is paid to a lender to service funding when doing borrowing, has contributed to the deficit, and then rolling that into the ongoing operational budget is also an issue. Continuing to use the cost-to-continue budgeting approach enables and even encourages the mayor to overspend, and stifles innovation. The mayor is not compelled to exhaust the entire property tax and other tax windfalls each year. According to the city's admission, spending on transportation is 320 percent higher, and on human services is a staggering 700 percent higher compared to our peer cities. One of the troubling issues in this budget process is that the city appears to have rolled a significant amount of the one-time COVID relief money of 47 million dollars into its ongoing budget. If that is the case, that raises a host of questions regarding proper budget practices, ethics, and transparency. In addition, debt service should be in the area of 12% of the operating budget. Presently it's over 16% and is heading toward a 20% threshold. A high ratio threatens the AAA bond rating of the city which, if lost, will increase borrowing cost.

The city ordinance requires a fiscal note on major projects which seems to be no longer in use. The fiscal note should provide the total cost of the project, the annual operating cost, and the revenue source for the initial cost of the project and its long-term operating cost. As an example, has there been fiscal note provided for the operating costs of the new Bus Rapid Transit system?

It is recommended that you place this referendum on hold and take the following actions over the course of the next year to resolve this deficit.

1. You have an exceptionally talented core of department heads and senior staff, ask them how they would innovate services and reduce cost. The city has done business the same way for many years. If you promote the need and desire for innovation, which starts with you, the elected officials, you may be surprised with what they come back with.
2. The consolidation of services across the entities of this county would not only be cost effective, but would likely improve serviced delivery to all resident of the county. I know

this to be true, as I have consolidated several agencies in the past, and each time it improved services and saved money for the taxpayer. It is time to stop being so parochial and become an innovative organization.

3. Take a page out of Milwaukee playbook and revisit the State Allocation Policy. Milwaukee was successful because they brought the Mayor, Alders, Chamber of Commerce, Labor, and business together to collectively lobby the State Legislature for the changes that were passed last year. The city of Madison should do the same, but it will require leadership to bring those factions together toward a common goal of meeting and lobbying our State Representatives. Yes, that will require you to speak to Republicans and develop a professional relationship with them. The city should seek changes to the shared revenue formula, authorization for a sales tax for the city and/or a transit district covering the Madison metro service area, and an increase in the state payments for municipal services for state office buildings and the University of Wisconsin.
4. The city should also exercise more fiscal discipline by:
  - a. By not using one time revenues to create long term operational expenses.
  - b. Discontinue the use of premiums when borrowing money.
  - c. Reduce the amount the city is currently borrowing.
  - d. Properly providing fiscal notes on projects that are proposed within the city.
  - e. Examine all contracted expenditures, particularly in social services, for proven results.

I believe that these efforts are necessary before you ask your constituency for more money. The other point to keep top of mind is this. Property tax hurts those that can least afford it, the most. People in lower to middle income are disproportionately impacted by property tax whether an owner or renter. The city has said “well it is only going to 20 to 30 dollars a month on the average value of a home”. But for many people, that is often money they don’t have. Couple with that with the two other referendums that are on the ballot, if all three were to pass, that would likely put many people on the streets or into a subsidized housing situation. I think it is your responsibility to get your fiscal house in order first before you ask the taxpayers for more.

Randy R. Bruegman

Madison Resident

**From:** [Tom Cox](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:34:29 AM

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The Mayor and her budget are both slightly disappointing and disingenuous. The same with the mini alder meetings held this spring. The focus seems to be primarily on cutting the most basic and used services in an effort to scare voters into approving more money. There are so many secondary programs and expenses which could be reduced. While most of these items are desirable, they are not absolutely essential. Today's Cap Times includes articles on two such issues. While not the best examples, was the 4.5 million for the Badger Mill Creek purchase and \$461,000 for additional speed bumps absolutely needed? Where is controlling or freezing employee benefits and wages in this conversation? Also didn't the Mayor's office add a Communications Manager this Spring for like \$90,000? And of course there is our BRT. Again, a pragmatic forward thinking possibly beneficial program funded largely by the Federal Government. But isn't it still costing the city \$80 million not to mention the disruption and confusion?

I plan to vote "no" on ALL referendum tax increases this fall. As far as the city budget, Paul Soglin's approach is much more desirable and practical. Cut costs, borrow or use the rainy-day fund, and this fall work with a Wisconsin legislature hopefully more receptive on returning a greater portion of our taxes to Madison.

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 11:31:38 AM

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Monday, August 5, 2024 – 11:27am

**Name**

Jess Draws

**How would you like us to contact you?**

Email

**Email**

[jessicalyndraws@gmail.com](mailto:jessicalyndraws@gmail.com)

**Reason for Contact**

Budget

**Message**

No Cuts to Libraries: Support Option C

My name is Jess Draws and I have been a resident of Madison and a user of the Madison Public Library system since 2012. I am writing to you to express my strong support for the libraries in the face of potential budget cuts for the next fiscal year.

I am aware of Option A and B as proposed by the Madison Public Library Foundation. I do not find either of these acceptable. I want Option C. I support the proposal for a \$22 million referendum that would increase property taxes by about \$20 a month to balance the budget rather than taking \$6 million in cuts from city services. This is agenda item #84443 (Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison) at the Common Council Meeting tonight (8/5/2024). I have already registered my support, although I will not be able to attend the meeting.

Libraries are essential to marginalized communities, providing free access to resources such as books, internet, educational programs, and safe spaces. They serve as a lifeline for low-income families, the elderly, immigrants, and people experiencing homelessness. Cutting library funding would disproportionately impact these vulnerable populations, deepening existing inequities in our city. Furthermore, maintaining robust library services is a smart financial choice; libraries contribute to the local economy by supporting workforce development, literacy, and lifelong learning, which in turn fosters a more informed and connected community.

Thank you for your time,  
Jess Draws



**From:** [william dye](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Concerns Regarding City Budget, Services and Referendum  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:22:07 AM

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Dear Mayor Conway and Members of the Madison City Council,

I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my deep concern regarding the current state of our city's budget and the impact it is having on essential services. It has come to my attention that we are facing budget overruns which have led to proposed cuts in city services. Additionally, I am troubled by the decision to put a referendum on the ballot to increase property taxes.

As a resident in District 12 (Alder Amani Latimer Burris area) and taxpayer in our community, I understand the importance of fiscal responsibility. However, I believe it is equally important to ensure that our city continues to provide necessary services that contribute to the well-being and safety of all residents.

I urge you to reconsider the decision to pursue a referendum on property taxes. While I understand it could help raising taxes in the short term, it is crucial that we explore all viable options to maintain the quality of life in our city. Transparency and community input are essential in making such decisions, and I believe if a referendum passes it would only provide a band-aide.

We need to focus on our basic city services. Water, Sanitation, Police, Fire, Garbage, Recycling, Snow Removal, Public Transit, Schools, Streets and Traffic services.

As of today, the city needs to STOP all construction of the Public Market, Brand New Homeless Shelters, BRT and other non-essential City Services . The Mayor's office needs deep cuts...half of her lieutenant Mayors need to resign or all of them need to take 50% pay cuts. Anyone else involved in creating and approving these last two budget also need to take pay cuts or resign. Until the budget is back in line.

What worries me the most, you proved all the Conservatives and MAGA extremist right. Your spending is out of control. Let's pull this back so they don't come praying on our beautiful city next.

Furthermore, I kindly request more information on the specific areas where cuts are being proposed and their potential impact on residents. Understanding these details is crucial for residents to fully comprehend the implications of the budgetary decisions being made.

Thank you for taking the time to consider my concerns. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on this matter and hope we can work together to find solutions that benefit our city and its residents.

Sincerely,

William Dye  
2205 Fremont Ave.  
dyewilliam@hotmail.com  
608-347-4051

**From:** [Jordan Ellenberg](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Madison Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Support for the referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 5:17:48 PM

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Dear Alders,

My name is Jordan Ellenberg; I'm a Madison resident and homeowner and I support the referendum to increase the property tax levy. I consider myself fortunate to live in a city that provides such great municipal services, and I think it's only fair for those of us in the best financial position to pay more than we do now to keep those services healthy.

Thanks for your service to the city!

Best,

Jordan

**From:** [Kayla Every](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [TaMaya Travis](#)  
**Subject:** Homeless Services Consortium  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:43:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [Education and Advocacy Statement \(1\).pdf](#)  
[Aug 6th Referendum Advocacy Points Common Council.pptx](#)

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Hello Alders,

Thank you for your time tonight, and the consideration of so many complex issues in relation to the proposed referendum.

Here are our full comments and a short presentation on behalf of the Dane County Homeless Services Consortium Education and Advocacy Committee. While we have many considerations to uphold as a large consortium, we believe the linked community plans can provide further understanding of the complexities within our intersectional work.

Thank you!

**Kayla Every**

**Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program  
Program Coordinator | YAB Coordinator | She/Her  
e. [KaylaE@yabdanecounty.com](mailto:KaylaE@yabdanecounty.com) | w [www.yabdanecounty.com](http://www.yabdanecounty.com)**

"You have to act as if it were possible to radically transform the world.  
And you have to do it all the time."  
-Angela Davis



## **Homeless Services Consortium of Dane County**

### **Re: City of Madison Proposed 2024 Referendum**

As a group made up of over 100 diverse organizations, the Homeless Services Consortium (HSC) at this time is not in direct support or opposition of this item, but instead our Dane County's Education and Advocacy Committee would like to share relevant information concerning the City's proposed referendum, as it poses a significant risk to the sustainability of the progress made during the COVID-19 pandemic, should an addendum go to vote and fail. The Consortium has responded to the pandemic alongside our collaborative applicant, the City of Madison to implement substantial improvements to ensure basic safety of our unsheltered, housing-insecure, and health-sensitive community members in various areas, including the centralization and enhancement of shelter conditions, the successful transition of individuals from hotels to permanent housing, and robust eviction prevention measures. These advancements have been pivotal in addressing local homelessness and housing insecurity during an unprecedented national housing crisis.

Despite these many achievements, we have also experienced setbacks, such as the loss of housing units due to the unexpected sale of [Madison's Rethke and Tree Lane properties](#), the conversion of hotels to housing, and other vital programs which leave us facing a projected deficit of 1,683 housing units needed to meet local service needs entering 2025.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, numerous unmet needs persist within our community, such as the lack of affordable housing where the average studio apartment in Dane County, inadequate shelter conditions, the need for supportive services and organized resources. The proposed referendum may maintain crucial funding for these services and sustain significant progress we have worked tirelessly to achieve, but asking Madison homeowners to increase their property taxes could pose additional risks, pushing our community further away from the solution. While rent costs continue to rise, the average cost of an efficiency apartment (0 BR) requires renters to make at least \$52,000 annually to reasonably afford it<sup>2</sup>. This prices out many individuals making less than \$26 an hour, directly correlating to the significant number of young single adults staying in our homeless shelters. Asking Madison homeowners to increase taxes could further raise local rents, especially for smaller or private landlords, therefore spreading the cost burden across those already significantly impacted by the national housing crisis. Instead, invest into our 2025 budget to further to ease housing cost burdens for all Madisonians, 49% of whom are already cost burdened.<sup>3</sup>

The HSC and many organizations across our consortium partnered in major collaborative community plans alongside both the City of Madison and Dane County Human Services to evaluate and inform our response to the ongoing housing crisis, including [Dane Forward: A](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Please see Appendix D: Dane County Housing Needs Estimates  
[https://www.danecountyhomeless.org/files/ugd/73dee7\\_8383994437e64c6ca725f8aa4944c00.pdf](https://www.danecountyhomeless.org/files/ugd/73dee7_8383994437e64c6ca725f8aa4944c00.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Please see PG 154: Housing Costs for Newer Market Rate Rental Units Built 2010-2021  
<https://rhs.danecounty.gov/documents/pdf/DCRHS-SAPReport-FNL-web.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Please see PG 143: Share of Cost-Burdened Renters Across All Income Levels by Municipality  
<https://rhs.danecounty.gov/documents/pdf/DCRHS-SAPReport-FNL-web.pdf>

**Homeless Services Consortium of Dane County**  
**Re: City of Madison Proposed 2024 Referendum**

[5 Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#), [Regional Housing Strategy: A Roadmap to Solving Dane County's Housing Crisis](#), and YHDP: [Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness](#). In each of these plans, the City of Madison committed to partnerships that provide transparency between the general public, government officials, nonprofit and business partners about funding, programs, and priorities. These expert reviews present data surrounding the state of this housing emergency, the appropriate mix of community wide services we would need to provide, the impacts on our most housing-insecure, and has organized coordination to ensure homelessness is rare, brief and nonrecurring in Madison and across Dane County.

We urge the city to consider supplementing this plan with alternative funding solutions outlined throughout these plans so that we do not compromise essential services or pose a significant increase to the cost of housing in our community. One viable approach would be to reevaluate and reduce expenditures on costly non-emergency services carried out by other city departments when our work aims to ensure do not most appropriately fit the intention of the department. If you invest in prevention, diversion and [housing first programs](#), the cost and need for emergency services will go down. By strategically reallocating a relatively small resources towards maintaining and expanding vital services, you can ensure the continued support and stability is delivered to those in need and decrease the need for emergency services.

The Homeless Service Consortium of Dane County remains committed to evaluating and advocating for the needs of our community and ensure progress made over the past few years is not only preserved, but built upon. We rise the need for the City officials and stakeholders to prioritize the welfare of our entire community by exploring more equitable and sustainable funding alternatives that do not overextend the cost burden on homeowners and renters, but instead and improve the likelihood of approval and curb unnecessary risks while introducing a potentially divisive addendum, should one be introduced to the upcoming ballot.

As Jim O'keefe recently present to this Council, the homeless service programs the City now operates were organized to meet the minimum requirement needed to confront crisis. The City and County have jointly funded multiple community plans which have organized efforts to increase funding and expand effective programs, as well as for a shelter where staff, volunteers and nonprofits can collaborate to provide effective and streamlined support.

Supporting a relatively small amount of additional funding as outlined in these plans could end the housing crisis. Adjusting the funding to meet the increasing costs alone could be just enough to soothe our growing crisis, but the potential of a failed referendum that results in decreased funding to human services programs is unsettling and out of touch with the commitments made by the City and processes happening across our community.

# **HOMELESS SERVICES CONSORTIUM OF DANE COUNTY**

**Points of consideration regarding  
the City of Madison 2025 budget and referendum  
and the subsequent impact on the local housing crisis**

# Background: Affordable Housing

## Housing Availability Factors In and around Madison between 2010-2020

- Dane County added 42,000 households from 2010-2020, making it the fastest growing county in the state.
- Dane County job market grew 14% adding over 38,000 jobs more than double the rate of Wisconsin overall.
- During that time, Dane saw growth at a rate of 4 rental units built to every 5 households entering the county.

**Dane County Population Growth by Age Group, 2010 - 2020**

Age Cohort	≤ 14	15 - 24	25 -34	35 -54	55 -74	≥ 75
Dane County	+ 3.6%	+ 15.1%	+ 8.0%	+ 1.5%	+ 30.8%	+ 21.9%
Wisconsin	- 4.7%	- 1.7%	+ 2.2%	- 9.6%	+ 26.1%	+ 9.4%

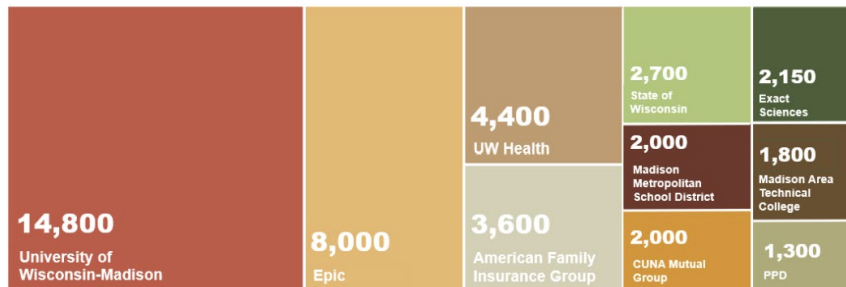
Source: US Census Bureau 2020, SB Friedman



# Background: Affordable Housing

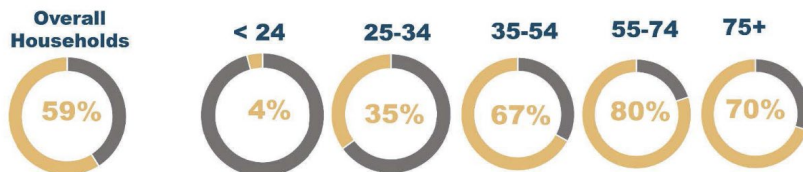
## Major Employers

Figure 6. Dane County Major Employers, 2022



Source: Lightcast, SB Friedman

Figure 18. Homeownership Rates by Age Cohort in Dane County



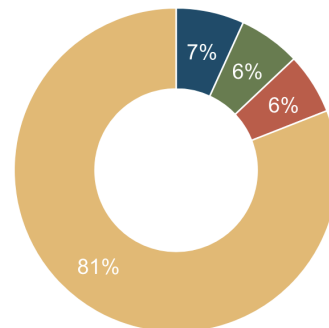
OWNER HH RENTER HH

Source: PUMS ACS 5-Year Estimates (2016-2020), SB Friedman

## Dane County Land Area vs Population

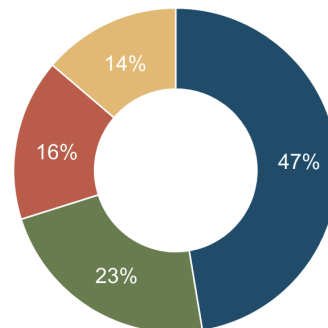
Madison accounts for rough 47% of Dane County's population.

Dane County Land Area by Jurisdiction Type, 2020



MADISON VILLAGES  
OTHER CITIES TOWNS

Dane County Population by Jurisdiction Type, 2020



Source: WI DOA, US Census Bureau 2020, SB Friedman

# Background: Affordable Housing

## Local Housing Affordability

- Housing is Affordable when a household spends **less than 30%** of their gross income on housing costs.
- For renters, this includes rent and utilities.
- For homeowners, this includes their monthly mortgage payment, utilities and other owner costs (property taxes, homeowner association fees, homeowners' insurance).
- **One in Four** households in Dane County are housing-cost burdened, meaning they spend more than they can afford on housing costs.

**HUD Income Limits by AMI, 2022**

	Area Median Income	2-Person Household
Extremely Low Income	30%	\$27,700
Very Low Income	50%	\$46,200
	60%	\$55,400
Low Income	80%	\$73,800
Median Income	100%	\$92,300
Moderate Income	120%	\$110,800

Source: HUD FY 2022, SB Friedman

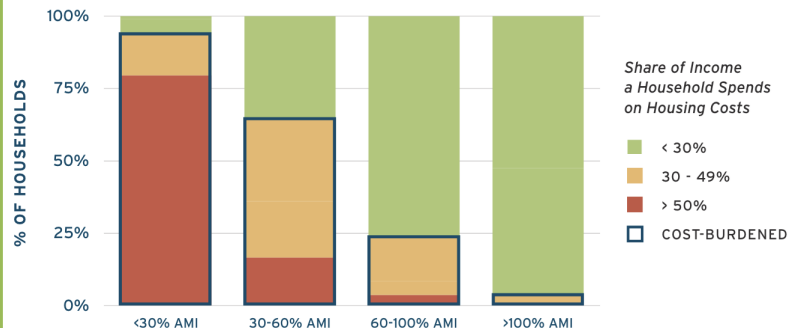
\* AMI = Area Median Income

# Cost Burden Inequity

Local Demographics on Household Cost Burden, 2020

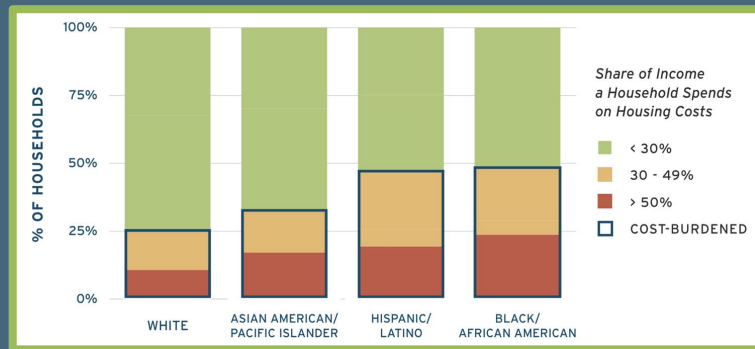
## By Income Level

Cost Burden by Household Income in Dane County, 2020

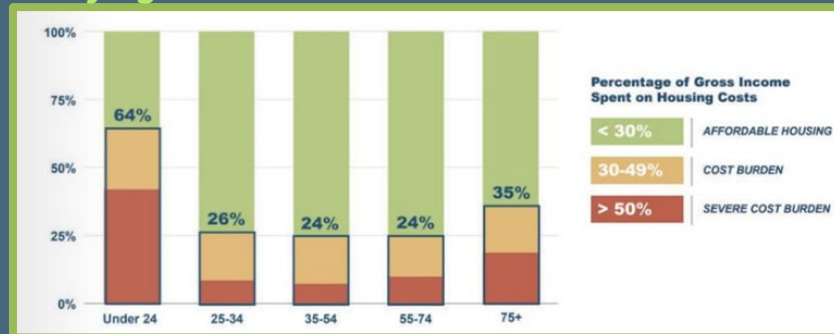


Source: PUMS ACS 5-Year Estimates (2016-2020), SB Friedman

## by Race/Ethnicity



## by Age



Source: PUMS ACS 5-Year Estimates (2016-2020)  
| Dane County Regional Housing Strategy

# Housing Cost for Newer\* Units

## Current Rental Climate

				
	STUDIO	1-BEDROOM	2-BEDROOM	3-BEDROOM
AVERAGE RENT FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION	\$1,250	\$1,500	\$1,950	\$2,240
MIN. INCOME FOR UNIT TO BE AFFORDABLE	\$52K	\$64K	\$83K	\$101K

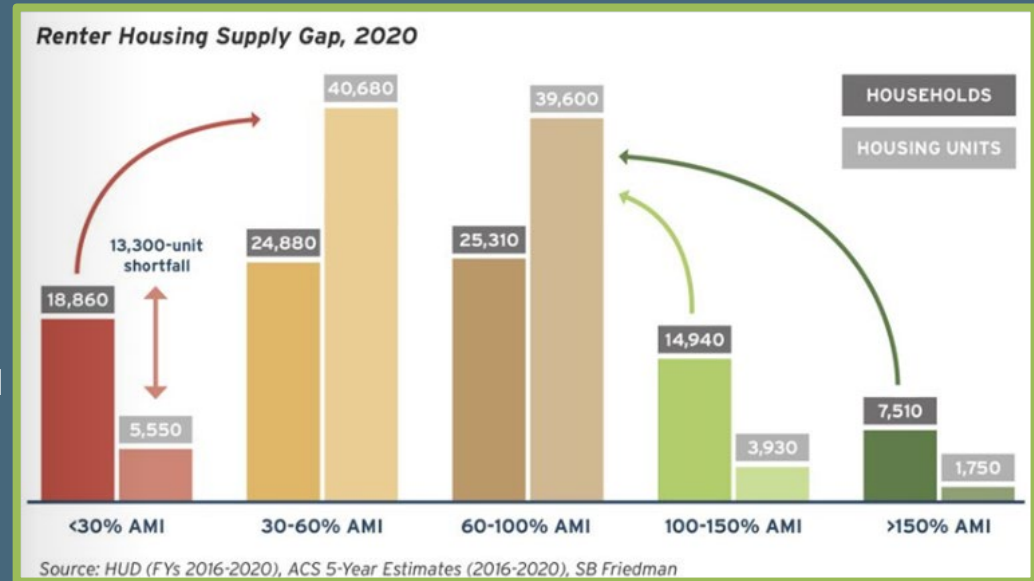
\* Newer includes Market-Rate Units Built Since 2010

Source: CoStar, SB Friedman | Dane County Regional Housing Strategy

# Competitive Rental Market

## Housing Equity Gap

- Competitive market created where households who are able to afford higher rents are securing housing below 30% of their income and are willing to pay more for historically-cheaper units. This drives up local housing prices and prices lower income Households out of Madison and often out of Dane County.
- Dane County will need to produce 139,000 new housing units by 2040, or approximately 7,000 per year to address expected need and growth.
- At least 35,300 new rental units should be affordable to lower-income Households at or below 60% AMI.



\* AMI = Area Median Income

# Impact of Housing Crisis

## Eviction Filings

### Eviction Filings

	TOTAL
2019	27,026
2020	19,427
2021	17,727
2022	25,819
2023	28,196

### Judgment

	TOTAL
2019	4,264
2020	2,254
2021	1,737
2022	1,621
2023	1,999

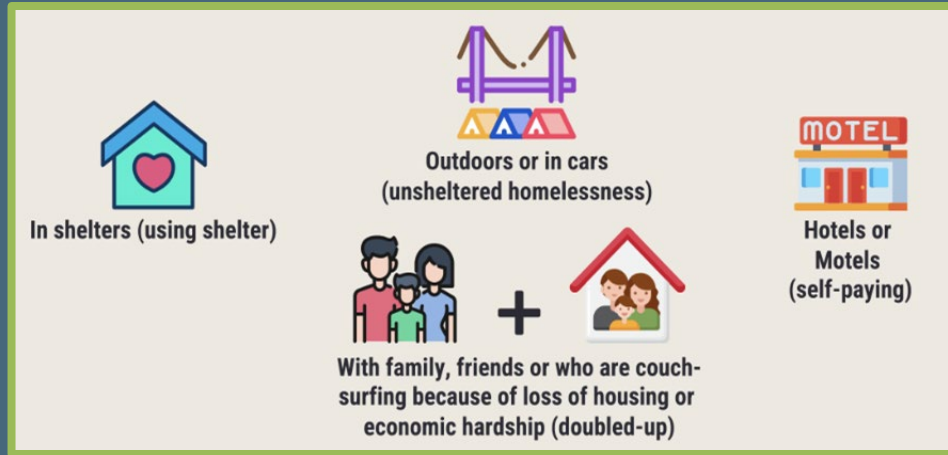
- In 2023, the number of eviction filings in Dane County nearly doubled compared to 2022. In 2024, the number of eviction filing rate rose another 9%.
- Currently, most small claims records are retained for **twenty years** after entry of judgment or final order. SCR 72.01(8), 72.01(9), and 72.01(10).
- This is **regardless of whether an eviction was granted and regardless of whether a money judgment was entered.**

\*Re amendment to SCR 72.01(8), 72.01(9), and 72.01(10)

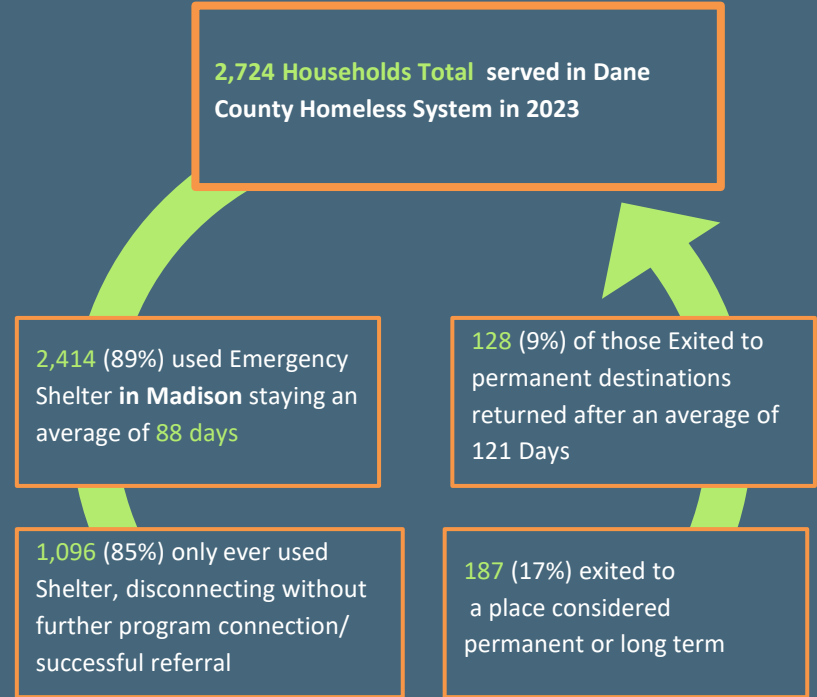
- Many Landlords report using Eviction filing as a form of **late rent-collection** and never intend to remove the tenant.
- Tenant Resource Center reports Quarterly and Annually
  - “Eviction is often concentrated at properties where disproportionate numbers of the tenants are in poverty and/or Black.”

# When Housing Is Not Available

## Homelessness Can Look Like..

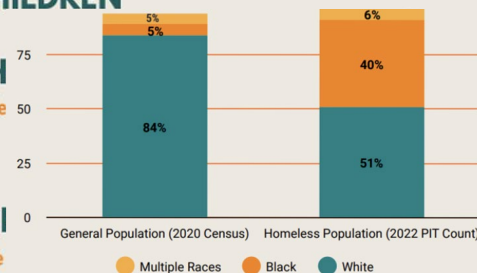


Our system only captures numbers of people accessing shelter or calling our Coordinated Entry

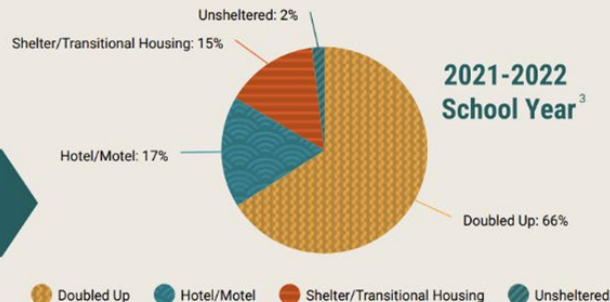


# Housing Instability Inequity

## Homelessness Demographics



Black people are **8x overrepresented** in the homeless population relative to the general Dane County population.



<sup>1</sup> data source: 2022 Point in Time (PIT) Count. This does not include households experiencing doubled up homelessness.

<sup>2</sup> data source: 2022 HMIS

<sup>3</sup> data source: 2021-2022 Dept. of Public Instruction



# Homeless Service System Performance

## Current System Performance



Giving people shelter or long stays in shelter only prolongs their homeless experience and increases costs to the community.

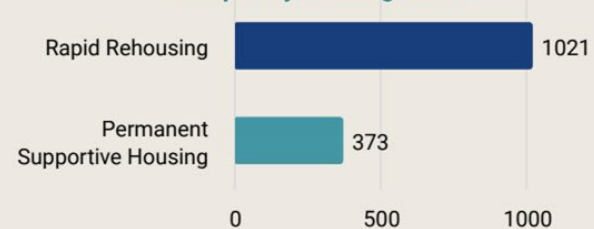
**Permanent Housing is the solution to addressing and ending homelessness.**

Total Underserved	1,165	This is the number of households currently underserved. This is calculated by counting the number of households enrolled in the homeless system of care and subtracting those that have exited or entered permanent housing. It does not include households who are not enrolled in the system.
Annual Inflow	1,461	This model assumes inflow will continue to remain the same. (Ideally, inflow will decrease as system improvements are made).
Total unserved population with unit loss and no additional changes made	1,340	To reach Functional Zero, this average number needs to match the inflow number.
Annual Unmet Need	121	Annual inflow minus annual outflow. With no action, this is the projected addition to the population each year.

## How Much Housing is Needed?

Temporary funding for 431 permanent housing units may end → This would create 276 additional unserved households each year

### Additional Permanent Housing Units Needed If Temporary Funding Ends:



**\*This number represents people who have enrolled in the homeless system of care (CES) who have not exited it for permanent housing. Because this number only includes people who have enrolled in the homeless system of care, it likely under represents the actual number of people experiencing homelessness in Dane County.**

# Plans Responding

## Local Plans and Goals

- **Regional Housing Strategy:**  
Roadmap to Solving Dane County's Housing Crisis 5 Year Strategic Plan
  - Plan Objectives focus on housing equity and stock
- **Dane County CoC:**  
Dane Forward 5 Year Strategic Plan
  - Plan Objectives focus on community response to homelessness
- **Dane County Youth Action Board:**  
Coordinated Community Plan to End Youth Homelessness
  - Plan Objectives focus on community response to youth homelessness

The **City of Madison** and **Dane County** are leading the cross collaboration across county in partnership with many housing providers, nonprofits, funders, and partners!

## Example Talking Points

- We all deserve a safe and stable place to call home [**safety**].
- Affordable housing ensures Wisconsin kids have the stability to bring their best, full selves to the classroom, that hard working folks can live in the communities they work in, and that all of our families have a roof over their head at night. [**opportunity**].
- No one should have to choose between keeping a roof over their head or putting food on the table [**cost of living/ equity**]
- Housing is a basic human need and ensuring every Wisconsinite has a stable living situation will make our state thrive and our economy prosper [**equity /opportunity**]

**Affordable Housing is a gateway to equity, opportunity, and moving Wisconsin forward.**

# Value-based Language

## **Equity -**

Housing is a basic human need

## **Safety -**

Framing people first values  
rather than profit

## **Opportunity -**

Point to opportunity for Wisconsinites  
and providing stability

# Ways to Take Action

Take action in your community and advocate for legalized cannabis.

- Dane County's Housing Plans  
[Regional Housing Strategy: Roadmap Action Plan](#)  
[Dane Forward: 5 Year Strategic Plan](#) ([Link to Participate!](#))
- Support the Homeless Services Consortium to continue launching innovative new projects, like our new youth homeless services system, which newly opened doors on Madison's first and only young adult system navigation center.

[Homeless Services Consortium](#)  
[YAB Dane County Website](#)

**From:** [Faith Fitzpatrick](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** city council meeting agenda item 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 6:05:48 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from fafitzpa@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear alders, I am opposed to the referendum and am appalled by how the Mayor is threatening our basic services and critical city staff positions against a increase in taxes. All of which could have been avoided with better fiscal planning.

Faith Fitzpatrick  
5156 Spring Ct  
District 19

**From:** [Greg & Kathy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 7:59:13 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from gkathome@chorus.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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As tax payers in the city of Madison, the proposed property tax increase will be unacceptable. The State has set tax increase limits to protect property owners.

Why does the City want to skirt this protection? We are slowly being taxed out of the home and city that we love. Separately, the school referendums are totally out of line for the tax payers. I understand the need for good schools, but this is too much of a burden.

I can offer no real solutions, but taxing average people out of their homes is not the way to build a city for the future. Please consider every option and implement these options before raising our property taxes again! Sure our roads are awful, but I'd rather have some bumps and be able to live where I choose.

Thank you - Greg and Kathy Gebhard

**From:** [Samantha Cora Christian Haas](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Comment in Support of Referendum: We need thriving libraries and parks  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:12:21 AM

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You don't often get email from samanthacoraphoto@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

I have called Madison home for the last 10 years, and ever since starting a family during the pandemic I've become more aware of the importance of city services. At the top of the list are the beautiful libraries and parks, which would suffer tremendously by the proposed budget cuts. I support the \$22 million referendum, because I recognize how vital services like libraries and parks are to connecting our community with local resources and each other. We need "Third Places" like libraries and parks that are multicultural and multigenerational for our city to thrive. Please do not cut funding to the programs and people who make these spaces wonderfully welcoming, accessible, and inclusive.

Thank you,  
Samantha Haas  
5717 Hempstead Rd, Madison  
920-248-2676



**From:** [Bill Hamilton](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum Resolution # 84443  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:35:03 AM

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You don't often get email from billhamilton@execs.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

**Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.**

We, as residents of the city, have no control or oversight of the spending or expenses incurred by the city. As our elected officials, you should work with the funds you have and develop a budget that provides essential city services, to the best of your ability. No one can fault you for making tough decisions. If that means postponing projects, not filling vacant positions, curtailing non-essential services, etc., then that is what should be done. Our property taxes are some of the highest around and should not be raised to cover budget shortfalls. Thank you for your service to our city. Bill

Ps- Is there any way the city can look at taxing or charging a fee to not-for-profit organizations that get the benefit of and use city services.

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 3:46:27 PM

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Tuesday, August 6, 2024 – 3:41pm

**Name**

Amelia Hansen

**How would you like us to contact you?**

Email

**Email**

[amhansen97@gmail.com](mailto:amhansen97@gmail.com)

**Reason for Contact**

Budget

**Message**

Dear City Finance Department,

I will support the referendum to increase the percentage cap on raising property taxes (agenda item #84443 on today's Madison Common Council agenda) to fund Madison public services, if the purpose of the increase is to fund all Madison public services except the Madison police. To clarify, I will support a referendum that clearly states that the increased percentage cap on raising property taxes will not allow any revenue collected from increased property taxes beyond the current percentage cap to be given to the Madison police department budget.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Amelia Hansen  
18 S Bedford St  
Madison, WI 53703

**From:** [Eileen Harrington](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Madison Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Support for property tax referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:35:47 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from eilieh@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

I am writing to support the proposed referendum to increase Madison property taxes to fund city services. I favor this approach rather than the alternative severe reductions in municipal services. Given that this is item 68 on tonight's agenda, I am sending this message rather than registering to speak because I doubt I will be up that late!

Why do I support an increase in my property taxes for the City of Madison? Quite simply, this city provides a wide array of services and resources that make it a wonderful place to live. I was born and raised in Madison before moving away from 1976 to 2012. I have lived in several other cities. Whether talking about streets or parks, libraries or CARES, emergency services or public safety .... I could go on and on ..... Madison shines. I am most willing to pay a modestly higher tax to maintain services. Of course, we would not be here but for the grossly unfair state revenue sharing formula.

Thank you for considering my views.

Eileen Harrington  
4209 Veith Avenue  
Madison  
202-256-5337

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**From:** [Patrick Hasburgh](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** We Can't Lose Essential City Services!  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 5:33:43 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from patrick.hasburgh@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Greetings Alders,

I don't have time to go into the MANY reasons why referendum resolution #84443 agenda item 68 needs to pass tonight, but I'm sure you all know the City is facing a crunch like they have never seen and something has to be done to try and prevent a budget disaster.

Thank you all for your time and service to our City!

--

Patrick Hasburgh  
1801 Melrose St.  
608.692.3459

**From:** [brenna.holzhauer](#)  
**To:** [Finance](#); [Finance Committee](#)  
**Cc:** [Peter Schroepfer](#)  
**Subject:** City Budget / Libraries  
**Date:** Friday, August 2, 2024 1:19:46 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from brennawells@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I am writing to advocate for our libraries as I've heard there may be cuts to library hours and services. We have 2 young children, and we visit our library at least once a week - for books, play time, programs, and more. One of the reasons we bought our house was proximity to Pinney Library. We most often visit evenings and weekends when we are not at school/work/daycare. In addition to being a wonderful educational resource, it's one of the only free kid-friendly places to go in inclement weather. I know there are many factors at play in the city budget, but please consider library accessibility and amenities for busy families.

Thank you!

Brenna Holzhauer & Peter Schroepfer  
405 Bowman Ave  
Madison

**From:** [Maryanne Huttleston](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 2:44:14 PM

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[You don't often get email from [maryannehuttleston@gmail.com](mailto:maryannehuttleston@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good afternoon.

I stand in opposition to the property tax referendum. You have purposely fed the media with information designed to scare citizens into thinking the only choice is approve an outrageous increase or lose the amenities that define Madison as a wonderful city. Lift the veil that is covering the layer of administrative fluff that is actually the basis for the increase. We as citizens live within our budgets the city must do the same.

Maryanne Huttleston  
7 Honeylocust trail  
Madison  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Shawn](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Comment/Suggestion on Budget Crisis  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:34:59 AM

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You don't often get email from shmlowry71@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

As a new resident to Madison, I must say that the property taxes here are insane already. Until recently moving to Madison, my girlfriend used to live in Lake Geneva in a gated, aviation-oriented neighborhood with a private airstrip called Lake Geneva Aire Estates. Her home was 4600 sq. ft. and the lot was 2.75 acres. She NEVER paid more than \$4,200 in property taxes in all the years she lived there. Now we live on the east side of Madison in a Veridian neighborhood with a 1600 sq. ft home on a postage stamp sized lot and my taxes are projected to be over \$8,000. What's wrong with this picture?

I have a solution to the problem, though. The city of Madison currently operates 9 libraries across the city. 9! Plus a mobile library. In this day and age of the internet, where every written work in history is no more than a click away, the city thinks that supporting 9 libraries is a sound idea? How about we cut those down to 4 libraries? One for each compass point of town? I've no idea of these libraries' budgets but closing 5 of them would save a ton of money.

Again, this is the age of the internet. There is no earthly reason to be hanging on to these relics of the past. Our libraries have become, like our city parks, overrun with addicts, homeless, and some pretty scary people. You know, the libraries and parks for our city's children and families to recreate in and enjoy? Not even safe for a school-aged kid to enter any longer. Supporting 9 ancient relics is completely insane.

Have we forgotten that inflation and the cost of living is already at record levels? Have we forgotten that most rent payments these days resemble mortgage payments? Have we forgotten that the cost to feed your family for a week has gotten way, way out of control? Have we forgotten what gasoline costs? Utilities? How much more blood can you get from the stone? This is the absolute wrong time to be asking for more tax money when we're already one of the highest taxed counties in one of the highest taxed states with fears of a recession yet to come. This is a losing proposition no matter what side of the aisle you happen to be on. Money is money to all people. And all people are hurting right now.

Oh, and don't worry about the students and the kids...they don't use the library anyway. They have a library in their pocket 24/7, rendering the brick and mortar library obsolete. Just look at the latest reading scores. Most of them have already been failed by our lackluster education system and cannot or do not read anyway.

To recap, close 5 libraries, eliminate those employees completely and the problem is fixed. 9 libraries in 2024 in a city this size is far too many. You are welcome. If you need me to help solve any other issues without fleecing people any more than they've been fleeced already, let me know. Happy to help.

Respectfully,  
Shawn Lowry

**From:** [James Mand](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** AGENDA ITEM 68 OF BUDGET  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 7:19:03 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jimmand1948@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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TO ALL:

Cut the \$1.1 million taxpayers spend on the Police Civilian Oversight Board, a do-nothing agency created to solve a non-existent problem.

Five years after its creation, this sop to Defund-the-Cops Wokeness still can't write up a complaint form.

Sincerely,

James F. Mand

49C Golf Course Rd., Madison WI 53704

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows



**From:** [emosse@aol.com](mailto:emosse@aol.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Item 84443 - (Oppose) Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 6:18:21 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [emosse@aol.com](mailto:emosse@aol.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear City of Madison Alders,

I am writing to **oppose** the Scheduling of the Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison. I am a homeowner, who resides on the northside of Madison. I am a retiree, living on a fixed income. It is a struggle now to pay bills and stay afloat, and the thought of having additional taxes imposed is unbearable. It is unfair to place the burden to city services on the backs of homeowners.

The City of Madison has a Rainy-Day Fund. Unfortunately, I don't because with every opportunity the city, state and/or county are finding ways to make the property owner pay more for the services we receive. I believe the City of Madison and the residents should coalesce, and demand that the State of Wisconsin Legislature improve it's formula for shared revenue, and stop stranglehold the cities (especially Madison and Milwaukee), to the point that they have to raise taxes to be able to provide residents with the level of services we deserve and expect.

Gun violence is a big issue in most cities nowadays, and of course we want to be safe in our communities. That said. on many occasions, I see many police squad cars in a small radius when driving through various communities. If the city has a shortage of officers, how does it afford to have 3, 4, 5 squad cars at a single stop or within a mile of each other. I understand sometime this is necessary at accident scenes or when shots are fired, but other times it look like an overkill to me. If you must cut budgets, maybe the Police Department is a place to look at.

It is cost prohibitive for homeowners to keep up when every entity look to increase the tax burden on the homeowner, with every opportunity. And it's scary!

Alder Myadze, I **oppose** the scheduling of a referendum, relating to exceeding the municipal property tax limit, and I encourage you and fellow alders to vote **NO!**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Sincerely,

Earnestine Moss  
1729 Browning Road  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [jonnmnsn@juno.com](mailto:jonnmnsn@juno.com)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Budget deficit  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 9:48:28 AM

---

You don't often get email from [jonnmnsn@juno.com](mailto:jonnmnsn@juno.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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To whom it may concern:

This morning I read an article by Alder Derek Field which was posted July 14, explaining causes of and option for the City Operating Budget Deficit for 2025.

He states, "The largest expense is public safety and public health, which makes up 42.5% of the budget (\$172.4 million). This includes police, fire, emergency medical services, and public health. The second largest expense is debt service, which is how the City pays back borrowing for capital projects for long-lasting improvements in the City's infrastructure (15.8%; \$63.9 million). The third largest expense is public works, which includes services like street and facility maintenance, trash pickup, snow clearance, parks, and more (12.4%; \$50.1 million)." I'm curious - where does the BRT project (\$195 million), the Public Market project and the construction of the Bartillon men's shelter (\$23 million) fit into these categories for the operating budget?

How much is the bike bridge over Hwy 30 costing the City and which category does that fit into?

I couldn't even find an up-to-date estimate on the cost of the Public Market. What is that number as of today and how much is the City responsible for?

In Alder Field's article, he says, "One of the main reasons (for the bigger gap) is because it will be the first year since 2021 that we will not have access to federal COVID relief funds. The City will have to make hard decisions about services and how to pay for them as a result." Did our City leaders think those COVID funds were going to last forever? What were those monies used for?

It appears to me that the City of Madison led by the Mayor has been irresponsibly spending money on unnecessary projects the past 3 years and is now trying to blame our day-to-day essential services for the deficit. What poor management and what a waste of our hard-earned taxpayer money.

Cindy Natvig

**From:** [Adam Nelson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** speaking tonight  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:35:06 AM

---

You don't often get email from adam@uxharbor.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi, I registered to speak virtually at the common council meeting tonight. Is there a zoom link I should use for that?

Adam N

**From:** [Gregory Reed](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Madison Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Madison City Budget  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 5:41:19 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from gregoryr.reed@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

My name is Greg Reed and I currently serve as the Vice-Chair of the Community Development Authority with Alders Evers and Knox and live in Alder Vidavers district. I also had Alder Bennet as one of my real estate students in class several years ago as a real estate instructor in the Wisconsin Real Estate Program / Graaskamp Center.

I fully support authorizing the \$22 million referendum for the following reasons:

Instituting short-term budget cuts to balance the City of Madison's budget this upcoming fiscal year will have long-term negative implications on the future growth and development of this city. As home and property owners can readily attest, with each passing year of deferred maintenance, the long-term cost to repair or fix the issue mounts. What may yield near-term cost savings now will cost far more over the long-term.

Draconian budget cuts to operations, staffing and investment in public infrastructure now will result in long-term damage to the city's ability to grow and address the issues that accompany tremendous population and development growth during the most recent inflationary time period.

The prospect of different shared revenue formulas for Wisconsin cities could become a reality if the future composition of the Wisconsin State Assembly and State Senate shifts based on updated legislative districts. While the ability to see meaningful results from these revised shared revenue formulas could be years away, they offer a longer-term solution that could help thwart having to consider future budget referendums as currently proposed.

With 30+ years of commercial real estate experience in multiple jurisdictions nationwide, I have extensive budgeting experience and have had to make difficult budget decisions regarding raising revenues (rent increases) versus managing or reducing expenses. The positive multiplier effect of addressing sources of revenue always outweighs both the near and long-term effects of cutting expenses or in this case, city services.

I worked for nine years at Moody's Investors Service (now Moody's Ratings) conducting surveillance of commercial backed mortgage securities (CMBS). In that role I learned about ratings, methodologies, managing and measuring risk and how rating agencies view credit risk. Madison enjoys an enviably high credit rating right now and that rating is considered stable according to Moody's. Failure to address the looming budget shortfalls, with even a meaningful short-term solution, could jeopardize not only the stability of the current rating but also trigger future downgrades. By approving the \$22 million referendum now with the prospect of revised shared revenue formulas in future years, Madison could continue to enjoy a stellar credit rating for the foreseeable future and incur lower borrowing costs as a consequence.

Failure to authorize the \$22 million referendum could result in budget cuts that could thwart the amazing work of the Madison Police Department, the much needed infrastructure improvements planned and underway (including implementation of the new BRT system) and the quality of life that makes Madison such an exceptional place to live.

As a homeowner, I am willing to pay more to ensure that the City of Madison's finances are on solid footing and hope that you vote to authorize a referendum.

Thank you for your service to the City of Madison and for your consideration tonight.

Best regards,

Greg Reed  
973-722-8144 cell

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 1:51:48 PM

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Tuesday, August 6, 2024 – 1:51pm

**Name**

Rachel Rovinsky

**How would you like us to contact you?**

Email

**Email**

[rachorovinsky828@gmail.com](mailto:rachorovinsky828@gmail.com)

**Reason for Contact**

Budget

**Message**

Hi, I am a graduate student at UW-Madison and Madison resident. I am urging the City Finance Department and Common Council to approve the \$22 million referendum that would balance the budget and allow for continued support of public services, including our libraries. This money collected from property tax should go towards services that support our most marginalized communities. This means allocating more money towards libraries, fire department, garbage collection, and parks, NOT police, as police primarily harm BIPOC residents of Madison.

**From:** [Glori Sabin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Cuts  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 5:14:32 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [kdietzman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kdietzman@sbcglobal.net). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders,

It was just recently brought to my attention that proposed cuts do NOT include the \$1.1 million taxpayers spend on the Police Civilian Oversight Board that is a do-nothing agency created to solve a non-existent problem. If I was aware of this before, I would have included it in a previous comment I sent to all of you earlier today. Remember, we are all watching and listening. Thank you

Glori D Sabin  
10 Jubilee Cir  
Madison Wi 53718  
Email: [kdietzman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kdietzman@sbcglobal.net)

**From:** [Norman Sannes](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Steve Rammer](#)  
**Subject:** BUDGET CUTS  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 8:11:07 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from norman.sannes@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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CONSPICUOUSLY MISSING from the Mayor's proposal if the referendum does not pass is the \$1.1 million taxpayers spend on the Police Civilian Oversight Board, a do-nothing agency created to solve a non-existent problem.

Five years after its creation, this sop to Defund-the-Cops still can't write up a complaint form.

We retired, fixed income folks are being taxed out of our homes. That is a fact.

Norman Sannes, Madison



**From:** [Maggie Schnell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** No Cuts to Library Services!  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 10:17:06 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from mgschnell1014@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison alders,

I have been a resident of Madison for 10 years, and I am writing to urge you not to cut library funding. All of the arts programming is really worth it, and if evening and weekend hours are removed or limited there is a huge portion of Madison residents, including myself, who will simply no longer be able to use the libraries in person at all due to their work schedule. For example, libraries are the most convenient places to vote early absentee, or to turn in an early absentee ballot by mail, especially given the legal fights over drop boxes and potential delays in the USPS. Cutting library hours will simply make it more difficult for people in Madison to vote, especially for disabled folks, single parents, those with inflexible schedules or who are working multiple jobs.

Library services in general are the most essential for those of our neighbors who are in the most vulnerable of circumstances. An extra \$20 a month from property owners seems a more than reasonable price to pay for what Madison Public Libraries offer to this community.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Maggie Schnell

**From:** [LeeAnn S Sinclair](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding upcoming possible referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:55:26 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from lassinclair@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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To Madison City Alders,

I am a citizen of Madison who is concerned about climate change. I believe our city staff has done impressive work to create and implement a climate sustainability plan for our city. When it comes to addressing the climate crisis, we all know that we have passed the point of taking no action.

Though I would prefer alternative ways to address our city budget deficit, I am asking you to carefully examine the referendum resolution (Legistar 84442) on August 20 because to balance the upcoming budget without a referendum, the city would need to make significant cuts in services in 2025, which would also no doubt result in employee layoffs. Budget cuts presumably would effect the funding for the climate sustainability plan.

With a referendum, Madison will be able to continue actively working to reduce the on-going effects of climate change.

Without it, the future cost to our residents to cope with increasingly devastating climate events will be higher.

Please carefully consider the long-term consequences of delaying this referendum. Thank you.

LeeAnn Sinclair  
1516 Langley Lane  
Madison, WI 53718

**From:** [Mikael Snitker](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Time to cut costs, and get a grip  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 24, 2024 7:32:05 AM

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You don't often get email from snitker@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Greetings,

Year over year taxes have spiraled, without relief for owners and renters alike. When will the city get a grip, on its spending, and debt problem—and start respecting the heavy tax and rent burdens faced by each family?

Instead—try living within your means first, before asking for more money to fill in the gaps. And, as these things go, every tax dollar collected is a dollar from the mouth of a family, aging resident, veterans, people with disabilities, and average people—and some people who can least afford it.

In case there is any doubt—I will be voting 'no' on the City's referendum-- as a vote of conscience. In my 34 years of voting—this is my first no vote for a funding increase request--ever--and a funding request which couldn't come at a worse time for residents. This includes many 'yes' votes in Portland, Oakland, and Santa Cruz , all with high costs of living. Not this time.

Think what you want-but it's time to make do with what you have, stop making excuses & reckless spending, talk with your finance people, and ask taxpayers--they will tell you the alarm they have, too. Maybe you are alarmed as well.

But, it doesn't take a doctor to see that the patient is gravely ill.

Mikael Snitker, PhD

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] city budget  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 5:36:49 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Tuesday, August 6, 2024 – 5:35pm

Robert Tews

4901 Buckeye Rd

Madison, Wisconsin. 53716 No, do not contact me. All Alders city budget After 2 years of doing almost nothing maybe you should get rid of the Police Civilian Oversight Board and save \$1million.

**From:** [J W](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding the property tax referendum  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 7:03:24 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from madcitymail@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello, we are sorry we are late in sending our input, but we were not in town.

We disagree with the additional 22-million-dollar funding, even though it may involve making cuts to the operating budget. Homeowners and private companies are facing the same choices and decisions, in times of change. The economy and inflation, including layoffs at our employers or cut backs on hours, has caused us to tighten our belts at home too. We just don't have it to spare.

In good times, it is easier to absorb financial requests like you are asking, but it is not those times right now, and we fear what is coming in the next few years after watching our 40i K's dive this past week.

You need to make these hard choices like we do at home. So do it and don't burden those who pay a lot of taxes already. Decide on NEEDS versus WANTS. Maybe those flush years of federal government aid have made it too easy to fund everything, but now it's time to get back to reality, like we have had to do.

The stimulus packages and covid aid were like opioids, once you start, you are hooked, and it's hard to stop. The American people have suffered the same fate from being rescued and are now entitled and expectant of constant bailouts and sit with their hands out. They, like government do not understand sometimes you have to sacrifice in tough times and grow stronger as a result, but in fact they are now much weaker and can not handle normal fluctuations and stresses in life...and want to be rescued. Seems that is the same with the city government. You can't have your cake and eat it all the time, especially when you can't pay for the cake.

Paying fair taxes is a social obligation and is right, but overspending and extorting taxpayers when times are tough and programs can be forced to budget or be put on hold until funds are there is right too—but forcing people to pay more when taxes are already the highest in the state is immoral, unethical and frankly stealing.

So, do the right thing. We watched the testimonies on the news last night and realize the majority were city workers who may be affected through job cutbacks and offloading of more work on them, a loss of some nice conveniences but not necessities for the public, but when

times get better and other projects are done and come off or decrease on the city's budget sheet, you can add money back to projects, social programs and new projects as it come in.

A budget is a balance of incoming revenues and correlates with expenditures. So overshooting the budget with over spending does not give license to lay the cost on hard working already highly taxed residents who are all effected by the last few years of soaring inflation in all life costs with dwindling pay checks. We all love to dream of living and providing the ideal for all in Madison, but now is not the time to pressure the taxpayers into submitting to your shortfall. Manage your budget like we do. We wonder how businesses will be affected when people have discretionary money to keep their doors open.

Do the right thing. It is so easy to sit in the council chambers and write your dream lists, pet projects and agendas, but before you just pass the buck, try having more public meetings in your districts, many of us are busy working or are not able to come to you when you decide to have meetings, so you don't hear the masses, just the benefactors who live down town and are served will by the changes you are forcing on the rest.

Tom and Liz

Sent from [Outlook](#)

**From:** [dvm222](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** \$22 million referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 5:31:06 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [dvm222@charter.net](mailto:dvm222@charter.net). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

As a property owner in madison for over 30 years, I feel you need to find the money some where else and not the property owners.

I have been planning and living a life that fits in my budget. Now that I am retired, adding to my property taxes seems a little much to me. Try raising corporate taxes for once or do without as many of us do.

If you can't find the money else where, then services will need to be cut back. Go back to work and figure this out Mayor Satya.

Thank you,  
Deb V.

Sent from my Galaxy

**From:** [Kathy Viets](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget/referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 6:15:04 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from kaviets@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I was once very proud to live in Madison. It was a great place to live.

It is no longer and I am greatly concerned by this proposed budget and referendum.



**From:** j.w  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** Tax meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 5:36:32 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jgwittwer@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Thank you for the meeting on this issue. I would like to voice my opinion against the tax increase especially in my district in the Williamson Street area. I have been living in this area for 35 years so I've seen the decline in our neighborhood.. The Williamson Street area does not seem to get the basic city resources that are common in most or all other districts.

There was recently a murder, a half a block down from my home yet the police presence has not increased on Friday and Saturday nights when these people party on the street.

I heard there is now a dedicated Willy Street police liaison yet they have not reached out or shown their face in this area.

We need police officers walking down Williamson Street on Friday and Saturday nights 11pm until 3 AM to see the crime

The large amount of street people drinking and sleeping on the sidewalk and in the bushes, makes it hard to get people to move into our rental units. Telirium the co-op the social justice center, and a few others bad players need to work with the police to deal with this issue. They are the cause of so many desperate people gathering here.

In my 35 years here, I have never seen a speed trap on Willy Street yet they are all over the city and other neighborhoods. People drive well over 100 miles an hour here regularly and with no police around there's no reason for them to stop.

Please pull over the vehicles with the mega sound systems and give them a ticket!!!! my home shakes from their music every 15 minutes all day and night.

In conclusion, the actions of the city in the neighborhood I love are just driving the good people away and raising taxes just sends a message get out.

We don't use the schools or the police or most of the city resources yet we pay a huge amount of our income in taxes .

I hope you respectively act on the issues I have raised here.

Thanks, Willy st Homeowner

**From:** [Sally Young](#)  
**To:** [Liz D.](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 4:47:19 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sallyryoung@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Thanks, yours was too. And you spurred me on to actually write it and send it rather than just thinking about it.

Sally R. Young, Ph.D., LPC  
Lifeline Connections, LLC  
5900 Monona Drive, #305  
Madison, WI 53716  
608.219.2277

On Tue, Aug 6, 2024, 2:00 PM Liz D. <[liz.winter.dannenbaum@gmail.com](mailto:liz.winter.dannenbaum@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Excellent! ♥♥

On Tue, Aug 6, 2024, 11:41 AM Sally Young <[sallyryoung@gmail.com](mailto:sallyryoung@gmail.com)> wrote:  
To: Madison City Council

In the past, Madison residents have been generous with voting to voluntarily increase their property taxes. However, I would like to go on record as being against the city's upcoming referendum. I am on a fixed income that is not keeping up with inflation. We have an ambitious mayor and I have not seen the city council doing much to restrain her ambitions. It is no surprise that the state has unfairly targeted us with a paltry amount of state funding. It is no surprise that the pandemic funds would end soon. So, why did this 'crisis' materialize in the past year? Why were we not working harder to balance the budget by forgoing wonderful, forward-looking but unnecessary projects two, three, four years ago?

Sally Young  
4112 Major Ave.

"One of the most dangerous illusions of the climate crisis is that the technology of modern life makes us invincible...our bubble of invincibility is far more fragile than we know."

Jeff Goodall author of *The Heat Will Kill You First: Life and Death on a Scorched Planet*.

**From:** [James Buckett](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fiscal Responsibility  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 1:20:04 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from nemesis99@charter.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Greetings,

Growing up in the 50s, 60s and 70s a phrase often heard from my elders was, "Money doesn't grow on trees". While it might be a cliché saying by today's standard the message is still relevant. You learn fiscal responsibility by living within a budget and saving money whenever you can.

The Mayor and City Council of Madison continue to live under the impression that whenever they want to spend more money on programs their money tree is city taxpayers. Reducing expenditures should be a priority investigation; not threatening the loss of basic services if city residents don't agree to an egregious increase in our property taxes.

The last ten years of my career at UW Madison was dealing with the harsh reality of serial budgets that would never increase while the cost of serials continued to skyrocket. The only option was to cut subscriptions in order to keep within budget. There was no money tree or citizens to tap into and the cuts occurred, year after year.

I will not vote in favor of any tax referendum increases. The City of Madison needs to learn how to live within its means by reducing unnecessary expenses and cutting costs on things that are not essential city services.

Regards,

Jim Buckett  
Madison, WI

**From:** [Mike](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** No to \$22 vote million tax hike  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 2:19:19 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from mrcarrusa@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I will vote no for any tax hike referendum. The shortfall caused by mismanagement and waste should be made up by cuts and fundraising.

**The Mayor has 4 Deputy Mayors.** The President of the United States has only one Vice President. Deputy Mayor positions should be cut 1 - 3 full positions, not the half position the 1/2 position I have heard proposed. Cutting full positions save the most due to not funding benefits and retirements for half time positions.

**Garbage and recyclables** could be every other week with 26 weeks garbage and 26 weeks recyclables. This would cut garbage collection 33%.

**Libraries** could be closed Sundays. As for night hours the other 6 days would have alternating early / late hours. 3 days with 9 am - 5 pm hours and 3 days 1 pm - 9 pm hours. Extra funding could come from fundraising "Friends of Libraries".

**Social and Community Programs:** Increase fundraising from private sources. Many programs I am sure already rely on the private sources of funding.

The Mayors office and City Council Members should not threaten citizens to make cuts in community safety, such as Police and Fire services.

Michael Carr  
2137 Commonwealth Ave  
Madison, WI 53726

**From:** [Sara Meredith](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [council](#); [Finance](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Agenda Item #84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 8:38:10 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from smeretactics@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good morning Alders, Common Council Members and City Finance Department,

Emailing to let you know of my support for having a \$22 million referendum to increase property taxes \$20 a month rather than cutting city services - including the library, parks, and elimination of arts grants ( to name a few)

I'm also emailing in my capacity as an artist AND full time volunteer of arts non- profit Communication. We believe cuts to many of the city services like the library would have an unfair impact on the city's poorest and disabled residents.

We want our city to be accessible and if that means those who can afford homes and properties pay a bit extra to ensure vital and most accessible city services remain available - then that is what needs to happen.

Thank you for your time and dedication!

photo



**Sara Meredith**

Communication Shop Manager, Artist Smere Tactics

She Her Hers| [smeretactics@gmail.com](mailto:smeretactics@gmail.com)

[www.smeretactics.com](http://www.smeretactics.com)



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Create your WiseStamp [email signature](#)



**From:** [Emily Reynolds](#)  
**To:** [Finance](#); [council](#); [LI Administration](#); [mpl-libraryboard](#)  
**Subject:** Please Support our Libraries with Option C  
**Date:** Monday, August 5, 2024 8:39:01 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from emilymargrit@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

My name is Emily Reynolds and I live in District 2.

Today I went to Central Library with a bag full of VHS tapes and audio cassettes I kept from when we cleared my mom's house out after she passed away. A library worker named Sean taught me how to use the digital archiving equipment there so I could digitize these precious memories and have them forever. Sean walked me through not just the technical stuff, but also best practices for archiving. We chatted about what kids learn in school today and that he spells his name the same way as my brother. I might never talk to Sean again, but him teaching me to digitize my tapes will be with me forever, and make it possible to easily share with relatives living in other states. The library will let me come--for free--and spend 3 hours at a time digitizing what I have using their equipment--for free! My brother's kids can watch him play Timon in his middle school's production of The Lion King from way back in 1994. I can finally listen to the tape my mom labelled "Emily, age 4, freestyles the colors of the rainbow for 20 minutes."

This is just one of many things our libraries do for us. Libraries are a foundation of a healthy community. They are a critical service and supporting them shows we care about people, learning, helping, teaching, growing, and togetherness. They are already struggling and stretched thin and can't take more cuts. We *must* fund our libraries, and not at the expense of Youth Services or Bubbler staff.

I am writing in strong support of Option C on agenda item #84443 to support Youth Services and programming and the Bubbler. I have registered my support officially, but I wanted to email you too. There are immeasurable stories about how libraries have helped our community from others out there, and this was one of mine.

Thank you,

Emily

**From:** [Michael J Wish](#)  
**To:** [council](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** \$22 Million Dollar Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 6, 2024 9:22:54 AM

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You don't often get email from mjwish46@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Madison Alders and Mayor:

I have never been this upset about a budget, ever. Where was the sense of sustainability, as you glibly banter about, as the lot of you overspent and decimated our resources, like drunken sailors. **Shame on each and everyone of you!** A high school freshman with a completed introductory business course, could have managed costs and revenues and balanced the budget better than any of you. Your action in incurring the \$22 million deficit isn't criminal, but should be. You were entrusted with managing the City's resources with responsibility to arrive at a balanced budget year to year. You failed miserably and now you want the taxpayers to bail you out !!! Enough said.

Taxpayer bailout, without a flat moratorium on new spending is a joke. You need your powers to spend, managed by a third party or a commission, similar to the unneeded police and fire oversight commission, or a special master with staff to curb the ravenous spending by the City. There a start to managing the budget get rid of redundant functions. If the Police and Fire Commission can't do the job, replace them with people who can.

I see that if we don't knuckle under, existing services and people will be cut. Let me see existing positions, 5 assistant mayors would be a start, pay cuts at the top positions mayor, alders, managerial positions, etc. Nothing about cuts in unimplemented new services, or projects or that are on the table, or a needed mandated moratorium on new spending . Someone must take an axe to new buildings, and other large expenditures items. If I had the power you would fire all of you for impotent and follow-the-leader-behavior, follow the lemmings over the cliff, that has placed the City in the position its in !!!

Sincerely,

Michael J Wish

**From:** [chrissey ary](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** tax money  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 12:24:43 PM

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You don't often get email from lunchlady20101@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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As a retired person I feel that the money from our taxes should support all those who are citizens and need help and take care of the services that they are to cover. Why not have the people who want to sponsor undocumented families do so. The newcomers are stretching all of our services to the max. I have no one in school so I do not want to support a school system that is failing. As a small addition.. why not have the people who have bicycles get a license plate or tag for a few \$\$ to help pay for the new bike paths that I will never use. But I also would like to see more police and have them unshackled to enforce the laws on the books which would do a great deal to protect against crimes that effect the innocent. Hold people accountable for their actions and that may make Madison a place ALL would like to live in. DO NOT RAISE MY TAXES. Thanks (EVEN THOUGH I KNOW MY WISHES WILL BE DISMISSED!!!!)



**From:** [tom Beck](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Over budget \$\$  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 2:42:56 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from cnse55@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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18 people, no replies, sad.  
Thanks,  
Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights  
**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

On Aug 5, 2024, at 12:14 PM, tom Beck <cnse55@yahoo.com> wrote:

to solve the budget problem, stop scare tactics about cutting FD & PD cuts. Start common sense , reduce the unnecessary positions.  
See below, why does the mayor need to travel overseas?

Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights  
**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** tom <cnse55@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** June 19, 2024 at 10:05:37 AM CDT  
**To:** City of Madison <district10@cityofmadison.com>, district1@cityofmadison.com, district11@cityofmadison.com, district12@cityofmadison.com, district2@cityofmadison.com, district3@cityofmadison.com, district5@cityofmadison.com, district6@cityofmadison.com, district7@cityofmadison.com, district8@cityofmadison.com, district9@cityofmadison.com, City of Madison <district4@cityofmadison.com>, district14@cityofmadison.com, district16@cityofmadison.com, Mayor <mayor@cityofmadison.com>, Our Rep <district15@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Over budget \$\$  
**Reply-To:** tom <cnse55@yahoo.com>

Easy fix:

1. eliminate both asst.mayors
2. Mayor takes 10% pay cut, travel budget cut 20%
3. Alder's take 10 % pay cut
4. All DEI positions cut

**Tom,**

**Protect the 1st amendment, stop the censorship Google,  
FB, Twitter, MSM!**

**From:** [Beverly Bednar](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [TCTVoice@captimes.com](mailto:TCTVoice@captimes.com)  
**Subject:** Nov. 5 Referendum  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 2:37:29 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from garnette85@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am not voting for the referendum or any referendum that raises taxes. Are you kidding me? This is so disgusting I can hardly stand it. Why did the city spend \$50 million on a bus system that goes nowhere? They ruined the bus system that was in place. Now it takes me 2 bus rides to get anywhere and then they don't even take you as far as the damn malls. You end walking all over, in bad weather, hot weather, cold weather, rain. So this is why the city is asking for another \$25 million, because they already spent \$50 on the dumbest bus system I ever encountered.

I rode the bus for more than 50 years. I knew global warming was on its way 50 years ago. This is my reward for riding the bus all these years; that it would take 2 buses to get anywhere that one bus took me before. I see thousands of cars go by on University Avenue when one bus alone goes by. This is the reward I get for taking all those bus rides and never owning a car.

You all have a lot of nerve asking for \$25 million when you already spent \$50 million on a terrible bus system and no one has mentioned this. Why are you out \$25 million? And by the way, I take the buses as little as possible and every bus driver I have spoken to has agreed with me how bad the bus system is.

You already knew the city would be out \$25 million when you paid \$50 for the stupid bus system. You knew it; why did you do it? And now you want the taxpayers to pay for your colossal mistake.

Beverly Bednar  
Madison Wisconsin

**From:** [linda.carr](mailto:linda.carr@cityofmadison.com)  
**To:** [al-lalders@cityofmadison.com](mailto:al-lalders@cityofmadison.com)  
**Subject:** Budget comments

---

Dear Council,

I for one will be voting NO for your referendum this fall. The mayor has spent without consideration for the future. Our property taxes are already very high, as we all know. With high taxes and inflation, and a fixed income, we have had to make daily sacrifices to stay afloat. The city could do the same. I do not appreciate the scare tactics of cutting police and fire. I think there are many other places to start.

1. The mayor's staff. Seriously, one chief of staff, 4 deputy mayors, 3 coordinators, one assistant and 2 clerks. One deputy mayor and one coordinator could go. I'm thinking back on all the staffing cuts I experienced in health care - lean staff.
2. Trash collection every other week.
3. Cut back on street sweepers. Could also reduce brush collections.
4. Trim city street workers - usually there are 1-2 watching while just 1 does the actual work.
5. Increase parking fees, tickets

I'll stop short of having out of town workers pay toll to use our roads. I live near many schools and the UW campus and watch daily September - June the amount of drivers from surrounding towns using our streets and parking. FYI...they are not riding the bus, but rather driving in individual cars causing more congestion.

Thank you,  
Linda Carr

**From:** [Jeanette Clawson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [agarfield@captimes.com](mailto:agarfield@captimes.com)  
**Subject:** tax hike  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 3:36:36 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [clawsonj15@gmail.com](mailto:clawsonj15@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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To whom it may concern,

I read about the tax hike in the Cap Times and I'm curious about what a 22M hike would look like to me. Taxes in Madison are significant, but I believe that it is worth the investment. I can afford to pay some more, but I'm concerned about what the increase would be. Is there any discussion of future financial support from the federal government for any of the services listed? What options have been explored to sustain the current systems? Don't local businesses have a responsibility to the community to take on some of the expense?

The services that are listed to be cut are vital to what makes Madison a great place to live. In particular, the CARES program, police programs, bus services and library hours are vital to the care of the most vulnerable population in our community. However, raising taxes puts more people at risk of economic insecurity. Our country has abandoned so many people and I am proud to live in a community that strives to live up to its progressive ideals. I look forward to more discussion on this important matter. Thank you for your service.

Jeanette Clawson  
3430 Richard St.53714

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Budget  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 4:51:25 PM

---

Alders,

The following message was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Jerry Darda <jerryxdarda@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 4:11 PM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Budget

You don't often get email from [jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Alders

Please consider serious cuts to the Community Development Division proposed budget before going to referendum at a time when MMSD is doing the same.

In addition there are other areas to cut such as the police oversight group which do nothing!

And make some common sense judgements distinguishing WANTS from NEEDS. Don't cut basics, police, fire, trash, etc. and don't threaten use with across the board cuts to these basics services when you have significant Wants available to cut most notably in the CDD.

And thanks to alder Vidaver for her transparency, timely, and regular communications.

Jerry & Bonnie Darda

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Budget  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 10:30:06 AM

---

Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Jerry Darda <[jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 8:03 AM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Budget

You don't often get email from [jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Jerry Darda <[jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com)>  
Date: Thu, Aug 8, 2024 at 8:02 AM  
Subject: Re: Budget  
To: Figueroa Cole, Yannette <[district10@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district10@cityofmadison.com)>

Alder Cole,

Thank you for your response to our budget concerns. Obviously, you and the other alders are much more privy to budget issues than we are. However as housing providers with 3 buildings (10 apartment units) all on the near West side, it pains me to have to raise rents on my hard working tenants, and get blamed by city officials as being greedy when the city council has a significant share of responsibility here by constantly raising property taxes with increased spending on arguably some non essential programs.

I suggest the following in terms of cutting the CDD budget

1) Look at using schools (after school hours) and libraries for senior, child care, and

youth services. Cut some of the \$8.5 there.

2) Cut some of the \$3M for small business employment and job training--what the heck are the schools and Madison college doing in this regard.

3) \$1.3 M community centers--use school buildings

4) \$15.5M FTE's We have no idea what this is, but it can't be more important than safety and sanitation (police fire, trash)

Simply, get creative on sharing public facilities where possible as well as eliminating non essential services

Certainly the police oversight (do nothing) committee can be eliminated immediately that's an \$0.5 M start

Every organization has waste and non essential expenses. We request you look hard at these before going to the referendum.

It's time to get Religious organizations ( churches, synagogues, mosques) involved in solving some social problems such as providing meeting places for seniors and youth--and out of government hands.

At this point, although, certainly not a model for prudent budgeting either, we will support the MMSD referendums but not the city's referendum because we believe there is too much waste and we resent the implication (threats) of cutting essential services.

Thank you for your consideration to our request.

Jerry & Bonnie Darda  
15 Sturbridge Circle  
Madison WI 53717  
608-219-1623----Jerry's cell

On Wed, Aug 7, 2024 at 6:25 PM Figueroa Cole, Yannette  
<[district10@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district10@cityofmadison.com)> wrote:

Hello!

Thank you for your email! The Community Development Division has a general fund budget of about \$15.6 Million which is 3.8% of the City Budget and about 45 Full time positions. What are you suggestion we eliminate? The Senior Center,



Neighborhood Centers, support to DAIS, Unidos, the shelter, Daycare?

Once your services selection is eliminated, do you expect MPD service calls to increase or decrease, while keeping their same budget? MPD's Budget is ~\$91M or 22% of the City Budget

2024 Budget in Millions	Example of Services (not inclusive list)
\$2.8	Renters, tenant resource services, rehabbing dwelling units to convert to low-income home ownership and rentals, the shelter
\$8.5	Senior Services, Senior Center, Childcare, MOST (out of school time), domestic violence, other VP youth services
\$3	Small businesses, young and adult employment, and job training
\$1.3	Community centers, and non-profit facility loans
\$15.6	45 FTE's

Looking forward to your input.

Thanks,  
Yannette

Alder Figueroa Cole  
[Subscribe for Updates](#)

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**From:** Fields, Debbie <[DFields@cityofmadison.com](mailto:DFields@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 4:51 PM  
**To:** All Alders <[allalders@cityofmadison.com](mailto:allalders@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** FW: Budget

Alders,

The following message was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Jerry Darda <[jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 7, 2024 4:11 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Budget

You don't often get email from [jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Alders

Please consider serious cuts to the Community Development Division proposed budget before going to referendum at a time when MMSD is doing the same.

In addition there are other areas to cut such as the police oversight group which do nothing!

And make some common sense judgements distinguishing WANTS from NEEDS. Don't cut basics, police, fire, trash, etc. and don't threaten use with across the board cuts to these basics services when you have significant Wants available to cut most notably in the CDD.

And thanks to alder Vidaver for her transparency, timely, and regular communications.

Jerry & Bonnie Darda

**From:** [Brian King](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Against Tax Increase  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 7:39:11 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from brian king5@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

The city is gradually pushing us away from being a resident here. We are retired on a fixed income. No pension or health insurance subsidy by former employers do we enjoy. City, School and County property taxes as a proportion of our income have gone up every year that we have lived here - over 10 years. Get on with slimming down the city government. No tax increase or school referendum will get our support.

**From:** [Josh Olson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Raising the Levy Limit is a Must  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 7:45:06 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jo.olson03@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hi Alders,

After reviewing the potential cuts proposed by city agencies (<https://www.cityofmadison.com/news/2024-08-05/update-on-2025-budget-process>), seeing other cities struggling with increased operating budgets and similarly going to referendum, and reviewing the data showing inflation and home values being markedly up compared to property taxes I've been convinced that we need to raise the levy limit.

It's not our fault that the State placed restrictions on property taxes. It's not our fault that we succeed compared to other cities, towns, and villages in Wisconsin so we receive less state funding. But we have to play within the existing rules.

There are only a few items on the budget cutting list I'm only mildly okay with cutting. Many of these would make me very upset, some of them are non-negotiable with how I live. It is worth a \$200 increase in property taxes a year to ensure we don't lose those services.

For alders that are looking for solutions to budget restrictions, the housing shortage, and rising property taxes that people with fixed incomes are worried about affording: let's build more housing, specifically small and more inexpensive housing. The City itself can't build it all, but we would do ourselves a great service in allowing developers (big and small) find opportunities to build Missing Middle homes to upgrade our low density, high maintenance cost single family detached homes that don't fit well in a city. That means updating the zoning codes so we can build more in traditionally SFH-only districts, which are bleeding us dry (see [https://datarocks.github.io/madison\\_parcels\\_data/](https://datarocks.github.io/madison_parcels_data/)). If someone can turn a large, 5 bedroom SFH with only 2 occupants looking to downsize into a new duplex or triplex, let's make it easy for them to do that. And let's ensure the people looking to downsize have options so they can stay in the neighborhood too. That means increasing all kinds of housing supply and it means relying less on "planned and finished development" of communities and more dynamic, adaptable growth.

If we do this, if we build more in Madison with homes that thicken our neighborhoods, increasing quality of life, we can also make a more financially resilient city.

Please raise the levy limit and please look towards making a more prosperous city by letting people build more. Thank you.

Josh Olson

**From:** [hregnier](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** property tax increase, again  
**Date:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 7:54:40 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from hsoregnier@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Please help us understand how, as retirees who worked for over 35 years and are on fixed incomes, are supposed to come up with well over \$1,000 per month to cover property taxes with the amount constantly increasing. And why are our property taxes so much higher than almost any other city in the U.S.? This system is absolutely not working and we are constantly asked to approve property tax increases to fund schools. Where is the money going? How does it compare to places like Cambridge, Massachusetts where property values are very high but property taxes are 75% LOWER?

I am happy to pay my fair share of taxes but there seems to be no end in sight here with no explanation as to why our property taxes are among the very highest in the country.

Thank you for reading -

Henny Regnier

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] \$22 million proposed referendum  
**Date:** Sunday, August 11, 2024 6:31:31 PM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Sunday, August 11, 2024 – 6:30pm

Jane Albert

she/her

2144 West Lawn Ave.

Madison, Wisconsin. 53711 Yes, by email. [jalbert4410@gmail.com](mailto:jalbert4410@gmail.com) All Alders \$22 million proposed referendum I will not even consider voting for this until I see a list of belt tightening measures Mayor Satya will implement in her own office!

The proposed referendum hurts children, families and the most vulnerable of our citizens.

From: [Nino Amato](#)  
To: [All Alders](#); [Mayor Nino Amato](#)  
Subject: 2025 Budget | Referendum & Proposed Budget Cuts  
Date: Sunday, August 11, 2024 9:51:05 PM

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**“Cut the Mayors  
bloated Staff by 50% &  
Cut the Mayors out of  
state travel = Funding  
for the Goodman  
Community Pool”**

# **Community Pool.**

## **— Nino Amato**



**From:** [Joan bellkaul](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** UPCOMING REFERENDUM ON GARGANTUAN PROPERTY TAX INCREASE  
**Date:** Friday, August 9, 2024 10:21:23 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from joanbellkaul@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I, together with many other property owners in the City of Madison, am poised to vote **NO** on the upcoming referendum. I am not alone. City of Madison residents on the ND General site are expressing outrage at the prospect of adding so much more to their already-crippling burden of city property taxes.. It is an "all-the-traffic-will-bear" situation this city is facing.

Decision Makers in the City of Madison need to **halt** ALL NON essential, "frill and pet-project /showboat" spending; **and, rather,** use the same kind of careful, budgeting and discretion on the use of our hard-earned taxpayer money, just as **we** have been forced to do as individuals, in the face of rising, unprecedented cost of living expenses, in order to remain solvent.

And when election time rolls around again, you can be sure that your stand on this issue will be a key factor in your re-election.

Sincerely,

Joan Bell-Kaul, Lead  
NEXTDOOR: Environmental, Nature and Wildlife Group, Admin. and Originator (1,125+ current membership).

**From:** [Books24u](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: No to a possible city budget referendum in November  
**Date:** Friday, August 9, 2024 4:22:18 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from books24u@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders,

While reading about a possible \$22M city referendum for the November election in the Cap Times, a loud jet at the airport, most likely an F - 35 was taking off. True story. My thoughts were that at the federal level too much money is going to the War/Military Industrial Complex. At \$100M each for an F - 35, this is an example of too much money going somewhere else other than to on the ground funding to keep Madison great.

With Madison homeowners currently facing already high assessments, I'm planning on voting "no" on a referendum if one is placed on the ballot in November for a \$22M tax hike.

The city can always look at implementing more integrity and basic grit to efficiency measures that are helpful for all departments. The proposed cuts are bad for safety measures. And it doesn't make sense to cut bus routes and service after spending so much for the new bus stations and all of the red paint. I "see red" over that proposal. A stand against wasteful federal spending, especially for militarism, is something to stand for when it affects various budgets in Madison. What would former U.S. Senator William Proxmire say about the F - 35s in Madison? If federal funds helped cities in the past as Esser Funds did, why can't Madison fine some other federal funds to help out now?

Keeping Madison affordable is a stand to continually take for this great city!

Sincerely,

Steve Books  
625 Spruce St.  
Madison, WI 53715  
(608)358-7906

**From:** [Donna Coughlin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Property tax hike  
**Date:** Monday, August 12, 2024 1:29:22 PM

---

[Some people who received this message don't often get email from dcoughlin12@charter.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please budget more effectively. The \$22 million tax hike is outrageous & should not be approved.  
Donna Coughlin (Madison resident and taxpayer).  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Jean](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [agarfield@captimes.com](mailto:agarfield@captimes.com)  
**Subject:** About the Proposed \$22M Tax Hike  
**Date:** Friday, August 9, 2024 12:49:14 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from jkdemuzio@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Greetings,

My husband and I have a few suggestions about how to get the city budget under control without raising taxes. They are:

- 1) Reduce the Mayor's office staff and research staff.
- 2) Reduce the salary of the city alders.
- 3) Reduce the salary of the mayor.
- 4) Mow the city parks less frequently.
- 5) Reduce city tree trimming to a minimum and do not cut down trees that still are alive but have been damaged. There is far too much over trimming with the city trees.
- 6) To the mayor: Be more efficient in your city management. (I did not vote for you because you have been fiddling with the rezoning of single family housing use.)
- 7) Make little budget cuts in every city department including the mayor's office.
- 8) Don't make blanket cuts to services or propose enormous property tax increases to home owners who are already not happy about rising property taxes.
- 9) Stop the Rapid Transit Project now! Embracing this project has already reduced bus routes in many parts of the city where bus service is the only means to get around.

I hope you and your office will consider some of these ideas.

Jean DeMuzio

Tony Milanowski

3313 Derby Down

Madison, WI 53713

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact  
**Date:** Thursday, July 11, 2024 4:11:54 PM

---

Thursday, July 11, 2024 – 4:07pm

**Name**  
Jessica

**How would you like us to contact you?**  
Email

**Email**  
[jegilkison@gmail.com](mailto:jegilkison@gmail.com)

**Reason for Contact**  
Budget

**Message**

I'm writing with concern about the possible cuts to library services. Libraries provide essential services to our community, including to some of the most marginalized people. Cuts to our libraries impact all of us, whether directly or indirectly. We are better served by cutting the law enforcement budget, as their services benefit a smaller group of people and continue the cycle of the carceral system, perpetuating white supremacy and capitalism.

**From:** [Sharon Goss](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** proposed tax hike  
**Date:** Sunday, August 11, 2024 6:29:04 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from smleg68@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am opposed to any raise in property taxes. I live on Social Security and a small pension. My taxes on a modest home in Madison are well over \$8000/yr. I've lived many places and have never paid such high taxes. I can't afford to stay in my home if you keep raising taxes. .

I think alders and the mayor should look at whether all the growth you keep pursuing is paying its way. If not, then why not tax the people benefiting from growth? Perhaps the city could increase user fees on nontaxable properties, which we have a lot of. Are there other ways to generate income?

If the city is going to cut services, some would be ok with me. For example, my nearest library already has no Sunday hours so that seems like a place to start. Fees for parking is ok with me because I hardly go out. Cuts in bus service and social programs would also not impact me a lot. I would be happy to see less street repair; I think it's way overdone compared to other cities. We could all haul our own brush.

Thanks for asking.  
SG

**From:** [Terry Heiliger](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback  
**Date:** Friday, August 9, 2024 11:44:28 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from badgerhm@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I know you're dealing with the psycho GOP legislature but we need to focus on getting our fair share of the state revenue sharing ( I think that's what it is).

The fact the City is proposing some of these cuts is ridiculous. If we can't afford those things for our safety and/or our benefits then we are in trouble especially since our property taxes have already skyrocketed.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [ckot@azkot.com](mailto:ckot@azkot.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** NO to \$22 million referendum  
**Date:** Monday, August 12, 2024 8:23:57 AM

---

You don't often get email from ckot@azkot.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

This increase in property taxes places the burden on only real property owners. Tax renters as well. Renters use the same services without paying for them. Your property taxes are so high now that we have considered selling and leaving.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Carla Kot

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)



**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 31, 2024 9:06:48 PM

---

Wednesday, July 31, 2024 – 9:03pm

**Name**

Lj meister

**How would you like us to contact you?**

Email

**Email**

[frdm1203@gmail.com](mailto:frdm1203@gmail.com)

**Reason for Contact**

Budget

**Message**

The library is the most important part of the budget. It needs to expand or remain the same. Figure out how to balance without cutting the library. People of middle n low income use this service. It also educates the next generation. Lj meister 2626 moland st

**From:** [Gayle Nimmerguth](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum & Bus Service  
**Date:** Saturday, August 10, 2024 8:45:53 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from gayle1spirit@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

If there is no property tax referendum or it doesn't pass, please do not cut evening and weekend bus service. The unnecessary bus system overhaul has made things hard enough, so please give us a break and don't make things worse.

**From:** [Lynn Marie Pauly](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum opinion from a District 15 resident  
**Date:** Saturday, August 10, 2024 12:06:05 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lpauleau@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To the Madison alders:

I'm submitting my comments regarding the propose \$22 million referendum that would raise property taxes to avoid service cuts.

I am strongly opposed to this referendum. The mayor's past spending obviously did not take into consideration the funding for the future years. Plus I do not believe she pushed hard enough to get state assistance.

Go back to the drawing board and reduce your referendum request by half and I will be more apt to support a referendum.

The mayor is not looking out for home owners who see property tax increases every year. I honestly feel that way.

Lynn Pauly  
District 15

In the last five years (Deficits of \$10-20 million) it is mostly the mayor and council adopting new spending initiatives without having a plan to fully fund them in the future years. Most of my structural deficits were in the range of \$2-3 million the result of increased energy or insurance costs.



Virus-free. [www.avast.com](https://www.avast.com)

**From:** [George Shinnners](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget - referendum question  
**Date:** Saturday, August 10, 2024 11:03:37 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from georgeshinners217@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello I have heard nothing regarding necessity of cutting back on spending multi-millions of dollars on “social engineering” projects. For instance, it appears the various housing projects are creating significant hidden costs in over site and control. I hope the Council has learned from this.

George Shinnners  
null

**From:** [Rosemary Sprenger](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** possible service cuts etc.  
**Date:** Saturday, August 10, 2024 3:15:44 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from respreng@uwalumni.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I saw the recent article in the Cap Times and am giving you my feedback. Instead of raising taxes a lot, I'd prefer minor service cuts and also using much of the money in the rainy-day fund to avoid major cuts. I rent an apartment and am a senior citizen.

I'd like to be able to use the South Madison Library on Sundays in the cooler months, but eliminating evening hours might not affect me. When I've been there on a Sunday in the past, the staff have ample time to socialize, so reducing staff on Sunday would also reduce the time they'd have to visit with each other. I don't want the staff there to know I complained about this & appreciate the help they've given me over the years.

If bus service was cut on evenings, I might not be affected in the winter. I still want bus service on weekends, but use my car to get to the grocery store etc. I'm also eligible for paratransit service but rarely use it; if you cut that, you might be violating the Amer. with Disabilities Act.

Rosemary Sprenger

**From:** [dave stecher](#)  
**To:** [Streets; All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 2025 City of Madison Budget Referendum Comments  
**Date:** Monday, August 12, 2024 3:48:26 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from dave.stecher@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi, I am writing in support of the budget referendum and the necessary tax increases.

However, if cost reductions are necessary, I see an opportunity to save costs in snow removal.

A typical residential street in many suburban style single family residential areas in the city requires two passes from the plow to clear the whole width. However, part of this street width is intended for street parking which is sparsely used in many single family areas due to ample driveway and garage space. Instead of using two passes to clear the whole street including the unused parking spaces, a single pass by the plow should provide sufficient width for two vehicles to pass by each other.

I request that the council and streets division look at the potential cost savings from providing just a single plow pass in all single family residential streets with minimally used on street parking - such as most neighborhoods to the West of Midvale. Providing a single plow pass would cut the required plowing time in half for these streets and would allow the city to save on plowing while ensuring the typically used portion of the streets are cleared quickly.

I would prefer to see city resources allocated to ensure sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian infrastructure are cleared as quickly as the streets, rather than having our overly wide residential streets cleared curb to curb.

-Dave Stecher

District 11 resident

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [City Budget](#)  
**Subject:** Form submission from: Contact  
**Date:** Sunday, July 21, 2024 2:31:44 PM

---

Sunday, July 21, 2024 – 2:29pm

**Name**

Hannah Stocklein

**How would you like us to contact you?**

Email

**Email**

[stocklein@wisc.edu](mailto:stocklein@wisc.edu)

**Reason for Contact**

Budget

**Message**

To whom it may concern,

I would like to voice my support for Option C for the 2025 Madison Public Library budget moving forward, to continue to fund youth services and the Imagination Center at Reindahl Park. MPL is an absolutely crucial component of Madison, to cut the library's funding is to directly harm the community, especially those who rely on the library's free access to books, wifi, and youth services the most.

I have lived in Madison most of my life and I began using MPL as soon as I learned to read. As a child, I spent many hours at the Sequoya library in the old strip mall doing the scavenger hunts and reading Lemony Snicket books. Cutting Sunday hours would take this joy away from children who are unable to go to the library during school hours. To this day I continue to rely on the public library to read new release books in print and digitally through the Libby app. As a veterinary medical student, it is nice to use weekend and night hours to get off campus to study. Many other members of the community rely on the library as a safe place outside of the home to work.

Please consider how harmful cutting funding to MPL will be to the community.

Sincerely,

Hannah Stocklein (she/her)  
Co-president of Pathology & Lab Animal Medicine Club (SLAC)  
Class of 2026 DVM Candidate  
School of Veterinary Medicine  
University of Wisconsin - Madison

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] 2025 city budget  
**Date:** Friday, August 16, 2024 9:16:39 AM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Friday, August 16, 2024 – 9:14am

Punky Egan

1321 Burning Wood Way

Madison, Wisconsin. 54704 Yes, by email. [punky@punkybakes.com](mailto:punky@punkybakes.com) All Alders 2025 city budget Dear Alders,

I am writing again about the proposed city's 2025 budget.

Articles keep appearing in the local news about what items could be cut if the mayor doesn't get what she wants. At the top is always cuts to the libraries.

She knows how popular and used the library system is so of course that's the first thing she always mentions. "Nice library you have there if you can keep it...". That's right out of a thug's notebook and it's POLITICAL BLACKMAIL!

I live across the street from Cherokee Park. I wasn't able to afford this house until I was in my 60's and only because of the housing crash. Because of the city's irresponsible spending my taxes have almost doubled in 10 years to the point that I can barely afford them. My retired friends in the neighborhood feel the same way. We will never vote for a referendum that raises our taxes again to the point we are forced out of our homes.

You council members need to do your job of balancing the budget with funds you already have. Stop wishing if only the Wisconsin legislature gave us more money.... It's NOT going to happen anytime soon, so start reducing and cutting to get to a balanced budget. And use some of the rainy day funds.

The job of the city is not to employ people. It's to run a city efficiently for the benefit of its citizens. Priorities need to be set and each area of the city's budget needs to be gone over individually. A 5% cut across the board is a lazy way out. I'm sure there are budgets that are large and padded like administration's. They could do with a larger reduction. The library system makes up a smaller portion of the budget and it probably shouldn't be cut at all because of the impact it has on all citizens.

While I have to live within my budget, it's beyond frustrating to be thought of as a piggybank to keep returning to because no one wants to say NO to projects. MADISON, YOU CAN'T HAVE IT ALL!

Be responsible for once and get the budget under control before asking for more, because it's not going to be there.

Sincerely,

Punky Egan

1321 Burning Wood Way

Madison, WI 54704



**From:** [sharongoss09@aol.com](mailto:sharongoss09@aol.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** referendum  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 14, 2024 12:28:43 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sharongoss09@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To: All Alders

I oppose a referendum on raising city taxes. My tax bill for school/city is outrageously high already. You will just force seniors out of their homes. (Hopefully this is not part of the city's strategy to increase density.)

I am ok with cuts. If you raise taxes now I fear it will just encourage spending without regard to income and taxes keep going up and up.

S and L Goss  
District 9

**From:** [Val Martin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Potential referendum feedback  
**Date:** Monday, August 12, 2024 5:49:17 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from vigan789@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To our Alders,

Nice job. You apparently are unable to work within a budget. Now we need to bail you out of your shortfall, or face cuts to needed programs. How much time do you all devote to this shortsighted planning during council meetings? Good luck with that referendum.

My wife and I sign our brief note as 44 year residents of Madison, having lived with successful city planning for many years. Evidently, successful no longer.

**From:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**To:** [Munger, Sam R.](#); [Brogan, Dylan](#); [Kapusta-Pofahl, Karen](#); [Matthias, Isaac L](#)  
**Cc:** [Schmiedicke, David](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Support library's budget  
**Date:** Thursday, August 15, 2024 8:05:45 AM

---

FYI

-----Original Message-----

From: Julia Olson <jrou747@gmail.com>  
Sent: Sunday, August 11, 2024 10:15 PM  
To: Finance Committee <financecommittee@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: Support library's budget

[You don't often get email from jrou747@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

My name is Julia Olson and I live in West Madison.

I know that Madison is facing a budget shortage this upcoming year and the library's budget in particular may face cuts.

I am against the cuts going to the libraries and am asking you to support the full amount the public libraries are requesting for funding this upcoming year.

I currently do not live near a library, but when I lived in the Meadowood neighborhood I saw first hand how libraries served the essential function of third spaces, or spaces kids were able to congregate in a space supportive environment where they could engage in pro social and productive activities.

If hours were cut, this would have a profound impact on these kids and their families.

I am asking you to support the libraries full request for funding for this upcoming year. Madison's youth needs them, not only to support their educational and social needs but also to give them a space to exist while parents are working.

Without these libraries, they may be more likely to get into trouble just from sheer lack of resources and things to do. By keeping libraries open for as long as we can, we are protecting Madison's kids from both being victims of and perpetrating harm.

Thank you,

Julia

**From:** [Allen Rickey](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Letter  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 14, 2024 9:05:24 AM

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## YOUR VIEWS

### City hasn't made hard choices to cut spending

Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway says a structural budget deficit has existed since 2012 when the Republican-run Legislature and governor imposed harsh revenue restrictions.

One might ask, "Why has she spent freely during her five years in office and only now is developing a five-year plan to address the deficit?"

The mayor says a tax levy referendum is needed to fix our \$22 million deficit and, if it fails, dozens of city jobs will be lost. Framing the issue in terms of lost jobs was simplistic and intended to strike an emotional chord. Now she's using another well-known tactic from the bureaucratic playbook: threaten deep, across-the-board cuts to

popular city services.

I understand why the mayor and City Council want to stick with a cost-to-continue budget model. It's easier than having to evaluate the need for and efficacy of all budget items and make difficult choices.

I haven't yet seen good-faith efforts on the part of the mayor and City Council members to fix the deficit they helped grow. They want to be able to keep spending on nice-to-have initiatives, while declining to make strategic cuts to nonessential positions, projects and programs.

Therefore, I'll decline to vote to raise my taxes in 2025 and beyond.

**Ginny White, Madison**

**From:** [Robert Rowlands](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Tax Hike  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 14, 2024 7:52:15 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from rowlands@engr.wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I will vote NO

**From:** [elizabeth ames staudt](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Tishler, Bill](#); [mpl-libraryboard](#)  
**Subject:** In Support of the Madison Public Library & Related Referendum Option  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 13, 2024 2:17:13 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from elizabethames@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Alders,

Please approve adding a referendum option to the November 5, 2024 ballot in support of the Madison Public Library Board's suggestion.

My family and I moved to Madison two years ago and feel so lucky to live within walking distance of a library. Sequoya is our home branch, but we make regular visits to many of the branches (most recently to the Lakeview branch for a wonderful workshop with the fantastic naturalist-in-residence) and we take advantage of so many of the library's arts and community offerings. The idea of cutting arts programs and cutting Sunday hours rather than *adding* more of both is so disappointing and feels so deeply disconnected from what the citizens of Madison want, use, and need. A warm third place in the winter, a spot for families with stir-crazy kids to congregate, a space to volunteer and stave off loneliness alongside people who may become friends--the library is this and so much more. It's difficult to even enumerate the ways the library adds to my family's quality of life in Madison; we'd be here all day while I listed, and it's also so integral to the fabric of our life and our days as to almost fade into the background. But it would be a mistake to take the library and all it offers for granted, and I hope this message is one among many asking you to please approve the MPL Board's suggestion for a referendum and allow your constituents to vote and show just how vital the library and its services are to our Madison community.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can speak at greater length in support of the Madison Public Library or this suggested referendum.

Sincerely & appreciatively,  
Elizabeth (in District 11)

phone: (734) 330-6308

---

Elizabeth Ames  
[elizabethames.com](#)





**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Why do you want to hurt us city residents?  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 13, 2024 10:51:46 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Tuesday, August 13, 2024 – 10:48am

Christine Wolf

4617 Eldorado lane

Madison , Wisconsin. 53716 Yes, by email. [1wolfchris@gmail.com](mailto:1wolfchris@gmail.com) All Alders Why do you want to hurt us city residents? Why are you wanting to increase our property taxes and rents? Last year, you gave staff a 6% pay increase and now you want to cut our income?

Last year's budget, why did you add additional costs when you knew we were going to have a deficit in 2025? Why aren't more drastic cuts being made now? What is special about not wanting to cut staff? Public service jobs are NOT jobs for LIFE! Those of us with MORE LIFE EXPERIENCE have ALWAYS UNDERSTOOD public service jobs are subject to budget constraints and citizen wishes. Same with nonprofit jobs.

It will not be the end of the world for staff whose positions are cut. employment levels are low., jobs are plentiful. Yes, some staff will need to relocate. That is the REAL WORLD.

In my public service career, I had been laid off among 414 staff whose positions were cut. Yes, I had to search for another job. Yes, we had to relocate. Just like other folks in the real world. Get over the snowflake attitudes and make the hard decisions that must be made.

Perhaps us citizens need to request the governor to undertake an independent audit of Madison's expenditures. Just like the Governor did to Milwaukee. Looks like that's the only way to get Madison to deal with the city's growth and survivability. .

**From:** [Jean Rawson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Public Library  
**Date:** Friday, August 16, 2024 3:23:28 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from rawson.terhaar@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To: All Alders on the Madison Common Council

Please vote to include a referendum on maintaining funding for the City's public libraries on the fall ballot. Libraries are essential to civilized society, serving public needs in a multitude of ways.

Thank you for your attention,

Jean Rawson  
3226 Oakridge Ave  
Madison

Sent from Gmail Mobile

**From:** [Jill Angelo](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** NO to ref 84443  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 3:57:48 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from jillangelo85@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please vote NO to referendum 84443 and also alder rummell's amendment. Affordable housing, will be further out of reach because of a yes vote on tax increases or special charges. Any vote yes by an alder or the mayor on a tax increase, would make you part of the continued cause/problem of unaffordable housing here in Madison. (As was last year's common council members - very irresponsible, knowing of a huge budget deficit's for the coming years for Madison, and then to increase it!)

If the state is not giving Madison, their fair share of tax revenue, then go after them, put focus there, not the home owners here. Or have visitor fees on lodging and entertainment, etc.

Those who are worried about the libraries, can vote no on the tax increase, then write out a check for \$240 to Madison Libraries.

Also, with the increasing housing here, that should have brought in more tax money?? How much revenue was brought in from increase housing in Madison, last year, and projected for this year?

Also, it would be great information to the public if all alders and the mayor, releases to the public, what their primary residential real estate tax bill that has their name listed as owner, has been for at least the last two years.

Thank you to all those who will vote NO on ref. 84443, and Rummell's amendment on it. Please work on ways to cut the taxes and fees for the residents of Madison. You will be the ones trying to keep Madison living affordable!

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Books24u](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Possible referendum funding.  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 1:55:36 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from books24u@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders,

Some folks who have commented on the budget mentioned how the State is funding a part, or all, of what the issue is via shared revenue funding which is low for Madison. I believe it's a vast problem. But at the same time I like what Alder Rummel has proposed as careful sifting and winnowing of a budget is paramount.

As far as the Republican legislators at the State Capitol who have essentially "defunded" Madison budget through low State revenue allowances, something needs to be done and shown by the Madison Common Council about this. Are you going to just sit back and take it, or do something about it such as letting City of Madison and other Americans about this harmful situation.

And truthful wording is critical, not political spin, about this. My suggestion is that since all City of Madison budgets are affected by the budget which means that all City of Madison budgets are being defunded. So Republican leaders in the State Capitol have "given it" to Madison. This defunding is shameful. What about Police and Fire Protection? What is the cut for those departments? Are Police and Fire Protection being defunded by the reduced level of shared revenue that's allocated to all Wisconsin cities? Then the Republicans at the State Capitol are really defunding the Police and Fire Protection Services. Careful and truthful ways to discuss the budget is needed.

It looks that way to me. Good luck at the meeting tonight!

Peace out!

Steve Books  
625 Spruce St.  
Madison, WI 53715

**From:** [Melissa Cheeks](#)  
**To:** [Figueroa Cole, Yannette](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Library Referendum  
**Date:** Friday, August 16, 2024 9:07:48 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from melcheeks@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To All Alders,

Please approve adding a referendum option to the November 5, 2024 ballot in support of the Madison Public Library Board's suggestion.

I have lived in Madison since 2011, and started a family here in 2016. My children have grown up in the library. Now at ages 6 and 8, their love of reading has been fostered by the ability to check out library books weekly. We love visiting city libraries for their excellent programming- our favorite traditions throughout their lives have included storytimes, craft projects, and deeply needed connection between fellow parents. During the pandemic, I remember library staff curating books for us to put out on a socially distanced cart for pickup. Library staff goes above and beyond in caring for the Madison community- facilitating connection between families, and fostering a true love of reading for all ages. Our current weekly craft tradition at the Sequoya library marks the beginning of our week and brings our family so much joy.

The thought of cutting arts programming and Sunday hours is deeply disappointing. Our city needs more of what the library fosters: a welcoming and supportive place where all people can gather and thrive. Cutting resources and hours does the very opposite.

While the city budget already made some crucial mistakes, you have the opportunity to give the library system a fighting chance, and approve a referendum to be added to the November 5th ballot. I urge you to do so. Libraries are the soul of community, and we need to support them now more than ever.

Always,  
Melissa Cheeks, district 10 constituent

**From:** [Nancy Daane](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 8:48:40 AM  
**Attachments:** [Letter for November 2025 referendum .docx](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from nancd@att.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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### **To Whom It May Concern:**

The following is my opinion on the referendum in November of 2025. First of all I will vote no. I don't want to put people out of work or cut our services, but our property taxes are getting out of hand since our Mayor was voted in.

She needs to be voted out of office and if that doesn't happen then deny her any pay raises along with all of the folks that have been a part of this deficit. Maybe then they'll feel what we feel every tax season.

The following are some of the issues that upset myself and others as a taxpayer in the city of Madison.

### **The bus situation:**

Is the city being reimbursed what it is actually costing us as tax payers for the bus service that goes to Verona, Fitchburg, Sun Prairie, Middleton, etc.? To include the drivers pay, overtime and his/her benefits. Does it help cover all vehicle insurance and any other insurance needed for accidents, etc. or is our taxes picking up the tab. Most of the time when I see these buses they're empty or just one or two people on then.

Are these communities being assigned a \$40.00 wheel tax when they renew their car plates? Why not? The wheel tax was assigned for the bus service, but since then she has torn down all the transfer points and made it more difficult for Madison bus riders to get to their destination.

East Washington Avenue: for months they've preached about the people getting hurt by the traffic, so now putting bus stops in the middle of the thruway, what? Is having people walk across the busy street to get on the bus and again to get off the bus safe? I don't think so. The same situation is going to happen on Mineral Point Road, Whitney way and any other place they're making these changes.

And, was that expensive paint necessary? That must have cost thousands and thousands of dollars. I've had people tell me that the paint is slick when wet and the vehicle traction was less than perfect.

### **Apartments:**

Are the apartment owners taxed the same rate for property school taxes per unit? Those apartments are full of kids and these owners should be taxed the same rate per unit as we do for our stand alone homes.

**School Vouchers:**

I'm totally against giving kids vouchers to attend private, charter or parochial schools. I/we pay school taxes for all children and if parents want to send their child to a one of these charter/private schools then they should pay tuition for it, like we did when our children went to a private schools.

**Cherokee Condos:**

Some of the Condo's in Cherokee pay Waunakee school taxes. Why? When is the city of Madison going to change that? Why does the city of Madison help with Waunakee taxes? Wouldn't it make sense for city of Madison residents pay for own school taxes verses a richer communities school taxes? I would think so.

**Bike Paths:**

I think we should ease up on the strong focus on bike paths and focus on some of the other issues that affect all Madison residents. Bike paths are great, but it seems they come first and is that a priority when there are other more pressing issues in this city, for example snow removal. Bike paths were plowed and city streets were not. Last winter was unacceptable for what we went through with the condition of the streets.

Arboretum

**Turning Lanes:**

Congrats on the turning lanes on Odana Road, etc. But, why upset a good thing with putting those island in the middle of them. They've been a nuisance and most people I talked with agree and can't see why the city saw the need to add those little islands. They're beginning to be an eyesore now with all the chips from the snow plows.

Thank You,

Nancy, a concerned citizen

**From:** [Nicholas Davies](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Martinez-Rutherford, Dina Nina](#)  
**Subject:** 84443 - budget referendum - let voters speak!  
**Date:** Sunday, August 18, 2024 12:39:20 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from nbdavies@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear alders,

While I believe that there are budget cuts that the city could handle, and potential revenues to pursue, it likely doesn't add up to the amount needed, and we should put it to the city as a whole, in the form of a referendum, before making more drastic, inequitable cuts to city systems.

These budget considerations are currently only being discussed in Common Council and committee meetings, and as someone who does engage in city government at that level, I'm aware that many people don't have the time and resources to do so. Especially on a complicated, nuanced issue like the budget.

You all have a lot of tough decisions to make, about what can be done before going to referendum, and what that referendum amount needs to be. But I want to make sure you all recognize the aim of the small, vocal anti-referendum group: to keep this decision-making authority on a tax increase to themselves, and out of the hands of voters city-wide.

Amongst the public comment from that camp, I've found no serious consideration of *how much* of a referendum amount they would consider acceptable vs. not, nor any serious budgetary solutions. The mayor's office had a budget of \$1.5 mil for this year. The mayor's office does not have \$22 mil to spare.

Concerns regarding the proposed cuts:

**Assessor**

Eliminate the City's property listing service. Reduction of 2 FTE (\$216,046)

**Attorney**

- If this is referring to Madison Property Lookup, this is an incredibly valuable resource that I've used countless times for a variety of reasons.

**Building Inspection**

Eliminate Code Enforcement Officer, Housing Inspector, and Information Clerk positions.

Would slow down inspection and approval process. Reduction of 3.0 FTE (\$264,647)

- Slowing down inspections and approvals is exactly the wrong thing to do right now.

**Clerk**

Reduce poll workers to minimum required levels, increasing wait times. (\$149,969)

- Around the state and the country, we see this having an inequitable impact. People most impacted by wait times are those with less flexibility and security in their work, and/or childcare duties.



## **Community Development**

End City's financial contribution to agencies providing Youth Restorative Justice Services (\$180,000)

Reduce the City's financial contribution to case management and outreach services for persons experiencing homelessness (\$438,000)

End the City's participation in the Northside Early Childcare Zone (\$38,000)

## **Economic Development**

- These are textbook examples of cuts that would have inequitable impacts. Additionally, homelessness assistance and restorative justice programs are typically shown to be cost-saving programs overall.

## **Fire**

Reduce CARES program from three teams to one resulting in the loss of coverage on weekends and holidays and less capacity during the week. Reduction of 5 FTE (\$848,000)

- Cutting back on CARES will not eliminate these calls for service, it will just shift the burden of them. But those experiencing mental health crises will be the ones who experience the difference, when armed police show up instead of trained mental health responders.

## **Fleet Service**

Shift trailer maintenance to biennial schedule from annual schedule (\$21,497)

Reduce minor body damage/repairs (\$130,000 plus decreased resale value).

Defer maintenance for Fleet vehicles (\$39,426)

- We need to take into account that delaying maintenance on city vehicles can allow problems to get worse, and accelerate the timeline for those vehicles needing full replacement

## **Information Technology**

Discontinue or reduce coverage of various BCC meetings, discontinue edited podcast support, discontinue show productions, reduce event coverage and special project requests. Reduction of 1-2 FTEs (\$88,877 – 177,754)

- As waves of COVID continue to wash through our community, vaccine regimens fail to keep us, and the CDC treats it as a personal responsibility issue. But there is an entire population of immuno-suppressed people who are left out of public life when participation involves risk of infection. And with this, we are talking about excluding people from committee proceedings.

## **Library**

Eliminate Sunday hours making access more challenging for some residents. (\$120,693)

Eliminate evening hours making access more challenging for some residents.

- Libraries are highly valued by everyone, but these cuts will have a disproportionate, inequitable impact.

## **Parks**

Eliminate Aquatics Program. Reduction of 1 FTE (\$318,312)

Eliminate ice rink program, bench cleaning service, reduced restroom support, reduced maintenance of Forest Hill Cemetery. Reduction of 3.75 FTE (\$381,810)

- Eliminating aquatics and reducing restroom support will have clearly inequitable impacts.

## **Police**

Close district windows and reduce services provided by records staff; experiment with private transcription service for police reports. Reduction of 8 FTE (\$324,387)

- Eliminating armed response to traffic collisions might not be all bad, but we have already

seen police departments (including UWPD) weaponizing a lack of records staff as a way to avoid legal avenues for police accountability after police brutalized protesters on campus.

### **Public Health**

Eliminate Violence Prevention Contract - Focused Interruption Coalition has been the recipient of this funding since the funds were allocated. Funding provides hospital-based intervention and prevention services to those involved in violent incidents. (\$210,000)

- We need to consider whether this might also be a net cost-saving program, where interrupting a cycle of violence means reduced calls for police and ambulance.

### **Streets**

Reduce street repair by 52%. Reduction of 5.5 FTE (\$790,564)

- Will this actually save money in the long run? Or will unrepaired streets need to be rebuilt sooner?

### **Metro Transit**

Reduce night/weekend service:

Eliminate late night service (\$800,000)

Eliminate most Saturday service (\$1.2m)

Eliminate most Sunday service (\$1.2m)

Eliminate specific routes:

Route O (\$600,000) – South Side, Brooks to Fish Hatchery

Route L (\$800,000) – East/North Side, Sherman to Owl Creek

Route J (\$700,000) – West Side, Westfield to Brooks

- We definitely need to consider the equity impacts of these route and time reductions. It will have a different impact on people who would take transit opportunistically vs. those who rely on it.

### **Traffic Engineering**

Reduce crossing guard program. (\$79,624)

- Another cut that will have inequitable impacts on those who cannot drive kids to school, or act as their own personal crossing guard program.

### **Other potential revenue sources:**

- + Parking enforcement has a \$1 mil surplus as of July, after reaching "full" staffing. This indicates that right now every parking enforcer we add is pulling in more than they cost.

- + The golf program has been net positive (right? it isn't clear to me whether this is just because of land sales); if so, profits could support the wider Parks budget instead of being reinvested into just the golf facilities. If not, we could leverage further land sales to keep it profitable.

- + Things that the city charges rent for, like Monona Terrace, could be rented at-cost, or if the market supports it, at profit. This is especially important as Monona Terrace is being rented out below-cost to arms dealers, meaning that the city has been effectively subsidizing genocide. This also goes for subsidized parking facilities.

- + Similarly, we have been lending out MPD staff, and not at-cost. This year we lent them out to the GOP, and did not get reimbursed for all associated costs, in what was effectively an in-kind donation from City of Madison to the GOP.

+ To encourage incremental densification, the city could allow certain zoning district transitions to be administratively approved, rather than going to Plan Commission. This would increase population, transit ridership, and tax base. Anything we can do to streamline redevelopment will help.

+ Gradually transition Fire from full-engine response to sending only ambulances to non-fire-related calls. For future fire engine replacement, purchase less-enormous vehicles on smaller chassis. Possibly the department could accelerate this transition, at a profit, by reselling the high number of larger vehicles to other municipalities and replacing them with fewer, smaller ones. This would decrease response times (since smaller vehicles can navigate traffic more easily), and have secondary cost savings because roads would no longer need to be built to a >20' width, requiring less pavement, less plowing, etc.

Thank you,

Nick Davies  
3717 Richard St

**From:** [THOMAS ESCH](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** \$22 million shortfall  
**Date:** Sunday, August 18, 2024 4:26:13 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from thomas.esch@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

We are responding to requests for comments on the City's budget shortfall. Before there is a referendum to raise taxes we think the City should be sure everything possible has been done to cut the expenses and raise revenue. Here are some suggestions :

1. Cut some percentage of all administrative positions in the City. How about 10% of all non-union positions starting with the mayor's office.
2. Freeze the salaries of all non-union positions in the city for at least the next two years, maybe longer, if needed.
3. Start collecting a usage fee from all adults who ride bikes in the city to help pay for all the bike lanes, bike lane marking, bike paths, plowing of the bike paths in winter, bike lane/path signage, special crossing lighting, etc. How about \$50.00 a year per bike? There are currently special fees going to the city on the car licenses we purchase so bike people should start paying for the amenities that they are receiving.
4. Enforce the traffic laws for everyone in the city, including bicyclists. On our street alone there are at least 50 times a week when the cars and/or bikes drive through the stop sign on the corner without stopping. That alone would be a couple hundred dollars a week. With the number of streets/bike paths in the city we think quite a bit of revenue could be generated.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

Tom and Lana Esch

**From:** [James Ganther](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum Opposition  
**Date:** Sunday, August 18, 2024 10:51:35 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from stoa04@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi,

I wish to express my opposition to holding a referendum to increase property taxes. I encourage you to vote against this proposal and make cuts to the budget to avoid the referendum. I have looked at the budget and based on the budget and other observations believe there are areas that are ripe for cuts. These areas are as follows:

1) The mayor's office

It is loaded with highly paid administrative staff. I believe there are 5 deputy mayors and two sustainability coordinators. No way is that amount of administrative staff necessary. I would cut five of those positions which would save around a million of dollars that wouldn't be missed by at least 99.9% of Madison residents.

2) Madison Metro

The BRT is a huge waste of money! It is completely unnecessary! The second line should be canceled. More and more people are working from home and Madison Metro ridership is way down compared to what it was before the pandemic. Why is Madison spending a lot more on something that people are not using in sufficient levels to justify additional spending in that area? BRT will also significantly disrupt automobile traffic. It is the biggest boondoggle in Madison history. Words cannot express how stupid BRT is and the amount of money wasted on the East West work makes me really angry. Just a total waste of taxpayer dollars. All that work and expense to save riders a few minutes on a crosstown bus ride boggles my mind.

Also, there are lots of empty and nearly empty buses going around Madison. This is especially true later in the evening. Most late evening service should be canceled. It isn't being used. Another total waste of taxpayer dollars!

3) The Police Civilian Oversight Board Should be eliminated. It is a totally useless, do nothing body and is completely unnecessary. Eliminate it and save around a million dollars a year.

4) Employee Raises

Madison city employees received 6% pay raises this year. This is far more than a lot of employees received including most state and university employees. It is totally unfair to raise the taxes of state and university employees that are getting 2% raises to give higher raises to employees that received at least a 6% raise in 2024. Pay raises at most should be in the 1 or 2 percent range. Anybody making over \$100,000 a year should have their pay frozen. It would help make things more equitable.

5) Planning staff should be reduced. Much of their work is not necessary and is out of tune with what many Madison residents want in terms of development.

6) A hiring freeze for non-essential positions should be implemented.

I hope you will take these suggestions seriously. I'm sure there are many other areas that money could be saved as well.

The mayor is trying to scare people into supporting a referendum by threatening cuts to popular spending areas rather than cutting her wasteful spending. Don't go along with her game! She is terribly incompetent and doesn't care one bit about Madison taxpayers. I think she will lose if she runs again because it is clear for all to see now how totally incompetent she is at running Madison.

Show that you care about struggling Madison taxpayers who already pay extremely high property taxes compared to most other property owners in the United States. Please reject the referendum and make the necessary budget cuts to avoid having one!

Sincerely,

James Ganther

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Endorsement of Resolution Language  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 9:27:52 AM

---

Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Kevin Gundlach <kevin@scfl.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 8:56 AM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Cc:** Mayor <Mayor@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Endorsement of Resolution Language

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [kevin@scfl.org](mailto:kevin@scfl.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

To the City of Madison Common Council members and the Mayor of Madison,

Thank you for your hard work and dedication to the residents of the City of Madison.

The Delegates of the South Central Federation of Labor met last night, the evening of August 19th. These come from both the public sector and the private sector. They represent Federal, State, County, City, School District, University, and Technical College workers. They represent Building and Construction Trades, Manufacturing and Industrial Trades, Service Sector and Healthcare, Printing Trades and Utility Trades, Tech workers and more.

During the meeting, these delegates, who represent thousands of union members and their household members who live and work in the City of Madison, Unanimously Voted to Endorse a YES VOTE for the following Resolution language (or similar version), under file 84443:

"Under state law, the increase in the levy of the City of Madison for the tax to be imposed for the next fiscal year, 2025, is limited to [2.5%], which results in a levy of [\$296,296,440]. Shall the City of Madison be allowed to exceed this limit and increase

the levy for the next fiscal year, 2025, for the purpose of funding police, fire, garbage collection, parks and library operations and other City services and operations, by a total of [7.4%], which results in a levy of [\$318,219,440], and on an ongoing basis, include the increase of \$ 22,000,000 for each fiscal year going forward?”

We encourage your support for this Resolution and thank you again for your service. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Kevin Gundlach, President  
South Central Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO  
1602 S. Park Street, #228  
Madison, WI 53715

*The South Central Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO is an umbrella organization consisting of 100 Private and Public Sector Unions representing thousands of workers in 11 Counties within South Central and South Western Wisconsin. We work with non-profits, unions, governmental agencies, elected officials, university & college systems, job training organizations, apprenticeship programs, cooperatives, and businesses in order to achieve economic and social justice for all workers and their families within our shared communities.*

**From:** [jhirsch@chorus.net](mailto:jhirsch@chorus.net)  
**To:** [Conklin, Nikki](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 8:15:00 AM

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Alder Conklin

Alder Conklin:

Tonight, you and the other alders will be voting to place the referendum on the November ballot. Although I am unsure of the amount, I expect it to be approved.

Keep in mind that this is just the beginning of your work to solve the City budget issues.

Going forward, your constituents will be paying attention as the Council votes on frivolous spending and unnecessary expense items that appear on the Council agendas. Now is the time to take a hard look and prioritize our "needs" over our "nice to haves".

Janet

Janet Hirsch  
District 9

;



**From:** [Roderic Lakes](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** tax  
**Date:** Monday, August 19, 2024 8:34:43 AM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from rlakes@wisc.edu. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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This is a very poor time for a tax increase. Families are struggling with inflation.

The food pantries have seen record demand because people in the community are hurting.

A tax increase would increase the hurt and cause further loss of confidence.

The city needs to live within its means. After all, the citizens do so.

best,

R. Lakes

**From:** [Rick Marx](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Jackson Walt](#); [Christine Powell](#)  
**Subject:** Tonight's referendum  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 2:00:44 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from rickmarx6000@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Thank you for your support of City employees and programs by making sure there is an opportunity to allow taxpayers to fully fund the City's budget through the most progressive option we have, a referendum.

Supporting the referendum supports City workers ability to maintain family sustaining wages, supports City programs to serve the needy and supports our Madison values because we won't allow outside influencers to force us to abandon them.

Solidarity,

Rick Marx  
AFSCME L6000 Staff Representative

**From:** [Juli Wagner](#)  
**To:** [noreply](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget - District 6: D6 Items of Interest Week of August 19, 2024  
**Date:** Monday, August 19, 2024 9:03:54 AM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from juliwagner@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Marsha,

Assuming that higher cost properties associate with higher income is faulty for a segment of Madison homeowners. Incomes change over the course of time, many with retirement but many with changes in employment. Property values have of course gone up but that does not mean income has gone up and for many income has gone down.

For a segment of long time owners, housing costs have been more stable than renters but taxes have gone up. Putting the burden of tax increases on this group puts their long term path at even more risk. If forced to rent, in Madison, the risk is greater given the market.

I would be curious how many high income earners are the renters who may come for a period of time then leave the area, whether Madison, Dane County or the state. I've seen this with multiple individuals, often Epic associates. Meanwhile, long term residents are saddled with the cost to support the incoming, and, outgoing populations. The city chases and praises the younger working generations while there are multiple generations to consider with multiple income strata.

My tax bill went up 10% last year, \$1000. That is unsustainable if it continues. I am concerned I will again be saddled with larger increases merely because of the value of my home, owned for 15+ years, 25+ years of ownership in the city. I'm fortunate this has been the case but I feel at risk given the current conditions. And, I want to recognize there are so many at greater risk than I, and the numbers of unhoused.

Thank you for reading, and the tough work on this issue.

Best,

Juli Wagner  
S Franklin St resident

On Sunday, August 18, 2024, 11:38 PM, Alder Rummel, District 6 <noreply@cityofmadison.com> wrote:

[View this email in your browser](#)

City of Madison

Front entrance of the City-County Building on a sunny day



D6 Items of Interest Week of August 19,  
2024

The Common Council takes up the question of authorizing and scheduling a referendum on Tuesday.

**I will be proposing an amendment that will be posted in Legistar [84443](#) with the fiscal note tomorrow. I will ask the Council to consider reducing the Urban Forestry Special Charge (the UFSC's cost to continue in 2025 is \$7.5 million) by \$7 million while increasing the amount of the property tax referendum from \$22 million to \$29 million.**

For most Madison households, this amendment will reduce the financial impact of a property tax referendum by lowering the cost of their municipal service bill.

Additionally, a \$29 million referendum provides more in revenue for the 2025 budget, as well as future City budgets, compared to the \$22 million referendum. This could potentially delay the need for new special charges. The Mayor's long range plan (see link below) adds new special charges in 2025 if the referendum fails and in 2027 if the referendum passes, so moving the majority of the Urban Forestry Special Charge back onto the tax levy allows us to delay new charges and gives us more options before adding new special charges (infrastructure or parks).

Property taxes are less regressive than special charges. Whether a household is worth \$350,000 or \$700,000, the Urban Forestry Special Charge is flat. Every residential household pays the same amount. In 2024, it was \$84 per year. Unlike special charges, taxes on residential properties are tied to the value of the home.

**A \$7 million increase in the referendum amount (to a total of \$29 million), would add \$73/year to taxes average value home of \$457,300, above the \$230/year increase associated with the \$22 million increase. The difference in the increase in taxes for the average value home between a \$22 million or \$29 million referendum is \$6 month (\$19 vs \$25).**

A property tax increase would be lower for lower value properties (e.g., an additional \$7 million on the property tax levy would increase taxes on a residence valued at \$350,000 by \$56/year) and higher for higher value properties (e.g., the increases in taxes on a residence valued at \$750,000 would be \$120/year).

At the July 16 Council meeting, Mayor Satya outlined her long range budget [plan](#). The Mayor provided two scenarios: 5 year plans with and without a referendum (see pages 7 and 8). Many of you have seen news stories about city agencies offering 5% cuts for the Mayor to consider in her Executive Operating budget. The requested agency cuts total more than the \$6M the Mayor proposes to cut in 2025 if the referendum fails.

**If the referendum fails, according to the Mayor's scenario, we will need to find \$6M in reductions every year for the next six years. We can't cut our way out of this.**

I don't know whether my Council colleagues will adopt my amendment. I understand the referendum amount is higher than the \$22M reported gap, but I believe it meets the Guidance for Developing the 2025 Budget the Council

adopted in April. One of the key values included choosing the most progressive revenue options and the amendment follows the guidance to look at options to replace existing non-property tax revenues. Given that higher taxes are coming whether through a referendum or new special charges, I believe this amendment to increase the referendum amount and move the Urban Forestry Special Charge back on the tax levy would provide a benefit for the average property taxpayer.

### **First annual Madison Housing Week**

AARP of Wisconsin is holding the first annual Madison Housing Week along with a coalition of housing advocates including 350 Wisconsin, Madison is for People, Sierra Club WI, Strong Towns, 1000 Friends of Wisconsin, Realtors Association of South Central Wisconsin, Downtown Madison Inc, Smart Growth Greater Madison, WHEDA, and more.

Programming continues through the week with presentations by leaders from Bayview and Madison Area Community Land Trust and others to discuss affordable and social housing, universal design, missing middle housing and building for climate change.

The Madison Housing Week ends with a Dane County Executive candidate debate on housing Thursday August 22 at 6p at the Tinsmith. Registration and more details [here](#)

## **Boards, Commissions, and Committee Meetings**

- **Common Council:** The Common Council meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 20, in virtual format at 6:30 p.m. Agenda items include authorizing the scheduling of a referendum relating to exceeding the municipal property tax limits in the City of Madison.
  - [Meeting Details](#)
  - [Meeting Agenda](#)
  - [Watch Online](#)
- **Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee:** The Habitat Stewardship Subcommittee meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 20, in virtual format at 4:30 p.m. Agenda items include the Habitat Management Plan for Moraine Woods Conservation Park.
  - [Meeting Details](#)
  - [Meeting Agenda](#)
  - [Register for Public Comment](#)
  - [Watch Online](#)

If you would like more information about becoming a member of a City board, commission, or committee, please visit [the page linked here](#).

Note: This is not a complete list of meetings for this upcoming week. All meetings and their details can be found at the [Meeting Schedule page](#).

## **Announcements and News Releases**

- [Northbound Lane Closure – N Lake Street](#): Starting Monday, August 19, R.G. Huston will be restricting N. Lake Street, from University Avenue to

Langdon Street, to one southbound lane to facilitate their sanitary sewer replacement project. Vehicles wanting to travel northbound on Lake Street... *[posted August 16, 2024]*

- [Friends of Goodman South Madison Library to Host Book Sale on August 24](#): The Friends of Goodman South Madison Library are hosting a book sale event that will coincide with the Black Business Hub Ribbon Cutting and the 10th Annual Unity Picnic on Saturday, August 24. *[posted August 14, 2024]*
- [Resurfacing – Maple Grove Road, Putnam Road and Stratford Drive](#): Starting Tuesday, August 13 Payne and Dolan will be reconstructing the asphalt surface on Maple Grove Road from McKee Road to Putnam Road. Contractors will be working from Chester Drive to McKee Road during the project and will maintain one... *[posted August 13, 2024]*
- [Madison Maintains Aaa Bond Rating 51 Years in a Row](#) : This is the highest possible rating and reflects the City's strong and diverse economy. *[posted August 12, 2024]*

Please [visit the City news webpage](#) to find additional news and announcements and to subscribe to receive notification of news releases as they are posted.

## Events

- [Lunch Time LIVE! 8/20: The Toolies](#): Chairs or walls may be used for balance assistance. On Tuesdays - June through August - a FREE outdoor concert series will take place from noon-1pm on the King Street walkway of the Wisconsin State Capitol. Chairs will be available, and blankets and lawn chairs are welcome on the lawn nearby.
- [Rooftop Movie Night: In the Heights \(PG-13\), Tuesday, August 20](#): Come and enjoy a movie on the beautiful rooftop of Monona Terrace: Based on the stage musical by Lin-Manuel Miranda and Quiara Alegria Hudes, In the Heights tells the story of the predominately Dominican community of Washington Heights in New York City, where a bodega owner saves his pennies and pines for a better life back in the Dominican Republic. Directed by John M. Chu, the film stars Anthony Ramos, Corey Hawkins, Leslie Grace, Melissa Barrera, Olga Merediz, Daphne Rubin-Vega, Gregory Diaz IV, and Jimmy Smits. (Free and Open to Public, Musical, Runtime – 2hrs 22m)
- [Capitol View Farmers' Market, Wednesday, August 21](#): The Capitol View Farmers' Market is held weekly on Wednesdays (3:00-7:00pm) from late May through mid-October. Join us each week for great local vendors, live music, food carts, and special activities from week to week. Visit our website and follow us on social media for the most up-to-date information and schedules!
- [Movie in the Park \[Burrows Park\], Wednesday, August 21](#): Grab a blanket or lawn chair and join Madison Parks for a free movie in the park! [Top Gun](#) (1986), PG 1h 49m

- [Learn to Pontoon with Madison Boats, Thursday, August 22](#): We've partnered with Madison Boats for this Learn to Pontoon class at Marshall Park. Join our amazing captains as they demonstrate the basics of driving a pontoon boat. This program is limited to adults over 25 looking to gain boating confidence from Madison Boats captains. Participants will learn how to properly drive a pontoon and to learn the basics of boating safety. Cost to participate is \$10.55 per person. Register through [Madison Boats](#).
- [Orton Park Festival, Friday, August 23, Saturday, August 24 & Sunday, August 25](#): The 59th annual [Orton Park Festival](#) brings an incredible lineup of music to close out the summer, plus Cycropia Aerial Dance, vendors from the best of local restaurants and artists, craft beers and wines, kids' games and more!
- [Dane Dances: Grupo Candela / Eddie Butts Band, Friday, August 23](#): Dane Dances is a free, family-friendly event held every Friday evening in August on the beautiful Monona Terrace rooftop. The much-anticipated summer music series promotes inclusivity for all ages and is a great way to get down and dance with your friends, family, or coworkers.
- [Water Lantern Festival, Saturday, August 24](#): Our event is a family-friendly festival that brings together people from all walks of life. The festival includes local food vendors, music, and the release of water lanterns onto the water at sunset for a 90-minute window.
- [Movie in the Park \[Peace \(Elizabeth Link\) Park\], Saturday, August 24](#): Join Downtown Madison's Business Improvement District (BID) and Madison Parks for a free movie in Peace Park! [The Little Mermaid](#) (2023), PG 2h 15m

### **Parks Alive Dates!**

Parks Alive builds stronger neighborhoods and connects neighbors to their parks through fun, family-friendly activities, music and free food. Events are held in parks across the city and throughout the summer. Connect with your neighbors and engage with your community at a Parks Alive event near you! Events start at 5:00 p.m.

- [Parks Alive at Hammersley Park on Wednesday, August 21](#)
- [Parks Alive at Owl Creek Park, Thursday, August 22](#)

Please find additional upcoming City of Madison Parks events listed on the [City parks event calendar](#).

Additional upcoming events can also be found on the [City events calendar](#).

[View full blog post](#)



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**From:** [Shannon Barry](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** In regards to Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 4:18:04 PM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-i4hfdiaf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from shannonb@abuseintervention.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing on behalf of DAIS in support of Authorizing the Scheduling of a Referendum Relating to Exceeding the Municipal Property Tax Limits in the City of Madison (agenda item 84443).

On the heels of the second domestic violence homicide in the City this year, and in reflection that in 2023, domestic violence was the leading cause of homicide in the City, this is clearly not the time to put critical services such as those offered by DAIS, UNIDOS, Freedom, Inc., and others at risk through reductions in City funding. Across the state, domestic violence and sexual assault programs are facing severe cuts from federal and state sources. Those cuts will be felt most deeply here in Madison which is the fastest growing community in the entire state of Wisconsin and where we already cannot keep up with the need.

We know that one in two women, and one in three men will experience intimate partner violence at some point in their lifetime. Rates of IPV and sexual assault are even higher for those who are transgender or nonbinary. **At the same time, less than one-quarter of domestic violence is ever reported to the police**, meaning that victims and survivors are relying on friends, family members, and **the critical safety net of non-profit providers** here in Madison to achieve safety from those who have caused them harm.

Many people assume that services offered by DAIS and others are entirely government funded. In reality, the vast majority of our funding comes from donations. We have had to work hard to sustain what we can by increasing our reliance on fundraising – to the tune of \$2M in 2024 alone. Expecting donors to pick up more of the costs of what should be basic services is unsustainable. If taxpayers understood all that they help support through their property taxes, they may be more likely to vote in favor of a referendum. So many lives in our community are touched every single year by domestic violence and sexual assault – every single one of us knows someone who has been touched by this issue and would want those people in our lives to get the services and support they

deserve. I don't believe anyone in our City wants to see domestic violence homicides increase should services dwindle. To that end, again, I encourage you to support the addition of this referendum to the ballot so that the voters can choose.

Thank you all for your service to our beautiful city.

Warm regards,

Shannon

Shannon Barry, MSSW  
Executive Director  
Pronouns: She/Her/Hers  
DAIS (Domestic Abuse Intervention Services)  
2102 Fordem Avenue, Madison, WI 53704

(608) 251-1237 ext. 307 (p) | (608) 284-2134 (f)  
[shannonb@abuseintervention.org](mailto:shannonb@abuseintervention.org) | [abuseintervention.org](http://abuseintervention.org)  
Facebook: [Domestic Abuse Intervention Services](https://www.facebook.com/DomesticAbuseInterventionServices)  
Twitter: [@DAISofDaneCo](https://twitter.com/DAISofDaneCo)  
Instagram: [DAISofDaneCo](https://www.instagram.com/DAISofDaneCo)

[DONATE](#)

24-Hour Help Line: (608) 251-4445



**DAIS CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE:** The information in this email, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended recipient and may contain confidential and legally privileged information. If you are not the intended recipient, any disclosure, copying, distribution or use of the contents of this information in any manner is strictly prohibited and may be unlawful. If you received this in error, please contact the sender at (608) 251-1237 and delete the material from any computer.

**From:** [Erik Paulson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#); [City Budget](#); [Haas, Michael R](#)  
**Subject:** I (mostly) support Alder Rummel's amendment; keep the 2025 calendar in mind  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 20, 2024 4:25:54 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from epaulson@unit1127.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders -

Two quick things:

1. I like Alder Rummel's amendment. I think that the property tax is a more progressive option than the charges for services. However, I can understand how some of you might have different opinions and prefer the service charges, which all parcel owners (including and especially the state) will pay.

The thing that does give me pause with Alder Rummel's amendment is the "sticker shock" that voters will face. Yes, it does save folks money and for some quite significant, but I do worry a little bit about folks who may not have had time to really follow the issue and that \$29M is an even harder ask than \$22M.

I think I'd still prefer the \$29M levy/lower UFSC and trust that if folks were going to support a \$22M amount they'll support a \$29M, but I'll be a bit more nervous in November.

2. If your inclination is to put the referendum on pause for now and go into 2025 with some combo of a larger rainy day drawdown/new charges, keep in mind if you want to use a referendum to exceed the levy limit in 2026, the last day you can decide that is January 21st 2025 - 70 days before the April 1st 2025 election. Barring a change in state law, there are no fall elections that you can use for the referendum.

It seems unlikely that there will be any budget deal on local government funding in place by January of 2025 with the state. You would at least know if the Assembly has changed party control, but that's not a lot more information than you have now. (For what it's worth I think turnout in April of 2025 will be very high because there is a State Supreme Court race on the ballot)

So you'll have to decide your plan for 2025 tonight and your plan for 2026 in the next few months. I think the safest move is to assume no new state help in the next two budgets.

-Erik

**From:** [tom Beck](#)  
**To:** [Rummel, Marsha](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Over budget \$\$  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2024 12:07:09 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from cnse55@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Also cut mayor's travel budget to \$1,000. No Dubai trip's and Green energy crap.  
Thanks,  
Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights  
**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

On Aug 8, 2024, at 4:08 PM, <cnse55@yahoo.com> wrote:

Thanks,  
Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights  
**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

On Aug 8, 2024, at 3:50 PM, Rummel, Marsha  
<district6@cityofmadison.com> wrote:

I agree the budget is a city wide issue. All alders probably read your email and follow up email but per our custom no one is obligated to respond unless we know the emailer is one of our constituents. I was just trying to help you get an acknowledgement.

Regards-

Marsha

---

**From:** tom Beck <cnse55@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 3:08 PM  
**To:** Rummel, Marsha <district6@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Over budget \$\$

You don't often get email from cnse55@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

dist 15, but issues are pertaining to the whole city.

Thanks,  
Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights  
**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

On Aug 8, 2024, at 2:54 PM, Rummel, Marsha  
<district6@cityofmadison.com> wrote:

Hi Tom-

When you share your aldermanic district or street address, the alder who represents you is expected to acknowledge receipt of your email and your suggestions/concerns.

Thanks-

Marsha

---

**From:** tom Beck <cnse55@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 8, 2024 2:42 PM  
**To:** All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Over budget \$\$

Some people who received this message don't often get email from cnse55@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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18 people, no replies, sad.  
Thanks,  
Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights  
**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

On Aug 5, 2024, at 12:14 PM, tom Beck

<cense55@yahoo.com> wrote:

to solve the budget problem, stop scare tactics about cutting FD & PD cuts. Start common sense , reduce the unnecessary positions.

See below, why does the mayor need to travel overseas?

Tom

Protect our 1st. & 2nd. Amendment rights

**FIGHT! FIGHT! FIGHT!**

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** tom  
<cense55@yahoo.com>  
**Date:** June 19, 2024 at  
10:05:37 AM CDT  
**To:** City of Madison  
<district10@cityofmadison.com>,  
district1@cityofmadison.com,  
district11@cityofmadison.com,  
district12@cityofmadison.com,  
district2@cityofmadison.com,  
district3@cityofmadison.com,  
district5@cityofmadison.com,  
district6@cityofmadison.com,  
district7@cityofmadison.com,  
district8@cityofmadison.com,  
district9@cityofmadison.com,  
City of Madison  
<district4@cityofmadison.com>,  
district14@cityofmadison.com,  
district16@cityofmadison.com,  
Mayor  
<mayor@cityofmadison.com>,  
Our Rep  
<district15@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject: Over budget \$\$**  
**Reply-To:** tom  
<cense55@yahoo.com>

Easy fix:

1. eliminate both  
asst.mayors
2. Mayor takes 10% pay  
cut, travel budget cut  
20%
3. Alder's take 10 % pay  
cut
4. All DEI positions cut

**Tom,  
Protect the 1st  
amendment, stop the  
censorship Google, FB,  
Twitter, MSM!**



**From:** [Jon Jon](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Shame on You.....  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2024 7:55:30 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from dadyo961@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Absolutely shameful that this amendment proposed by the mayor has passed and is moving forward, especially given little opportunity for comment.

Shoving this amendment down residents' throats is despicable. Many of us are on very limited income in these trying times of hyperinflation.

**Do your jobs and make the tough decisions to live within your/our means!**

**From:** [David Oleniczak](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** City of Madison Budget Suggestion  
**Date:** Thursday, August 22, 2024 1:27:51 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from oleniczak@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello,

I'd like to thank you all for doing such an incredible job. You certainly don't get paid enough to take your positions seriously. I am grateful for everything the city does and would like to think I'm very on top of local issues. Here's a few suggestions:

1) Flat rate parking rate increases ACROSS the entire city. This would help immensely and not stifle economic activity in certain areas like the "localized" rate increases are sure to do. I ran the numbers and thought \$1.80 to \$2/hour across the city would be appropriate.

2) Delaying the construction of the new transitional housing off of Bartillion Drive. It may be too late for this, but I originally thought the old Madison Plaza Hotel or another area closer to East Washington would be appropriate. A place with a communal area and kitchen, coupled with privacy for men and women alike, along with a secured front entry and proximity to a grocery store and the new BRT/busses on East Washington seemed like it would have been a better spend to explore that option instead of building a brand new facility. I've struggled with being in transition in the past. Creating an environment too inviting where I don't have the social folks and services to support me getting on my feet seems like it would only slow progress towards my independence.

I fully believe these two changes could have balanced the budget. I still believe there is an answer somewhere within these thoughts.

3) Another small thought is copies at the library. \$.10/copy seems way too cheap and I don't think anyone would oppose an increase to slightly offset some increases in spending needs.

I'd hate to see the city have to cut staffing 5% or other services. I have a ton of other potential suggestions but don't want to be annoying. Thanks and keep up the good work.

Regards,  
Dave

**From:** [Mike Roach](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Cap Times](#); [County Board Recipients@countyofdane.com](#); [Isthmus Davidoff](#)  
**Cc:** [Dani Maxwell](#); [dmoe@madison.com](#); [Dean Mosiman](#); [News nbc15](#); [Channel 3 News](#)  
**Subject:** -- Madison's property taxes are five times (5X), higher than that of Colorado Springs, CO, but why such a large difference?  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2024 9:16:50 AM  
**Attachments:** [Screenshot\\_20240602-063120.png](#)

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mikeroachfox9@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Mike Roach** <[mikeroachfox9@gmail.com](mailto:mikeroachfox9@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Thu, Jun 13, 2024, 4:22 PM  
**Subject:** -----Peter, Madison's property taxes are five times (5X), higher than that of Colorado Springs, CO, but why such a large difference?  
**To:** Peter Carstensen <[pcarste@gmail.com](mailto:pcarste@gmail.com)>

----- **Madison's property taxes are five times (5X), higher than that of Colorado Springs, CO, but why such a large difference?**

**However, Colorado Springs sales tax is 8.2% and Madison it's 5.5%**

**But still, why such a big difference?**



**LI Referen...** Yesterday



to me ▾

Hello,

Here is the information that you requested.

The property tax rate in El Paso County, encompassing the city of Colorado Springs, CO is .31%.

The property tax rate in Madison, WI is 1.61%.

Best,

Sean  
Librarian

**From:** [Sandy Schick](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Property Tax Referencum  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2024 3:18:27 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from sswinko123@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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## WHY CAN'T THERE BE A CITY OF MADISON TAX CREATED?

That would be a lot fairer instead of burdening property owners only; everyone that buys goods and services in Madison can pay. Those that are rich can afford to spend more so the proportion would be equalized. The only items that would not be taxed is food.

This just sucks. Hopefully, eventually, the Democrats will dominate and the portion of money due Madison would increase back to where it should be.

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Media press releases need revision  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2024 9:30:10 AM

---

Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** J W <[madcitymail@hotmail.com](mailto:madcitymail@hotmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 21, 2024 7:14 AM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Media press releases need revision

You don't often get email from [madcitymail@hotmail.com](mailto:madcitymail@hotmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

nefactors of the metro and social programs.

We wholeheartedly support infrastructure expenditures, running of city services and jobs, as long as you are within budget. Fluff and pork barrel spending for pet programs too, IF WE HAVE THE MONEY! We support taxation to have a safe, clean and functional city...but we are not responsible to be our brother paycheck and keeper, UNLESS WE HAVE THE REVENUES TO DO SO. You obviously do not!

Maybe if we had more money in our pockets, we could go out to eat 2 or 3 times a week, shop on weekends for clothes and stuff like Americans do...and that generates sales taxes. When we do see owners and managers of businesses we used to frequent, they ask where we have been, we tell them its not in our BUDGET!

You seem convinced everyones income has kept up or surpassed the CPI the past 5 years, you would be wrong for the majority, and add inflation, we are sinking...most people feel poorer, because they are. We have a consistent budget shortfall, but have no choice but to adjust...how about the city?

There appears to be a public relations media blitz by the city administration to forcefully influence the passing of their budget shortfall in November per referendum.

That is fine and expected, but please stop showing whiney public employees feeling potential morale issues and veil threats of if-then budget cut threats, if you have to cut to pay for your overspending and lack of fiscal constraint, then austerity efforts might be necessary.

But that is your fault! You do not spend more than incoming revenues. And you do not report a 22 million dollar budget crisis when it's a crisis of poor management. Maybe if Madison politicians over the course of the last several decades wouldn't have angered the opposition in state government with their bully tactics, they'd get more cooperation and state funds!

So call it budget shortfall to meet all the city projects, pet projects and social programs the ADMINISTRATION decides are needed and must have without asking the people who pay for it. It must be wonderful to sit in meetings with your Starbucks and hash over spending others' money.

If we approve this vote, what happens next year, the next year and the future? Learn to live within your budget like we do! And this just encourages and enables the city to keep overspending because we know 51 percent will vote for it...most of them who pay little or no taxes, are here for 4 years then move away...and are the best

We stopped shopping for fun, stopped going out to eat, cut our food consumption in half but pay as much or more, cut back on medications, to pay for taxes and all the other rising costs of living...do you care, NO! We don't want charity, we don't and won't ever use a social program or go to food banks. We are too hard working and too proud, unlike most of the people with hands out in this city. Yes, Madison was a nice place to live, but that is dying fast, thanks to people not being able to enjoy living here. Taxes hear from all the taxing authorities not too mention income taxes, are driving us broke—thank you for that!

In summary, please ask nicely, don't use bully, guilt ridden or veiled threat press releases to gain your approval. Remember if you get a majority approval of 51 percent, the other 49 percent who voted won't too, so listen to them. They have spoken too, so a middle ground needs to be met and administration should ALWAYS balance and live within the budget, period.

We know the city council and leaders are more liberal politically, we are dead center moderates, and know many on both sides of the political fence, that's their right. But cooperation and listening and acting on behalf of both sides is only true and fair way of doing city business...stop cutting our personal quality of life here to support yours.

Thank you for your time, as we drive down Mineral Point road, we are looking forward to the traffic disasters that are to come and paying 7 million a year just to maintain this new transit system that does not come near our neighborhood...but we don't miss it either.



**From:** [J W](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Please consider single family homes and not just developments  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2024 11:31:34 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from phoenixrising1016@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Alders and Mayor Rhodes-Conway,

I am writing to express my concerns about the direction of housing development in Madison since the mayor has taken office, and the council who has supported these efforts. It seems that apartment developments are springing up everywhere, yet there appears to be little focus on creating affordable single-family homes. This issue is one that deeply affects many residents, myself included, and I believe it requires the attention of the City Council.

I previously reached out to all the alders on February 22, 2024, to share these concerns, and while I did receive a response from Karen Kapusta-Pofahl with links to homeownership assistance programs, I felt that my concerns were not fully addressed. The response did not seem to consider the broader issue of affordable housing for single families and the overwhelming number of apartments being constructed. I fear that the voices of many in our community, who share my concerns, are being overlooked.

Most importantly, prominent figures like Kamala Harris and Tammy Baldwin have highlighted the need to stimulate the construction of single-family starter homes. Other states, such as Colorado, are already implementing programs to make homes and multifamily condos more affordable and accessible. I would like to share the story of a friend, Ashley, who suffered a traumatic brain injury that left her homeless. Through Colorado's programs, she was able to purchase a condo on a disability income, which has dramatically improved her quality of life. I believe similar initiatives could greatly benefit Madison's residents.

I would like to suggest that the city consider halting the financial incentives for developers focused on apartment buildings and instead invest in affordable single-family housing. The current trend of prioritizing apartment construction does not reflect the needs of most Madison residents. I am concerned that many of these new apartment buildings are managed by companies using AI to maximize profits, which can further distort the housing market, regardless of occupancy rates. I worked in Property Management, so I do have some direct knowledge of software that exists and is being used to price units in Madison.

Another issue of concern is the increasing trend of corporate developers and investors buying up single-family homes. Studies, such as those conducted by the Pew Research Trust, have shown that this trend has been growing since the last major recession, with corporate entities purchasing about 15% of homes sold. This is a troubling development, particularly in cities with promising growth and job rates, like Madison. When corporations control a significant portion of the housing market, it can drive up prices and reduce opportunities for individual homeownership, exacerbating the housing crisis.

I do applaud your efforts in increasing housing availability, but there are still significant challenges, especially for those who rely on programs like Section 8. Property management companies can still find ways to circumvent renting to Section 8 applicants unless they have voluntarily agreed to income-contingent terms, which is not always the case.

Finally, I would like to address the city's current budget shortfall. With the numerous new multimillion-dollar apartment buildings, one would assume that the resulting tax revenue would help bolster the city's finances. However, it seems that is not the case. I would appreciate if you could provide clarity on the budget shortfall and how much tax revenue these new developments are actually contributing. Understanding these numbers is crucial for ensuring that our city's resources are being allocated effectively and that development is truly benefiting our community.

I am kindly asking that the council reconsider the current approach to housing development in Madison. It is essential that we create opportunities for affordable homeownership and prevent our city from becoming dominated by high-rise apartments and corporate-owned properties. I would appreciate a response on what your plans are to address these concerns as I would assume you and the council are aware of them.

Sincerely,  
Julia White

----- Forwarded message -----

From: J W <[phoenixrising1016@gmail.com](mailto:phoenixrising1016@gmail.com)>

Date: Thu, Feb 22, 2024 at 12:14 PM

Subject: Re: Please consider single family homes and not just developments

To: Kapusta-Pofahl, Karen <[KKapusta-Pofahl@cityofmadison.com](mailto:KKapusta-Pofahl@cityofmadison.com)>

I appreciate that, however that still doesn't solve the single family housing shortage. There aren't enough physical homes for the size of Madison and we're growing. The prices of homes

here are inflated so badly that the wages around here do not match the cost of living. I hear so many young people today saying they can't afford a home around here. Even couples. One of my coworkers has a small child and he can't even find a house and when he does the price is way too high and when a good price is found there are too many offers.

On Thu, Feb 22, 2024 at 12:02 PM Kapusta-Pofahl, Karen <[KKapusta-Pofahl@cityofmadison.com](mailto:KKapusta-Pofahl@cityofmadison.com)> wrote:

Dear Julia,

I saw your message and am sending over these links to City homeownership assistance programs.

City website: [www.cityofmadison.com/homeloans](http://www.cityofmadison.com/homeloans)

The City also supports Home Buyers Round Table <https://homebuyersroundtable.org/>

Best,

Karen

---

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**Karen Kapusta-Pofahl (she/they)**

**Chief of Staff**



City of Madison • Office of the Common Council

Room 417, City-County Building  
[210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.](#)  
[Madison, Wisconsin 53703](#)  
**Tel** 608 261 9159 • **Fax** 608 267 8669  
**Email** [kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com](mailto:kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com)

**Web** <https://www.cityofmadison.com/Council/>

*In compliance with State public records law, the City of Madison retains copies of ALL email messages to and from this mailbox. Email messages may be released in response to appropriate open record requests.*

---

**From:** J W <[phoenixrising1016@gmail.com](mailto:phoenixrising1016@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Thursday, February 22, 2024 11:31 AM

**To:** All Alders <[allalders@cityofmadison.com](mailto:allalders@cityofmadison.com)>; council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>

**Subject:** Please consider single family homes and not just developments

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I would like to address a major issue and it affects not just people in Madison, but in the surrounding areas. I am seeing all kinds of developments going up all over the place. While I applaud that, I don't see anything being said about the shortage of single family homes. We do have a serious housing crisis and the housing prices are very close to what you would find in big cities. In the case of building all these new developments, development companies agreed to only 5% of the units in those buildings are open to low-income. How does that solve the housing crisis when we also have a shortage of single family homes (SFA) and will continue until we start incentivising building homes and provide options for low to middle class residents?

You may want to consider how Denver is approaching this issue. One of my friends who has a disability was able to benefit from this program and she is living in the condo that Denver's program helped her buy. So it is possible for Madison to start looking at other options out there.

Also, one more thing I would like to add is that we also need to be more fiscally responsible and stop worrying about optics in Madison. Use the Public Market for example. Do we really need a public market? No. But the tax payers are paying for it whether we like it or not. And for what? Attraction that will help us build more culture in our community? That's exactly what was posted to a block on the Common Council's website. The fact of the matter is, everyone in this country is aware that Madison is about as progressive and cultural as you can get. With the UW and other universities and colleges in this town, we've been cultured for some time, and this city lets the whole world know we live in our bubble. I say that not to be snarky, but to put emphasis that a Public Market is an **accessory**, not a necessity.

**If we want to be progressive, then we have to do what is right for the people who need it.** Not bring a Public Market that the disadvantaged can't even afford to visit.

I think we all know that we desperately need to solve this housing crisis. Building a Public Market and apartments doesn't solve the problems this city faces, and that's half the battle. Access to education and training is another area to consider dispersing funds to before doing these **"pet projects"** that don't serve our community's needs.

One last thing....when I went to look for home ownership grants or assistance through the city, I couldn't find anything. I did find some pages on the website for the County of Dane haven't even been updated for nearly 4 years. There are still references to 2020 Funding Cycle being closed. Working in web design, not updating a page shows zero commitment to being open and transparent about solving the housing crisis. I'd like to hear some ideas moving forward and I truly hope this next budget cycle we start putting the welfare of our residents first and stop dumping money into unnecessary projects that could easily wait.

Thank you,

Julia White

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Closing Goodman Pool  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 5:57:07 PM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Tuesday, August 27, 2024 – 5:51pm

Gene Finn  
2529 Karakul Ct.

Fitchburg , Wisconsin. 53711 No, do not contact me. All Alders Closing Goodman Pool  
Greetings,

I am contacting you to urge you to not cut services to Goodman Pool. Although I live in Fitchburg, I have taken my daughter, who has an intellectual disability, there a half dozen times this year. This is a typical year and we have been going there since she learned how to swim. It services many low income families and would be missed by many.

**From:** [Mennig, Melissa](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); [Kuhn, Jamie](#); [#County Board Recipients](#)  
**Cc:** [Okeefe, James](#); [Iheukumere, Astra](#); [Becker, Casey](#); [Dux, Kristina](#); [Prescott, Johnneisha](#); [Doolan, Michele](#); [Harris, Justine](#); [Hulsemann, Kierstin](#); [Katherine S. Kamp](#); [linda@justdane.org](#); [Martinez-Rutherford, Dina Nina](#); [Kemp, Chad](#); [Takisha Jordan](#); [Wehelie, Nasra H](#); [Rhodes, Linette](#)  
**Subject:** 2025 Budget Recommendations from the City County Homeless Issues Committee  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 10:35:05 AM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[CCHIC budget recommendations for 2025 - 8.26.24.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from mennig.melissa@danecounty.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

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*(Do not reply to all)*

Dear Members of the City of Madison Common Council, Dane County Board of Supervisors, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, and County Executive Jamie Kuhn,

I am reaching out to you in my capacity as a staff member of the City County Homeless Issues Committee.

Attached, you will find a memo from the committee co-chairs, Takisha Jordan and Linda Ketcham. The memo outlines the **2025 city and county budget recommendations** from the committee, which received approval from the committee members present during our meeting on August 5th.

Thank you for your consideration.

Melissa Mennig

Bcc: City County Homeless Issues Committee members and staff, Astra Iheukumere, Jim O'Keefe

**Melissa Mennig** *(she/her/hers)*

Housing Program Specialist

Housing Access & Affordability

Dane County Department of Human Services

***DCDHS Vision: Empowered people thriving in safe, just, and caring communities.***

(e) [mennig.melissa@danecounty.gov](mailto:mennig.melissa@danecounty.gov)

(o) 608.709.6040



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**Proofpoint**





# **CITY COUNTY HOMELESS ISSUES COMMITTEE**

Linda Ketcham & Takisha Jordan, Co-Chairs



Date: August 21, 2024

To: City of Madison Common Council, Dane County Board of Supervisors, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, County Executive Jamie Kuhn

From: The City County Homeless Issues Committee, Linda Ketcham and Takisha Jordan, Co-Chairs

Re: City County Homeless Issues Committee 2025 Budget Recommendations

On behalf of the City County Homeless Issues Committee (CCHIC), we would like to express our sincere gratitude for your continued commitment to addressing housing and homelessness within our community.

During our meetings on July 1<sup>st</sup> and August 5<sup>th</sup>, we reviewed the City and County 2025 budget processes and discussed recommendations. We would like to highlight the committee's recommendations.

## **1. Maintain Financial Support for Homeless Services:**

We strongly urge that funding for homeless services in Madison/Dane County remains intact despite the City of Madison's projected budget shortfall. We recognize the complexities involved in this budget season, but the needs of our most vulnerable populations must remain a priority. We encourage the City and County governments to collaborate closely to bridge any funding gaps and sustain vital services.

## **2. Address Key Priorities for 2025 Budget:**

- **Shelter Funding:** Ensure adequate financial support for our local shelters.
- **Homelessness Diversion and Prevention:** Continue funding for diversion and prevention programs beyond the expiration of COVID-related federal funds.
- **Family Housing Options:** Expand housing opportunities for families with children.
- **Affordable Housing Development:** Explore innovative uses of the City and County Affordable Housing Development Funds.
- **Regional Housing Strategy:** Continue support for the Dane County Regional Housing Strategy.
- **Transportation Solutions:** Develop regional transportation solutions critical for low-income households without access to cars.

We appreciate your attention to these matters and look forward to your support in implementing these recommendations. Thank you for your continued commitment to improving housing and homelessness services in our community.

CC: City County Homeless Issues Committee Members and Staff, Jim O'Keefe, Astra  
Iheukumere

**From:** [Kim I. Richman](#)  
**To:** [Harrington-McKinney, Barbara](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Well done!  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 27, 2024 8:53:41 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alder Harrington-McKinney,

Your blog on the city website is one of about 10 that I subscribe to. Your blogs are always the most informative of them all.

Most of the alders simply post city committee and board meetings, events, and highlights, and don't add personal touches.

The August 27, 2024 blog (Advancing a Vibrant Community) was one of the best I have ever read. Facts are facts, and your blog stated nothing but facts (the same facts that some on social media claim is misinformation), plus residents who have had enough of the city's irresponsible spending. As one of the kindest & caring people I know, I was appalled to read how some of the alders have been treating you, although nothing surprises me in today's political climate. Alders are supposed to be tolerant, inclusive, caring, but apparently it's, "Do as I say, not as I do."

For all of the reasons that you and your email writers included in your blog, I'll be voting no, and encouraging as many people I can **to vote no as well.**

-----  
I hope your joint replacement recovery is going well, I've had some myself! Be vigilant with your physical therapy at home and it will end well!

Best Regards,

Kim

*Kim Richman  
krichman@pm.me  
District 16*

*#StandUpToJewishHate*

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) encrypted email.

**From:** [Allen Rickey](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Today's WSJ  
**Date:** Sunday, August 25, 2024 9:22:13 AM

---

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

## MY VIEW | PHIL HANDS



Al Rickey

**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Mayor](#); [Dave Zweifel](#)  
**Subject:** Cut Mayors Budget & all out of State Travel — Goodman Pool used as pawn in budget crisis VIEWS OF WSJ Sun. 9-1-24 CAPITAL TIMES - Dave Zweifel  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 3, 2024 5:24:07 PM

---

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders:

Please see below Dave Zweifel's Goodman Pool Budget Cut Opinion Article in Sundays State Journal (9-1-24).

As the Chairperson of Mayor Dave's Goodman Site Selection Pool Committee I'd like to suggest two amended budget recommendations that would keep the Goodman Community Pool open!

Two Proposed Budget Amendments to the Mayor's 2025 Operational Budget:

(1) reduce the Mayors bloated personnel and travel staff budget by 50%; and

(2) eliminate all City of Madison out of state travel budgets and prohibit all out of state travel in 2025 for elected officials, city dept. heads and all city employees — and require city officials/employees to participate by Zoom for all out of state meetings, forums and conferences.

LEST WE FORGET:

Madison's first and only community pool (Erwin & Robert Goodman Pool) was overwhelmingly supported in a City Wide Referendum, with over 67% of the Voters approving Madison's matching capital

funding and annual operating funding, along with the current pool location, in South Madison (Franklin Field) 325 West Olin Ave.

As the Chairperson of Mayor Dave's Goodman Site Selection Pool Committee and the City Liaison to Robert & Erwin Goodman Foundation, we owe it to the South Madison Area Families and children — and to the Goodman's, to maintain the Parks Dept. operational budget for the Goodman Community, Pool which help subsidize affordable fee structure for children and families in South Madison Area Neighborhoods, including Allied Dr.

Nor should the City Council allow the Parks Department to “privatize the operational management” of the Goodman Pool.

FACT: Private contractors need to make a profit and the first thing they would do, is raise pool fees and cut back on the pool required seasonal operational costs.

Please read Zweifel's article below and please do the right thing for the children of Madison — who cannot afford the annual private pool fees and stock purchase to join one of Madison's “neighborhood private pools.” — A.J. Nino Amato

[Dave Zweifel]

Bob and Irv Goodman, the Madison brothers who became two of Madison's biggest philanthropists — funneling the profits from their famed jewelry store on State Street back to the community — were longtime friends of mine.

They'd ask me to join them at UW athletic events, Milwaukee Brewers baseball games, Madison Muskies games, Downtown

Rotary Club meetings when Barry Alvarez or Pat Richter were the speakers, or they'd call just to shoot the breeze or get my opinion on some project.

You see their name on buildings and causes across the community. They helped build athletic facilities (Goodman Diamond for the UW softball team, for instance), neighborhood centers, public libraries, school forests. They established scholarships for needy students at UW-Madison and Edgewood College, endowed a fund at the United Way of Dane County Foundation, and supported HospiceCare and Madison's Jewish congregations. Their gifts to the community are estimated to top \$70 million and, in fact, their foundation is still contributing to causes to help people in need long after the brothers' deaths.

But what they were particularly proud of was their \$2.8 million gift to build Madison's first and only public swimming pool — \$2.5 million to get a \$4.2 million community campaign started, and then they added another \$300,000 to get the campaign over the top in time for the pool to open in the summer of 2006.

The brothers got involved because they had followed the typically endless Madison controversy over building a pool. Many residents felt that a city built around three lakes didn't need to spend money on an artificial pool. We all went swimming in the lakes, many would write in letters to the editor, so why can't today's kids?

But as the condition of the lakes seemed to worsen every summer, often closing beaches because of blue-green algae, kids in the city had no place to go. Besides, kids had to cross busy streets to get to the lakes, particularly those on the south side.

Several initial attempts to site a pool died because no one could agree where it should be located. Public opinion began to turn, though, when the Goodmans decided enough was enough and announced their pledge, providing the pool be built along Olin Avenue on the south side. The city itself wound up contributing just \$500,000 to build the \$4 million-plus facility.

Now the pool is being mentioned as a possible casualty if Madison doesn't pass this fall's referendum to raise the city's levy limits — and that would have troubled the Goodman brothers deeply.

I remember writing a column a couple of years after the pool opened chiding a group of Madison alders who, during budget deliberations, were upset that the pool's admission charges didn't cover 100% of its annual costs. My column declared that a city that had just been given a first-class swimming pool for a paltry \$500,000 of taxpayer money could afford to subsidize a few pennies of the kids' admission fees.

The Goodman brothers called me the next day to say thanks. Those were their sentiments, exactly.

If Madison has any respect for the two brothers who have contributed so mightily to better all our lives, it will stop using the pool as a pawn in its budget crisis.

It's closed for the season now, but thousands of children learned how to swim, how to compete or just had fun or had something to do during the long, hot summer. If we can't afford that, levy limits or not, we should be ashamed.

Zweifel is editor emeritus of The Capital Times.



Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Nakoosa Trail extension  
**Date:** Saturday, August 31, 2024 9:27:06 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Saturday, August 31, 2024 – 9:25am

Janet Carver  
4526 Conlin St

Madison, Wisconsin. 53714-1715 No, do not contact me. All Alders Nakoosa Trail extension I am a senior citizen living in the Burke Heights neighborhood. I use the paved trails daily to walk my dog. A roadway through Sycamore Park is the biggest waste of tax payers money. It would cut down on green space, remove healthy trees, and take out paved trails that were redone a year ago. Connecting to Jana Lane is a poor option for traffic flow. Jana Lane has many speed bumps to control traffic. I had tried looking at the web site for the Northeast parks a year ago and could not find any of the info I needed. It was confusing. Now that it has been made clear by our neighborhood association, some are telling us the concern is too late! Do not waste our tax dollars; the proposed referendum will surely be voted down.

**From:** [Joanne Heil](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Voting No on the November Referendum  
**Date:** Friday, August 30, 2024 6:28:24 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from joanne.m.heil@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good evening,

I'm writing to express my agreement and support in voting "no" for the November referendum. As a 21 year resident of Madison, I am frustrated at being treated like a limitless ATM machine for the city's reckless spending in recent years. For the reasons Alder Harrington-McKinney outlined in the below-linked post, and the reasons former Mayor Paul Soglin has expressed publicly in recent months, I believe the Mayor and the city council must treat the city budget the same way they treat their personal budgets, before this city becomes completely unaffordable to live in.

[https://www.cityofmadison.com/council/district20/blog/2024-08-27/advancing-a-vibrant-community?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR05drjBesHuOcYR66CsPaa2FsaCXetN0CswVqu6YpjIykcDgzg5vYelvvc\\_aem\\_o54FWLtTmeyKKVVsggRwIQ](https://www.cityofmadison.com/council/district20/blog/2024-08-27/advancing-a-vibrant-community?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR05drjBesHuOcYR66CsPaa2FsaCXetN0CswVqu6YpjIykcDgzg5vYelvvc_aem_o54FWLtTmeyKKVVsggRwIQ)

**From:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**To:** [Matthias, Isaac L](#); [Kapusta-Pofahl, Karen](#); [Brogan, Dylan](#)  
**Cc:** [Schmiedicke, David](#); [Munger, Sam R.](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Madison Public Libraries  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 3, 2024 10:12:34 AM

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FYI

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**From:** Ashley Komula <ashleyrutten@uwalumni.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 30, 2024 9:03 AM  
**To:** Finance Committee <financecommittee@cityofmadison.com>; Finance <finance@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Madison Public Libraries

You don't often get email from [ashleyrutten@uwalumni.com](mailto:ashleyrutten@uwalumni.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I ask that you please take into consideration how valuable the Madison Public Libraries are as you make your decisions about the City of Madison Budget. My children are 8 and 10 years old now. When they were toddlers we went to the library almost once a week. Based on my library history we have checked out hundreds of books. This then led to my children being interested in books, which then helped them be more successful at school. At my childrens' current ages they still go to the library about once a week but now we participate in some of the programming for older kids. They in particular love the Minecraft Club run by Ms. Janell and all the artists in residence that have exposed them to a wide variety of art forms (print making, cyanotope, etc).

I would love for families that are just beginning now to be able to have the same access we had as a young family.

And this is just our story. I imagine there are many other people in our community who have benefited from the libraries, some in the same ways as us, and some in different ways than our family.

Please, keep in mind how powerful the library space is for a wide range of people in our community. This is a resource that we should keep strong.

Thank you for your time,

Ashley Komula

53714 zip code

**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Cc:** [scottresnick@innovate.wisc.edu](mailto:scottresnick@innovate.wisc.edu)  
**Subject:** Madison's Democracy is at risk with Mayor Satya forcing 10 & 12 Story development, an unsafe BRT, Increases in property taxes & fees, while city staff belittles citizens objections and kowtowing to multi-Rental developers.  
**Date:** Sunday, September 8, 2024 10:50:44 AM

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## Opinion | Discontent with Satya Rhodes-Conway, City Council simmers

**By Paul Fanlund**

Sep 6, 2024

Joe Biden exited the presidential race on July 21 and — in a nanosecond — Kamala Harris' candidacy blew up, thrilling and energizing discouraged Democrats. Those from across the left-of-center spectrum were united in celebrating the reprieve from what was starting to look like an inevitable Donald Trump landslide victory.

In Madison, a secondary effect seems to be relegating city matters to the back burner. It's hard to dwell on local topics with America's democratic future at stake.

This ought to please Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway and her ever-compliant allies on the Madison City Council, as controversies that divide the public have at least temporarily taken a back seat.

But based on my conversations over the summer and the crackle of criticism on social media, plenty of Madisonians are emphatically not on board with most of the mayor's and council's agenda.

They see city leaders forcing pro-development zoning changes, belittling reasonable homeowner objections and kowtowing to developers.

They see city leaders making travel by automobile ever more time-consuming and difficult by narrowing roads and adding weird and illogical bicycle lanes, siding with the city's apparently influential bicycle lobby at every turn.

They see city leaders immersed in a public relations campaign promoting a new bus rapid transit system, brushing aside concerns that it could turn into an epic boondoggle.

Paul Soglin sees a through line in how city hall works differently than it once did.

“The shifts in zoning and traffic management represent a significant change in public participation in policy making,” the longtime former mayor told me. “Previously these discussions began with city committees, extensive neighborhood and task force forums, then the city staff would be directed to provide options for public debate. Now the staff provides one option, and all the people can do is react. Democracy is at stake.”

The kicker is that the mayor and council are now threatening citizens with reduced services unless they support \$22 million in higher taxes on a November referendum.

They say they might have to cut especially popular services such as support for the Goodman Pool, which serves many communities of color, as my colleague Dave Zweifel recently lamented in a column.

City leaders also threaten to reduce spending on police, fire, library and refuse collection. It's the old game of targeting popular services. Do they think this is our first rodeo?

When city leaders get pushback, they say critics are stuck in the past, some suggesting skeptics are selfish, elitist, even racist. The mayor's backers, including her council majority of loyalists, would say "deal with it," because she has been elected twice.

Two thoughts. One, her 2024 agenda of steamrolling homeowners and automobile drivers was not widely understood during the 2023 campaign. Two, she faced a weak opponent in her second election.

It may in fact be difficult to get qualified moderate progressives to run in Madison given the dominance of a younger and uncompromising far left that now controls the political ecosystem.

On the zoning issue, city hall apparently doesn't care how many apartments individual neighborhoods may have supported in the past. It is apparently never enough. Many critics of city leaders support — and have long supported — reasonable infill development, but that pace is not enough for city hall.

In late June, I attended a talk at Sequoya Library featuring William Tishler, an esteemed, long-retired professor of landscape architecture at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Tishler, father of current District 11 Ald. Bill Tishler, was there to talk about the book he wrote on the famed landscape architect Jens Jensen.

During a question-answer session, the elder Tishler lamented how the construction of boxy, look-alike, multi-story apartment buildings on seemingly every open space in the city threatens to undercut what he called Madison's "sense of place."

Think about it: sense of place.

That describes Madison's rich fabric of distinctive neighborhoods whose commonalities bind those neighborhoods. And when those neighborhoods are taken together, they create a diverse and long-cherished citywide quilt.



This old notion of sense of place, however, apparently has no place in contemporary Madison politics.

It is all about the many thousands of people who theoretically may want to live here one day. Who knows, by the time they all get here, the city might have become considerably less appealing.

On bus rapid transit, the mayor, city council and transportation officials have waged their Pollyannaish PR campaign, but little is said about the massive traffic upheavals and inconvenience for drivers, an unpleasant reality already apparent. City leaders have little to say about the future of rush-hour traffic on East Washington Avenue or Mineral Point Road.

Social media sizzles with residents upset about road changes, BRT or otherwise. They predict secondary streets increasingly will become more heavily trafficked, making travel less safe, not more.

Current city leaders think Madison has been overly auto-centric, so creating traffic jams is acceptable, or at a minimum unavoidable. Putting the city on an inanely named “road diet” reflects that attitude.

“The irony in the road diet plan is the addition of so many ‘no right turn on red’ signs,” observed Soglin. “The impeding of traffic is going to lead to a massive increase in climate warming gases from Madison

automobiles.”

Throughout the summer, people have asked me what’s up with the city and its obsession with adding more and seemingly redundant bike lanes at the expense of auto traffic. The questions even come from avid bicyclists, who say there are plenty of excellent and convenient paths.

So, as summer turns to fall, here’s where we sit.

Many long-time, left-leaning moderates believe they have been on the correct side of city issues for years, helping make Madison what it is. Now they feel ignored, vilified even, for wanting to preserve the character of their traditional neighborhoods or for having a system of streets that remains logical and drivable.

These unhappy and ignored taxpayers cannot stop the radical zoning changes or the anti-automobile crusade or the BRT system.

But there is the matter of the city’s upcoming referendum.

Throughout my several decades here, Madisonians have voted to open their checkbooks when they have city leaders they trust.

But, as the far left likes to tell us, times have changed.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Allen Rickey](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** From Cap Times  
**Date:** Monday, September 9, 2024 8:20:53 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Fyi

[https://captimes.com/opinion/paul-fanlund/opinion-discontent-with-satya-rhodes-conway-city-council-simmers/article\\_02df2c24-6bc6-11ef-aeeb-532039aa52d0.html](https://captimes.com/opinion/paul-fanlund/opinion-discontent-with-satya-rhodes-conway-city-council-simmers/article_02df2c24-6bc6-11ef-aeeb-532039aa52d0.html)

Al Rickey

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [Brogan, Dylan](#); [Munger, Sam R.](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#); [Tishler, Bill](#)  
**Subject:** Ask Me Anything  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2024 5:25:22 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

Here are a few of my questions for "Ask Me Anything:"

- The City used \$18 million in one-time funds (including \$5.6 million in ARPA funds, \$3.1 million in TID funds, \$9.2 from the Rainy Day Fund, and \$6.6 million in reoffering premium that should've gone to Debt Service) and getting nothing new besides more money on our tax and rent bills. Why should we trust you with more of our money through taxes?
- I'm all for collecting more in the Municipal Services from the State. Why is it they only pay 40%? Was it part of some negotiation or what is the history on that? Collecting a higher percentage would certainly make a big dent in our structural deficit and it wouldn't add more to our already hefty local property tax bill.
- what specifically has the Mayor, Mayor's Office, City Staff, Alders and/or Lobbyists done to work with the State to gain additional sources of revenue (increase in the State's payment of the Municipal Services bill, increase in Shared Revenue, municipal sales tax and/or RTA tax)?
- with the number of City employees significantly (~10%) than it was several years ago (and before adding so many new residents to our growing City), why should cutting staff who perform vital city services be the threat if the referendum doesn't pass? Adding staff for vital services did not cause the structural deficit, so why are they first up on the chopping block?
- The Mayor and others keep saying we can't continue to do more with less, but they keep adding more infrastructure, buildings, and programs that require increased staff services and time. There is no end in sight. Could there be a moratorium on new spending and new unnecessary borrowing until we're out of this financial crisis?
- is required salary savings on our major public safety agencies (police department in particular) effective, when the City ends up paying \$. (from the Operating Budget) in police overtime in just one year (2023)?
- why did the Common Council pass a % in 2024 for all non-commissioned City employees when there was no money in the Operating Budget to do so? I understand their

wage parity concern, but *that* could've been put to a referendum instead of promising money that does not exist for these operating costs.

- why aren't the Mayor/Mayor's Office, Finance Director and members of the Common Council looking at strategic budget cuts and going through a critical evaluation process instead of having department heads across the board delineate a 5% cut?
- can the City add a requirement that Fiscal Notes include estimated costs on completed capital projects? (Examples: Men's Homeless Shelter, Public Market, BRT) Most capital projects have Operating costs associated with them, but they are rarely included or considered when Council members vote on Capital projects.
- why did the City commission an outside comparable wage analysis with peer cities, while simultaneously reassuring City employees that their wages would not go down if they were found to be high? Is that analysis completed? What were the results?
- why is there no detailed estimate available for additional operating costs for the BRT?
- why were 4 Metro Transit Chiefs hired in 2023, with a current base salary of between \$153,000 and \$159,000, in part relying on ARPA funds that everyone knew would run out the following year (2024) and the General Fund (where the structural deficit lives) would need to pick up those operating costs? Three of the four of those Transit Chiefs have resigned. Will they all be replaced?
- what other operating expenses, started with ARPA funds, will continue on now with local funding through the operating budget?
- will you have another budget Q&A for the public after the Mayor's Executive Budget is released in Oct. 8?
- has voting yes to federal grants saddled us with operating costs for maintenance, upkeep, and replacement that our operating budget cannot handle as we move into the future?
- why is the City of Madison spending % on human services? Heed the words of CDD Director Jim O'Keefe. The vast majority of cities rely on private sector partnerships to fund these critical services. And we should do the same, especially when we don't have the money in the budget. What is being done to encourage private sector buy-in for Human Services?

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe

[bonnie.roe@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.roe@gmail.com)

608-239-1748

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Tishler, Bill](#)  
**Subject:** Must See Video Recording  
**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 2024 5:29:40 PM  
**Attachments:** [Must See Interview! 20240912\\_165955\\_0000.png](#)

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I'm sharing this very salient video and hope you will watch it and consider sharing it with your constituents. I found it very objective and informative.

Join Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce President Zach Brandon as he interviews Wisconsin Policy Forum President Jason Stein about issues pertaining to the 3 referenda on our fall ballot. Don't miss this objective analysis as you consider how to vote.

<https://youtu.be/DzvWihQh1Ig?si=PaeDaddlXKxyAuFA>

Thanks,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11



**From:** [Alex Saloutos](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Why taxpayers will vote no.  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 11, 2024 8:15:13 PM  
**Attachments:** [240911 BOPC LETTER PERMITSANDFEES.pdf](#)

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I've attached the letter I sent to the Board of Parks Commissioners regarding the subcommittee's approval of the 2025 permits and fees. The lack of transparency, missing information, and disregard for taxpayer concerns erode public trust. You've asked residents to vote for a tax levy increase, yet handling substantive financial decisions like this reinforces why many will vote *no*.

Best regards,

--

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the letter 'A' with a stylized flourish.

Alex Saloutos  
Cell: (608) 345-9009  
Email: [asaloutos@tds.net](mailto:asaloutos@tds.net)

September 11, 2024

Email: [pacommission@cityofmadison.com](mailto:pacommission@cityofmadison.com)

Board of Parks Commissioners  
City of Madison

Re: **Follow-up on Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee's Approval of 2025 Permits and Fees, Agenda items no. 13 to 21 on consent agenda September 11, 2024, Legistar ID Nos. 85066, 85062, 85064, 85066, 85067, 85068, 85069, 85070, and 85071**

Dear Members of the Board of Parks Commissioners,

I am writing to follow up on the recent vote of the Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee to recommend approval of the 2025 Parks Division permits and fees, despite the serious and legitimate issues I outlined in my prior correspondence (attached). Given the city's financial challenges and the lack of transparency surrounding the process, I find this recommendation deeply concerning.

As I highlighted in my original letter, there are several significant concerns that should have been addressed before any recommendation for approval was made, including:

- The absence of fiscal notes, contrary to city policy, or a staff report with more history on the permits and fees, and information on the competitive environment, which leaves both the public and this body without essential information to make an informed decision.
- The continued reliance on permits and fees that have remained unchanged for years without any clear rationale or data to support such a stance.
- The decision to include these items on the consent agenda, which effectively eliminates the opportunity for a thorough public discussion on what should be a substantive matter.
- The reliance on oral presentations by staff at the meeting as a basis for decision-making. This practice reduces transparency and limits the public's ability to review and respond to the information presented. Key decisions should not rest solely on verbal summaries made during meetings but should be accompanied by written reports and fiscal notes for public scrutiny.

The approval of these agenda items sends a troubling message to taxpayers: that City Hall operates without regard for transparency, fiscal responsibility, or public input. Given the city's well-documented structural deficits and the importance of maintaining public trust, the subcommittee's decision to press forward without addressing these concerns is a disservice to the community.

For instance, the potential closure of the city's aquatics programs has been mentioned, yet there is no clear plan or rationale for how fees will impact the pool's future or the broader services provided by the Parks Division. This is but one example of the lack of context and background information that should have been provided before any decision was made.

September 11, 2024  
Page 2

I urge the Board of Parks Commissioners to carefully reconsider these recommendations during your meeting tonight. As I requested in my previous letter, it is essential to ensure the approval process complies with city policies, particularly regarding fiscal transparency, and that the city's financial realities are fully considered before moving forward.

This decision is about more than the permits and fees themselves—it is about demonstrating that City Hall is responsive to the public interest and mindful of the burdens placed on taxpayers. I hope the Board will take a more deliberative and responsible approach to these important issues.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I appreciate your consideration and hope you will act in the best interest of the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A' followed by a stylized flourish.

Alex Saloutos

Pc: All alders  
Eric Knepp

September 9, 2024

Email: [parksfpf@cityofmadison.com](mailto:parksfpf@cityofmadison.com).

Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee  
City of Madison

Re: **2025 Parks Division permits and fees, city policies, and fiscal responsibility  
Agenda items no. 7 to 15, Legistar ID Nos. 85066, 85062, 85064, 85066, 85067,  
85068, 85069, 85070, and 85071**

Dear Committee Members,

I am a resident of District 5 writing to express my concerns regarding agenda item numbers 7 through 15 on your agenda today related to approval of the Parks Division permits and fees for 2025. All of these items are on the consent agenda, and staff recommends their approval. However, there are not any fiscal notes, contrary to city policy, or information in the record that would provide a basis for staff's recommendations. In addition, it appears including these items on the consent agenda is contrary to city policy. Given the large structural deficits the city faces and the purpose of this committee,<sup>1</sup> these are legitimate and significant issues.

**Most permits and fees will remain unchanged in 2025.**

I prepared the attached Table 1— Summary of Changes to Parks Division Permits and Fees, to provide an overview of how many permits and fees will stay the same in 2025. My best effort was made to accurately count the number of permits and fees. In summary, if these agenda items are approved, four out of five permits and fees will remain the same next year, some will be the same since at least 2020, and there is no historical information prior to this year for a significant number that would provide a historical perspective on how long it has been since the last increase and the amount of the increase. Given the city's financial situation, I have concerns about the ability of this approach to best serve the public interest.

**Agenda items 7 to 15 do not include a fiscal note approved by the comptroller, contrary to APM 1-7.**

None of these agenda items have fiscal notes, contrary to city policy. All resolutions must include a fiscal note approved by the comptroller. The drafter of the proposed ordinance or resolution may prepare a fiscal note, but comptroller's approval is always required.<sup>2</sup> Agenda items 7 through 15 represent a significant revenue source for the Parks Division. Given the plain meaning of the requirements in APM 1-7 that all resolutions include a fiscal note approved by the comptroller, how is it that these items do not include one?

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<sup>1</sup> The Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee reviews policies, rules and regulations, operation standards, special event permit applications and makes program recommendations and recommendations on new and updated user fees and charges for all parks, Parks Division operated facilities, the City's golf courses and Forest Hill Cemetery. [MGO 33.03\(5\)\(a\)](#).

<sup>2</sup> City of Madison, Office of the Mayor, APM 1-3, *Fiscal Notes on Ordinances and Resolutions*, April 13, 2005, <https://www.cityofmadison.com/mayor/apm/1-3.pdf>, downloaded September 9, 2025.

The lack of a fiscal note or staff report for these items leaves a void of information for the public and this committee to make an informed and fiscally responsible decision on these permits and fees. At a minimum, to make an informed decision on these agenda items it would be helpful to know the following:

- How long it has been since the permits and fees were last increased?
- What are other municipalities doing with the permits and fees for their parks in this fiscal environment?
- For permits and fees that generate a significant amount of revenue, such as the use of the Olbrich Gardens for weddings, which is currently \$4,600 a day in high season, what are competitive venues charging?
- If staff do not recommend a change to a permit or fee, why? And what facts support this position?
- What effect will the recommended permits and fees have on the net revenue for the various Park Division enterprises in 2025, and the ability of the Parks Division to maintain the current service levels?

Unless staffing has changed, the city's Finance Department will have an analyst or analysts assigned to the Parks Division that can assist with this work.

#### **Agenda items 7 to 15 to set 2025 fees on consent agenda.**

Agenda item numbers 7 through 15 are on your consent agenda, which also appears to be contrary to city policy. A consent agenda is a process that allows a large number of agenda items to be bundled together and passed with one motion without discussion. Typical consent agenda items are routine, procedural decisions, and decisions that are likely to be noncontroversial. Items are placed on the consent agenda to save meeting time, and to help ensure meetings can focus discussion on substantive topics.<sup>3</sup>

In my opinion, I think an ordinary taxpayer would consider Parks Division permits and fees a substantive topic for this committee. Given the nature of these agenda items, the purpose of this committee, and the large structural deficits the city faces, I don't understand why setting the permits and fees for 2025 has been placed on your consent agenda. I encourage you to reconsider this and the message it sends to taxpayers.

#### **Oral arguments for approval and due process.**

In addition, I want to emphasize that the practice of committees and commissions relying on oral presentations by staff at their meetings to make the case for the approval of an agenda item does not provide sufficient transparency or due process. The public must have an opportunity to review and respond to the fiscal notes or a staff report with their comments explaining their recommendations to ensure that all perspectives and relevant facts are considered by the committee.


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<sup>3</sup> City of Madison, *Consent Agenda & Consent Agenda Document New Alder Onboarding 2023* PowerPoint presentation, <https://www.cityofmadison.com/council/documents/onboarding/council-office--consent-agenda.pdf>, downloaded September 9, 2024

For the above reasons, I ask that the Facilities, Fees, and Programs Subcommittee proceed thoughtfully and in a fiscally responsible manner with your consideration of these agenda items so you are compliant with city policy, fulfill your mission, and best serve the public interest.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I appreciate your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A' followed by a stylized flourish.

Alex Saloutos

Pc: All alders  
Board of Parks Commissioners  
Eric Knepp

**Table 1—Summary of Changes to Parks Division Permits and Fees**

ITEM NO.	LEGISTAR ID NO.	DESCRIPTION	SUMMARY OF CHANGES
7	<a href="#">85061</a>	2025-2026 Proposed Olbrich Botanical Garden Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 81 permits and fees on this schedule</li> <li>• No changes recommended, except for two special events fees.</li> <li>• No changes to 79 since at least 2023.</li> </ul>
8	<a href="#">85062</a>	2025 Proposed Shelter Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 138 park shelter fees and 30 misc. fees, a total of 168 are on this schedule.</li> <li>• Fees for three new shelters added in 2025.</li> <li>• Changes recommended to four misc. fees.</li> <li>• No changes to 135 shelter fees since at least 2023.</li> </ul>
9	<a href="#">85064</a>	2025 Proposed Park Division Fees—Mooring; Watercraft Storage; Violation Ranges; Disc Golf, Dog Park, Lake Access, and Cross Country Ski Permits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35 permits and fees on this schedule.</li> <li>• One is new in 2025.</li> <li>• Seven are the same as 2024.</li> <li>• 27 are unchanged since at least 2023.</li> </ul>
10	<a href="#">85066</a>	2025 Proposed Aquatics Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26 permits and fees on this schedule.</li> <li>• No changes to recommended.</li> <li>• No changes made since at least 2020.</li> </ul>
11	<a href="#">85067</a>	2025 Proposed Forest Hill Cemetery Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 106 permits and fees on this schedule.</li> <li>• 3% across-the-board increase on all line items recommended, plus the addition of \$30 burial administration fee.</li> </ul>
12	<a href="#">85068</a>	2025 Proposed Golf Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 51 permits and fees on this schedule.</li> <li>• Recommendation to increase ten in 2025.</li> <li>• Five are new in 2025.</li> <li>• No changes to 36.</li> <li>• Ten are the same as 2023.</li> <li>• Four are the same as 2022.</li> <li>• 13 are the same since at least 2021.</li> </ul>
13	<a href="#">85069</a>	2025 Proposed WPCRC Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 64 permits and fees on this schedule</li> <li>• No changes recommended.</li> <li>• No history prior to 2024.</li> </ul>
14	<a href="#">85070</a>	2025 Proposed Special Event Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 45 permits and fees on this schedule.</li> <li>• One recommended change in 2025.</li> <li>• No history prior to 2024.</li> </ul>
15	<a href="#">85071</a>	2025 Proposed Recreation Services Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 37 permits and fees on this schedule.</li> <li>• No changes recommended.</li> <li>• Four are the same as 2024.</li> <li>• Two are the same as 2023.</li> <li>• 31 are the same as 2022.</li> <li>• No history prior to 2022.</li> </ul>

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Madison Night Market  
**Date:** Thursday, September 12, 2024 7:11:51 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Thursday, September 12, 2024 – 7:10pm

Michael Stier, MD

he/him

2617 Covall Street

Madison, Wisconsin. 53713 Yes, by email. [ma84stier@hotmail.com](mailto:ma84stier@hotmail.com) All Alders Madison Night Market Hi. I voiced my concerns about financial management of the City to a non-Alder Council Rep at the market. Despite me telling her that I don't account her responsible, she felt "uncomfortable" and asked me to leave. I never threatened her or used any inappropriate language or profanity. I was simply expressing my dismay about the City's budget shortfall in a cordial way. She refused to give me her name, which I find unprofessional. I don't believe this person has the character or skills to represent council in a public forum. I feel mistreated as an upstanding city tax payer. Thank you for all the work you do. Michael Stier, MD



**From:** [Alex Saloutos](#)  
**To:** [Guequierre, John](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#); [Brogan, Dylan](#)  
**Subject:** Question regarding the city's budget and your upcoming educational meetings  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 17, 2024 10:20:58 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alder Guequierre,

Thank you for your efforts to make Madison a better place and hosting the three upcoming educational meetings on the city's budget. I'm sorry I will not be able to attend your meeting on the budget tomorrow night as I will be traveling. However, I do have a salient question related to our budget and the two choices the administration has offered to voters to solve the long-term structural deficit that I, and I think other taxpayers, would appreciate an answer to.

As a preface to my question, the City of Milwaukee—which is even more liberal than Madison based on the last three presidential elections—has shown that making a significant long-term commitment to lobbying the state legislature—which has been controlled by Republicans— pays big financial dividends. Recently, as a result of Act 12, which was signed into law in June of last year and changed the long-standing formula for state aid to municipalities, Milwaukee received \$407 in state aid per capita this year, while Madison received just \$29 per capita. If Madison simply received the average shared revenue per capita that other cities did (\$195), Madison would receive an additional \$45 million in state aid.

According to Wisconsin's Ethics Commission, during the first six months of 2023, Milwaukee's lobbyists spent 299 hours communicating directly with state officials while Madison's lobbyist spent just 4 hours communicating with them. Looking at the big picture, over the last 20 years Milwaukee's lobbyists have invested a whopping 2,623 hours per year lobbying state officials, while Madison's lobbyists have invested just 418 hours per year. And Milwaukee did this for less than half the cost per hour that Madison did. And under the current administration, Madison's lobbyist spent just 247 hours per year advocating at the Capitol for us.

Given the return on investment for Milwaukee, will this administration make a comparable long-term commitment to lobbying state officials for more equitable state aid, more equitable payments for municipal services, and a local sales tax? And if not, why?

If you would like to discuss this or need more information, please feel free to call me anytime on my cell phone at (608) 345-9009 or send me an email. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Cheers,

--



Alex Saloutos

Cell: (608) 345-9009

Email: [asaloutos@tds.net](mailto:asaloutos@tds.net)

**From:** [Keith Schlesinger](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Tax Referendum  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 18, 2024 10:47:09 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from keith.schlesinger@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders,

I am reading an online story on WKOW and it said the Mayor is listening to residents on how to deal with the deficit.

First of all, listen to your taxpayers when they send a suggestion to the Mayor's office. She has a staff but NOBODY bothered to respond to my email.

I am addressing the park and ride lot at Dutch Mill Road, in southeast Madison. You are giving FREE PARKING to people in that parking lot while they hop a coach to O'Hare or Midway. Dane County charges \$10 per day to park at the MSN airport. The City of Madison is working AGAINST the County of Dane by giving away free parking at Dutch Mill.

Look at how many parking spaces you have there. Yes, go out there and count them. If it is a true park and ride facility, give them a 24 hour in and out policy with no charge. Otherwise , \$10 a day to park there.

You are missing revenue big time. You need to make this a user fee parking lot if parked for more than 24 hours. It is a simple ticket in ticket out system.

I just hope you guys listen to taxpayers. The Mayor's office does not.

By the way, I will vote NO on your referendum to raise taxes. I am retired.

Keith Schlesinger  
District 16  
Madison

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [Madison AHAA](#)  
**To:** [Mayor](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support for CDD budget urged  
**Date:** Monday, September 23, 2024 9:04:25 AM

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You don't often get email from madisonahaa@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor Rhodes-Conway and Madison Common Council alders,

The members of the Affordable Housing Action Alliance (AHAA) of Madison and Dane County thank you for informing Madison citizens of the serious budget deficit the city is facing in 2025 and your efforts to balance the budget by contemplating ways to increase revenues and cut expenses. As you work to finalize the budget, AHAA members strongly urge that the city protect the Community Development Division's (CDD) operating budget, including staffing levels.

AHAA is a local grassroots group that advocates for the creation and retention of affordable housing, as well as for services for those who are unhoused. We applaud, in particular, your commitment to safeguard resources for housing affordability and homelessness services. We also commend your priority of preventing layoffs or furloughs of city staff.

We urge you to make no cuts to the CDD operating budget, including staffing. For many years, the city has been sorely in need of housing for those who are unhoused, the city's workforce, and its most vulnerable citizens. This year, the men's shelter hit a 40-year high of guests in January when it housed 347 men in a space built for 250 (Cap Times). In the city itself, nearly half (48%) of renter households and almost one-quarter (22.4%) of owner households are cost burdened (City of Madison Housing Snapshot).

Over the past several years the city has taken multiple steps to increase the capital budget for shelters and affordable housing projects. Without an adequate operating budget, CDD staff and contractors will not be able to successfully staff, administer, and monitor these programs. We fear that if the CDD operating budget isn't protected from cuts, our capital budget spending will have been wasted.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our message. And thank you for your continued service to the people of Madison.

Sincerely,

**Affordable Housing Action Alliance**  
[madisonahaa@gmail.com](mailto:madisonahaa@gmail.com)



**From:** [Ron Anderson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** November referendums/ City Budget.  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 25, 2024 3:02:32 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from wb9yzu@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor and Council: It seems to me you are coming to the taxpayers of Madison with a huge “want” this year. A projected \$22 million budget deficit for 2024, and 2 funding asks from MMSD. In total, if all 3 referendums pass, would result in a \$1,600 increase over whatever property tax increases are already planned.

Looking up our tax records, I found that over a 4 year period from 2020 to 2023, our taxes increased by \$469 for Madison City and MMSD taxes combined. We now pay over \$6K in taxes per year without also including taxes paid via the Wheel Tax and the non-water related tax items on the “Metro Services” bill that used to be part of the property tax.

If I assume that taxes will increase at least another \$469 in the next 4 years (a ver conservative estimate) without passage of these referendums, and I add in the additional \$1,600 asked for by year 4 from the referendum, our tax bill in 2027 will be over \$7,600 for a modest 4 bedroom house with a bath and a half. That doesn’t include any increases in the wheel tax or previously paid for by taxes that are off-loaded to the monthly “Municipal Services” bill.

On the website for the 22M ask, the Mayor says this is about quality of life in Madison, well it is; but not in the way she intended it. Has anyone at all sat down and considered what it currently costs to simply LIVE in Madison vs other communities in the State? And what affect a large tax increase will do to efforts to provide housing that is “Affordable” (less than 30% of income)?

What is the income per household in Madison, WI? Per Google AI, “35% of households in Madison have an income under \$50,000, 28% have an income between \$50,000 and \$100,000, 26% have an income between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and 11% have an income over \$200,000. “. Additionally, “The median household income in Madison city in 2023 was \$70,484”. So if you think about this a second, purchasing a \$400K house in Madison, even at 0% interest is beyond the average Madisonian’s means.

Since being able to own a house to live in is the American dream, and is the gateway to generating wealth, the quality of life in Madison has decreased during the present administration, and will continue to do so regardless of the availability of the services the Mayor threatened to cut.

The average Madisonian doesn’t care one nit about the Mayor’s or CC’s take on the Ukrainian war, the war in Israel/Palestine/Iran; their take on abortion, LGBT+ rights or immigration. That’s not why you were elected. You were elected to run the City of Madison in a fiscally responsible manner. That means that money out can’t be more than money in – just like everyone’s household should be run.

Just this year:

- \* The Council, knowing there was a deficit, voted to give itself a raise.

- \* It is very likely that the Mayor also budgeted herself a raise for 2025 and forward.

\* Madison just hired a School Superintendent at \$299K/ year plus fringe benefits, moving, and travel allowances. This is the highest paid School superintendent in WI.

\* Knowing there was a deficit, the City approved a 10% raise for most City Employees, with a minimum raise of 8%. This alone increased labor costs (most of the City's budget) 10%.

\* Knowing that the existing Bus system was not getting enough ridership, and that it costs more to run than it takes in, the Mayor doubled down on the concept. Currently, ridership doesn't even pay for the upkeep on the buses, let alone the inflated salaries of the drivers, their OT, or the administration costs. It will be no better for BRT.

\* The City used Federal COVID funds, not to cover expenses related to COVID, but to add 110 positions and to expand the budget.

And I could go on and on. Just the other day I saw a City Employee repainting Fire Hydrants. We could have used volunteer Citizens to do that, but we don't have a volunteer program like other communities to involve citizens in volunteer beautification efforts. Is anyone aware that the Mayor has 13 assistants/coordinators?

The City needs to control its expenses, and some won't be happy about it.

Just like any person with loans, you can't solve a budget deficit without coming up with a plan to reduce debt. That should be job one.

Job 2 is controlling labor costs. Labor consumes most of the City's operating budget. You need to go back to the unions and level with them. They either accept a rolling back of the 10% raise, or you cut positions. You may need to do both. OT needs to be controlled or eliminated.

Any executive, including the Mayor, Superintendent of schools, etc needs to accept an immediate pay cut. If we can't balance the budget on what we have, we can't afford large salaries.

Going along that line, we also need to hire what we can afford. The Superintendent of Schools position is a perfect example. The City of Verona hired, from our ranks, their School Superintendent, at a fraction of what we are paying someone to move here from out of State.

In the future, the Mayor needs to go to the Legislature and fight for the City's piece of State moneys. The City of Madison loses out on taxes on 1/3 of the land in Madison, and then pays for the infrastructure/ maintenance// services to allow state owned properties in Madison operate. And every time there is a protest, we get shafted. It is generally agreed that the \$29/capita we receive in shared revenue from the State is ridiculous. The City needs to come up with a different sources of funding. Having Madison Property owners pay for everything is just regressive and pushes the Mayor's goal of "Affordable housing" into the distant past.

Sincerely, Ron Anderson

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Proposed funding cuts to Newbridge Madison, Inc  
**Date:** Thursday, September 26, 2024 6:12:06 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Thursday, September 26, 2024 – 6:10pm

Rita Cairns

She

1622 Lake View Avenue

Madison, Wisconsin. 53704 Yes, by email. [bilena\\_baldacchino@yahoo.com](mailto:bilena_baldacchino@yahoo.com) All Alders

Proposed funding cuts to Newbridge Madison, Inc Dear Aldermen,

NewBridge is the most important Agency on the NorthEast side of Madison when it comes to providing senior citizens like me with services that assist us in living our final years with dignity and purpose. From coordinating a multitude of public services, to offering socialization and learning activities, which studies have shown to reduce or prevent depression, I exhort you to provide additional funding to NewBridge, rather than cutting their budget by 44%.

My understanding is that this diversion of funds will help create funding to eight new additional organizations.

However, if the city cannot find funding to expand programs to new organizations, perhaps the city could provide free transportation via their city buses to anyone not residing on the NorthEast side, so they too can benefit of NewBridge's long standing and successful aging programs.

"Chipping away" at something that is working extremely well by diverting funds currently allocated to their budget does not sound like a good decision.

Please reconsider this proposal. You may even want to pay a visit to NewBridge to see how well the agency is run, and how thankful seniors are for such a haven.

Thank you,

Rita Cairns



**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); [board@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:board@madison.k12.wi.us)  
**Subject:** VoteNoMadison.com  
**Date:** Monday, October 7, 2024 10:23:10 AM  
**Attachments:** [cropped-vote-no-180x180.png](#)

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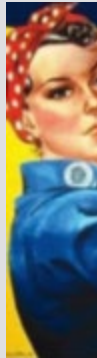
Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

**ACCORDING TO THE WISCONSIN STATE JOURNAL:** “Madison is becoming too expensive for many people to live here. Approving the city’s \$22 million request could make it harder for struggling people to afford a home or apartment. On top of that, the local school district is seeking additional money for buildings and operations this fall. Those referendums deserve scrutiny.”

*Press on the law BK below and learn the FACTS about Madison’s highest property taxes in Wisconsin. — Nino Amato, Sheri Carter, Betty Banks & David Mahoney,*

**On Nov. 5 th VOTE NO On Madison’s  
Ballot Referendums!**

[votenomadison.com](http://votenomadison.com)



Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**Subject:** IMPT - Madison & Dane Co. are standing at a pivotal moment in history & We as voters have the power to help shape our future!  
**Date:** Friday, October 11, 2024 12:15:21 PM

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*"Madison is becoming too expensive for many people to live here. Approving the city's \$22 million request could make it harder for struggling people to afford a home or apartment. On top of that, the local school district is seeking additional money for buildings and operations this fall. Those referendums deserve your scrutiny."* [Wisconsin State Journal](#)

The City of Madison is currently standing at a pivotal moment in history and we as voters have the power to help shape our city's future --when it comes to providing affordable housing opportunities for first time homebuyers, young professionals and working families - who want to live and work in Madison.

Unfortunately, Madison's cost of living for housing (homeownership and renting) is 19% higher than any city in Wisconsin and now our elected officials want to substantially increase Madison's property taxes on the November 5th ballot. Without questions, if the property-tax-increase referendums were to pass, they would make Madison's housing crisis even worse, while increasing the economic racial disparities among our citizens of color.

To learn how we can help shape Madison's quality of life for all of our residents and how best to cost-effectively manage the mayor's historic \$27 million-dollar structural budget deficit, [please click on the link below and get involved.](#)

The [VoteNoMadison.com](#) Advisory Group Co-Chairs are: former Dane Co. Sheriff, [David Mahoney](#), Former Madison Alder & City Council President [Sheri Carter](#), Former Madison Alder & Pres. of the WTC Board, [Nino Amato](#) and [Betty Banks](#), the 2024 recipient of Madison's Downtown Rotary Club Senior Service Award ([click on link below](#)).

**Take care and thank you for your consideration! -- Nino Amato**

**On Nov. 5 th VOTE NO On Madison's  
Ballot Referendums!**  
[votenomadison.com](http://votenomadison.com)



**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Please zero out ...  
**Date:** Thursday, October 10, 2024 11:17:23 AM

---

Alders,

The following email was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** davidblaska@icloud.com <davidblaska@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 10, 2024 8:03 AM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Please zero out ...

You don't often get email from [davidblaska@icloud.com](mailto:davidblaska@icloud.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

... The Police Monitor/Civilian Oversight Board.

## David Blaska

Madison, WI 53711  
608-575-3373  
[davidblaska@icloud.com](mailto:davidblaska@icloud.com)

Visit the **Blaska Policy Werkes** at [www.davidblaska.com](http://www.davidblaska.com)

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW:  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 9, 2024 4:12:54 PM

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Alders,

Following please find an email that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thank you,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

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**From:** Gary Gruenisen <[gruenisen@gmail.com](mailto:gruenisen@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 9, 2024 3:46 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:**

You don't often get email from [gruenisen@gmail.com](mailto:gruenisen@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

We oppose...

The new sidewalk on Hammersley road.

The new BRT.

Voting no on spending referendums.

Gary Gruenisen  
5810 Piping Rock Road  
Madison WI 53711  
608-445-4855  
[gruenisen@gmail.com](mailto:gruenisen@gmail.com)

**From:** [Carol Eunmi LEE](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Police Oversight  
**Date:** Friday, October 11, 2024 3:46:15 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from carollee@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

Back in 2010-2015, there were multiple police shootings of unarmed civilians per year. For instance, Paulie Heenan was drunk and shot and killed for taking a step forward. Tony Robinson was unarmed and shot in his own home. Then a mother called the police to stop her teenage daughter from killing herself. The police showed up and shot and killed her. These incidences were commonplace and were occurring right in my neighborhood. I am relieved that such incidents have become less common. While I respect the police and appreciate their efforts, EVERY institution needs oversight.

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama?

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000. This has caused commensurate large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers. Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments (such as community listening session resulting in a powerful report, negotiation of a memorandum of understanding for MPD data and records access, development of processes for receiving and investigating complaints, etc.), but these have not been publicized.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual

was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the well-being of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carol Lee  
915 East Dayton Street.

**From:** [KRISTIN MATHEWS](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restoration of funding for Civilian Oversight Board and Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Friday, October 11, 2024 9:22:02 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from imkrzy4mm@att.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

My name is Kristin Mathews. My life was deeply affected after the death of Tony Robinson in 2015. With all of the changes through the actions of the Ad Hoc committee and OIR recommendations, I feel we have made great strides in police accountability in Madison over the past nine plus years. The PCOB and OIM are critical pieces in moving forward with these steps and are just gaining momentum, with the complaint process at this time. Please take time to review the following requests regarding funding for these positions, as I feel that they are vital to a significant portion of the population in our City.

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future well-being of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000 for officer-involved killings that occurred between 2012 and 2015. This has caused large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was hired after twice recruiting nationally.
- A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
- A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
- A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
- A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD.
- A physical complaint form had recently been completed.



- A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
- Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
- The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
- Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
- Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally (by MPD themselves) are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves.

A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Kristin Mathews-Community Response Team and Board member of the Social Justice Center

**From:** [Quinn Mattsson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** My plea for police civilian oversight  
**Date:** Friday, October 11, 2024 9:34:42 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from quinnjmattsson@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders,

My name is Quinn Mattsson. I'm 26 years old and I've lived in Madison my entire life. I implore you to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB) by supporting an operating budget amendment. Police oversight bodies are the last place budget should be slashed, as they defend THE MOST crucial aspect of our society---democratic rule---by providing a check on the power of law enforcement.

In this email, I will not detail the unambiguous financial net benefit civilian oversight provides to Madison, as it avoids prevents costly investigations by dissuading high profile abuses of power. I will also not dive into the socio-economic disparities in policing in Madison.

Instead I will only stress the core of this issue: Many Madison residents do not trust police, and do not trust the governing bodies which provide them oversight. By defunding a civilian oversight board, YOU COURT DISTRUST, SOCIAL UNREST AND ILL HEALTH OF COMMUNITIES, in a way which cannot be assuaged or understated.

Please defy this trend of distrust in America, and give Madison faith in its governing institutions. Please preserve the police oversight bodies. I can't imagine a more crucial decision.

Thank you,

Quinn Mattsson

**From:** [Rachel Mortensen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fully Fund the Office of the Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Friday, October 11, 2024 6:28:01 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from rachelewm@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

The Office of the Independent Monitor must be fully funded. The upcoming referendum is a choice between two bad options, to eliminate the budget or cut it nearly by half. The Office must be fully funded in order to do the work it was created to do.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Mortensen

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Get rid of the Police Oversight Commission!  
**Date:** Friday, October 11, 2024 8:10:13 AM

---

Alders,

I'm forwarding along this message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Mark Porter <markporter2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 10, 2024 9:50 PM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Get rid of the Police Oversight Commission!

You don't often get email from [markporter2@gmail.com](mailto:markporter2@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

It's done nothing. It means nothing, It costs over a \$500k per year. Get. Rid. Of. It!

You're asking for more money yet you've put forward little in suggested cuts to existing services except those with the most impact on your tax paying residents. C'mon. Be real. Put forward something real.

mark.

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: \$22 Million city deficit  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 8, 2024 4:25:16 PM

---

Alders,

The following message was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thanks,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

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**From:** ryroryryry <ducati916yamahar1m@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 8, 2024 3:24 PM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** \$22 Million city deficit

You don't often get email from [ducati916yamahar1m@gmail.com](mailto:ducati916yamahar1m@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Spending \$10 million for the Affordable Housing Fund when you have thousands of illegal aliens competing for housing in your sanctuary city is excellent public policy. If you believe that I have a vaccine I'd like to sell ya.

**From:** [Jake Winkler](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** No cuts to the OIM budget!  
**Date:** Thursday, October 10, 2024 10:19:09 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from trappedinink@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

We've seen the mayor's proposed budget and alternate budget if the referendum fails. The first cuts the OIM budget nearly in half as it is poised to hear its first complaints, and the second eliminates its budget completely. This is the one structural change that came out of the 2020 protests, and we're going to hamstring it so it can't function? So we're going to pay lip service about the Race to Equity reports but then do nothing to prevent more bad news in the next one?

**From:** [Elizabeth Bynum Sorrell](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Funding for Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 8:42:04 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from liz.bynum@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for cuts or elimination.

This is an area where Madison is leading in the nation, and we're seeing real benefits. Now is not the time to cut back on funding to these important areas of work.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Bynum Sorrell



**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] budget  
**Date:** Thursday, October 17, 2024 9:32:06 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Thursday, October 17, 2024 – 9:29am

Jerry Darda

15 Sturbridge Circle

Madison, Wisconsin. 53717 Yes, by email. [jerryxdarda@gmail.com](mailto:jerryxdarda@gmail.com) All Alders budget Many thanks to all alders especially John Guequierre for your combined tireless efforts in both developing and communicating a budget which has to be a thankless job. I participated in John's session last night and apologize if I came on too strong and offended anyone. I appreciate that you have a thankless job. I'll try to briefly list my concerns:

1) prioritize cuts and spending. Safety has to be number one, that is police and fire protection come first. NO CUTS HERE.

2) look hard at gutting the CDD budget. this is a tough place to negotiate but lot of this stuff should be done by religious organizations and private funds. Frankly a lot of it is touch feely junk and a lot of these groups are poorly managed and not well monitored--see freedom inc. and urban triage.

3) the fact that you haven't completely eliminated the police oversight committee has hurt your credibility with reasonable people. In our Wexford neighborhood I haven't met one person who supports this do nothing group. last night Chief Barnes highlighted that our police department is the measuring stick for quality nationally. This is true. Barnes is great as is Carbon, thus oversight is a waste of money.

4) If this referendum passes, and you continue with, in my opinion an excessive CDD budget, as a housing provider, I don't want to hear any more complaints from the council about affordable housing in Madison, because we won't have any in the private sector.

**From:** [Madeline Doon](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Finance Committee 10/14/2024 - Written Comment  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 4:07:59 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from doon.madeline@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I urge you to amend the operating budget and fully fund the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These vital oversight bodies, hard-won victories of the 2020 protests, are essential for a just and equitable Madison.

The PCOB and OIM are national models for civilian oversight, even lauded by Barack Obama. They protect our city by reducing civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against the MPD, which have exceeded \$12.5 million since 2015.

Despite their significant impact, these entities have operated efficiently, spending only \$411,000 since 2020. They've achieved remarkable progress in community outreach, data analysis planning, complaint process development, and collaboration with MPD.

The limitations in budget have made it challenging to make progress and it requires time to see the results of this program. Seeing how some criticize these boards for not doing enough is unfair to the fact that change takes time. The PCOB and OIM are critical to this change. Data is critical to this change.

Defunding the OIM and PCOB undermines the voices of marginalized communities who often distrust internal police investigations. These bodies provide a crucial bridge for those seeking accountability and transparency.

Madison still faces stark racial disparities in policing. The OIM's data analysis is critical to understanding and addressing these disparities, ultimately creating a safer and more just city for all.

Please stand on the right side of history and ensure the continued success of the OIM and PCOB.

Best,

Madeline Doon  
Madison, WI 53718  
[doon.madeline@gmail.com](mailto:doon.madeline@gmail.com)

**From:** [Michael Gennaco](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in Support of Continued Civilian Police Oversight  
**Date:** Friday, October 11, 2024 6:58:47 PM  
**Attachments:** [Madison Letter in Support of Oversight.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from michael.gennaco@oirgroup.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders and Mayor,

Please find attached a letter espousing support for continued police oversight in Madison.

Mike Gennaco, OIR Group



October 11, 2024

City Alders  
Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway  
Madison, WI

Re: Letter in Support of Continued Independent Oversight in Madison

Via Electronic Transmission

Dear Alders and Mayor Rhodes-Conway:

As some of you may recall, in 2017, we were tasked with conducting an independent review of the Madison, WI Police Department ("MPD"). That year-long review resulted in numerous findings and recommendations intended to improve the functioning of MPD. One of our recommendations that formed one of the lynch pins of our report was a call for independent police oversight of the MPD. We noted that such oversight is an effective way in which civilians can have an influential voice in shaping how police serve its communities. Meaningful oversight has the potential to increase accountability and public confidence by adding a layer of outside scrutiny and input.

We recommended that Madison adopt a "hybrid" model of oversight, with a professional police auditor's office providing consistent and knowledgeable "boots on the ground" review and a civilian body that is representative of and accessible to the community at a grassroots level. Our report came on the heels of former President Obama's Task Force Report on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing in which one of the critical pillars for reform included a call for independent police oversight in all communities. And since our report, the George Floyd murder has galvanized many jurisdictions toward creating police oversight as one way to increase trust and confidence in policing. As a result, an increasing number of jurisdictions now have oversight that never did and those that have had oversight continue to improve their oversight models.

It is my understanding that while Madison has moved forward with an Independent Police Auditor and Police Civilian Oversight Board, both entities have faced some growing pains in their initial months of operation. Such circumstances are understandable when there is such a paradigm shift, particularly in a community where civic engagement is at a

particularly high level with diversity of opinion. And while there are never enough civic resources to satisfy the various needs of a city, the funds dedicated to a program fostered to engender trust and transparency of Madison's public safety responsibilities are resources well spent. In this time of heightened conflict at the global, national, and local levels, the continued efforts to "get oversight right" should be encouraged and fostered by City leadership.

I would be happy to respond to any questions about our work in Madison and our support for oversight in the City.

Best regards,

//Michael Gennaco, OIR Group//

**From:** [Debbie Griffin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison police civilian oversight board  
**Date:** Sunday, October 13, 2024 4:28:06 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from griffind19@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am a district 12 constituent and I strongly support continued funding for the Madison Police Civilian Oversight Board and Independent Monitoring. There must be a transparency and accountability system in place for those in positions of authority, especially for those who carry weapons that can end a life. I ask that you all vote for continued funding as well.

Thank you,

Debbie Griffin

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Amelia Hansen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Finance Committee](#)  
**Subject:** Finance Committee: Oppose Agenda Item 17  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 5:44:15 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from amhansen97@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000. This has caused commensurate large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was

developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the



other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Amelia Hansen  
18 S Bedford St  
Madison, WI 53703

--

Amelia Hansen  
(she/her)

There is a genocide of Palestinians happening right now.  
From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.

**From:** [Steve Herrick](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restoration of funding for Civilian Oversight Board and Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:27:08 PM

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You don't often get email from [estebandido@gmail.com](mailto:estebandido@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.**

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future well-being of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000 for officer-involved killings that occurred between 2012 and 2015. This has caused large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was hired after twice recruiting nationally.
- A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
- A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
- A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
- A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD.
- A physical complaint form had recently been completed.
- A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
- Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
- The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
- Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
- Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand

accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally (by MPD themselves) are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves.

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Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Steve Herrick

--

Steve Herrick

"Things should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler.

— Einstein

**From:** [Sharon Kilfoy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Shadayra Kilfoy-Flores](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Fate of the PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 10:24:46 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sharon@willyart.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear City of Madison Alderpersons,

I am writing to you to ask you to do whatever it takes to safeguard the continuation of the Police Civilian Oversight Board at it's current level of funding.

My family was greatly affected by the killing of Tony Robinson a block from the home in which my children grew up – the home in which I still live. Our family knew the Robinson family, my daughters having gone to East High School with Tony's mother, and my granddaughter having gone to Wil-Mar summer camp with Tony. I organized a mural project behind the Social Justice Center in memory of Tony and other neighborhood young people who lost their lives to violence. The mural was a celebration of lives lost by neighbors too young to have died. The work was difficult. It was grief work facilitated by a painted mural, mosaic murals and a pavement labyrinth mural. At times I felt that I had asked too much of the artists involved – including my daughter Shadayra, who lead the mosaics – as they worked alongside grieving family members who had lost loved ones. No other project I have organized taught me as much about the healing power of art as this one.

Out of the work that my daughter, Shadayra Kilfoy-Flores, did on the Social Justice Center LOVED AND MISSED EVERYDAY Mural Project, grew her passion, understanding, and involvement in the Police Civilian Oversight Board. If you recall, the night Tony Robinson was killed, Chris Taylor was at the gas station right in front of the house where Tony was shot. Changing the law that had allowed police officers in Wisconsin to oversee themselves when they killed civilians became personal for her. Once she got that state law changed, it fell on the city of Madison to implement the new law here.

My daughter has been involved in the implementation of the PCOB from the beginning. I can't tell you how many times we have had conversations in which I have heard of incidents in which the city was, at the least, not helpful with the process. I began to see how the city was impeding the process – whether intentionally or unintentionally. Just one example – setting up a board with a majority of members from the minority community, which is who would be representative of those who have the most dealings with the police, IS VERY DIFFERENT, from, say, the Landmarks Commission, most members of which are white, economically secure, and have time on their hands to donate. It became obvious that NO THOUGHT was given to how members of minority communities would be able to donate their time, most not having the benefit of institutional wealth. It just went on from here – I can give you many more examples of the city's ineptitude in helping to set up this board, to the point at which I began to suspect that the city really wanted to have the PCOB FAIL, and told my daughter point-blank, that it would be in the city's interest for the PCOB to FAIL and she should keep this in mind whenever dealing with the city. I hate to be such a pessimist but pitting the PCOB

against COMMUNITY SERVICES AT THE LIBRARY - are you kidding me? The city is continuing to prove my point. And you, council members, why are you approving the construction of so many ugly monstrosities - effectively selling the soul of Madison to the highest bidders – if not to afford services such as the PCOB and COMMUNITY SERVICES AT THE LIBRARY – BOTH!!!!

In conclusion, please, I beg you, do whatever it takes to safeguard the PCOB. I urge you to pay even better attention to making sure that the people on the board have the tools they need to be successful. If we really want to be a community that is inclusive and fair, we need to do much better for our communities of color. Ensuring the success of the PCOB is a step in the right direction for Madison, and for you as stewards, who have our trust.

Thank you

**Sharon Kilfoy**

Director

Williamson St Art Center

1020 Williamson St

Madison, WI 53703

608-658-3736

[www.willyart.net](http://www.willyart.net)

**From:** [Brian Lavendel](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Police Oversight and Office of the Independent Police Monitor  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 16, 2024 8:25:35 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from blavendel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor and City Council,

I was distressed to learn of the proposal to cut funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Police Monitor.

First, let me say that I understand that the city is facing some serious budget cutbacks and that we need to make some difficult decisions about where to spend and where to cut. However, the Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Police Monitor grew out of the bloodshed, pain, and trauma experienced by members of our community as a way to redress those harms and to alleviate future harm.

As I see it, the Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Police Monitor were commitments on the part of the city made in good faith to all residents of Madison, but especially to those who are most marginalized and most vulnerable. These two bodies can offer crucial safeguards to help reduce or prevent potential harm or abuse.

I believe we need to follow through on that and I strongly urge the Mayor and the City Council to fully fund the Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Police Monitor as originally agreed.

In closing, I do not see this as a discretionary item. I see it as honoring a commitment to ensure that police practices are more transparent and that we begin to restore--through strong civilian oversight--community confidence and trust in the Madison Police Department.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours in Community,  
Brian Lavendel

Brian Lavendel PhD • He pronouns • +1-608-301-5060 • 2302 Center Avenue • Madison, Wisconsin, USA  
• 53704 • *Teejop* (Four Lakes), ancestral lands of the Ho-Chunk Nation

**From:** [Daniel Levitin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:26:05 PM

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You don't often get email from dnlevitin@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an amendment to the upcoming Madison budget to fund the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). I see the OIM and PCOB as crucial for the safety of the city, and as making financial sense. They should be treated the same as other city departments, rather than being singled out for specific cuts. Madison's PCOB and OIM are on the cutting edge of community-control mechanisms in the country, and other cities look to us as a model.

Purely on a financial side, OIM and PCOB make sense, by making it less likely that the city has to settle costly lawsuits. In just the last 10 years, we have spent over \$12M in settlements. Getting these costs under control saves us money as taxpayers.

But additionally, the OIM and PCOB are necessary to protect madisonians from violations of our civil rights and/or physical harm. Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that

experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most importantly, this concerns the safety of marginalized communities. Their safety is more important than saving pennies in the budget.

Sincerely,

**Daniel Levitin**



**From:** [Lim, Sarah](#)  
**To:** [Mayor](#); [County.Executive@danecounty.gov](mailto:County.Executive@danecounty.gov); [All Alders](#); [county\\_board\\_recipients@countyofdane.com](mailto:county_board_recipients@countyofdane.com)  
**Subject:** 2024 Budget Recommendation from the City County Homeless Issues Committee  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 11:34:21 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[CCHIC budget recommendation II.pdf](#)

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Dear Members of the City of Madison Common Council, Dane County Board of Supervisors, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, and County Executive Jamie Kuhn,

I am reaching out to you in my capacity as a staff member of the City County Homeless Issues Committee.

Attached, you will find a memo from the City County Homeless Issues Committee. The memo outlines the **2025 city and county budget recommendation, specifically for supporting the Lived Experience Council (LEC)**, which received approval from the committee members present during our meeting on October 7th.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sarah Lim

Bcc: City County Homeless Issues Committee members and staff

**OUR MADISON**  
INCLUSIVE, INNOVATIVE & THRIVING

---

{ she | her | hers }

**Sarah Lim** | Community Development Specialist



*Department of Planning and Community & Economic Development*

**Community Development Division**

Madison Municipal Building | Suite 300

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard | Madison, Wisconsin 53703-3348

**Mail** P.O. Box 2627 | Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2627

**Tel** 608 261 9148 | **Fax** 608 261 9661

**Email** [slim@cityofmadison.com](mailto:slim@cityofmadison.com) | **Web** [cityofmadison.com/cdd](http://cityofmadison.com/cdd)

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## **CITY COUNTY HOMELESS ISSUES COMMITTEE**

Linda Ketcham & Takisha Jordan, Co-Chairs



Date: October 14, 2024

To: City of Madison Common Council, Dane County Board of Supervisors, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway, County Executive Jamie Kuhn

From: The City County Homeless Issues Committee

Re: City County Homeless Issues Committee 2025 Budget Recommendations

We, the members of the City County Homeless Issues Committee, have shared with you our recommendations for the 2025 City and County budget following our committee meeting discussion on August 5. The recommendation included maintaining financial support for homeless services and address key priorities such as shelter, diversion and prevention, family housing options, affordable housing development, regional housing strategy and transportation solutions.

During our meeting on October 7, we received updates from City and County staff regarding the budget process. Following the discussion, the members present voted unanimously to make the following request to you:

We ask that you consider allocating \$20,000 each from the City and County's operating budgets—totaling \$40,000—to support the Homeless Services Consortium of Madison/Dane County's Lived Experience Council (LEC) through an amendment process.

The LEC is a pivotal entity composed of individuals with firsthand experience of homelessness. Their insights are invaluable to service providers and policymakers as we strive to improve our community's response to homelessness. Dane Forward, A Five-Year Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness (2024-2029), identifies sharing decision-making power with those with lived experience as one of the key strategies.

We believe it is essential for LEC members to be compensated for their time and contributions. Previously, the LEC received support from federal COVID funds through the City of Madison, which expired in July 2023. Unfortunately, due to limited funding this year, many members have not been compensated. While some funds will be available through the City's CoC Planning Grant in 2025, they will not be enough to cover all of the LEC's planned activities. The requested funds will be used to provide stipends to LEC members who engage in community discussions about our homeless services system and housing programs.

We urge you to recognize the critical role of the LEC and allocate the necessary funds to sustain their essential contributions to our community.

Thank you for considering this important request.

CC: City County Homeless Issues Committee Members and Staff

**From:** [Maddie Loeffler](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Preserve Funding for OIM + PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:26:15 PM

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You don't often get email from madelyn0312@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000. This has caused commensurate large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is

also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Maddie

District 4

**From:** [Mack McKellips](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** In opposition of the Executive Operating Budget (Restore the PCOB)  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:26:00 PM

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You don't often get email from mackmckellips1@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

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Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of

powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

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OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

**Matthew McKellips**  
**Madison Resident**

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Office of the Independent Monitor/Police and Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 3:07:05 PM

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Alders,

I'm forwarding along the following email that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thanks,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Amy Miller <[ajmille2@uwalumni.com](mailto:ajmille2@uwalumni.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 14, 2024 2:28 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Office of the Independent Monitor/Police and Civilian Oversight Board

You don't often get email from [ajmille2@uwalumni.com](mailto:ajmille2@uwalumni.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Members of the Common Council,

My name is Amy Miller and I helped found the Community Response Team (CRT) after the killing of Paul Heenan, the unarmed man who was killed in 2012 by MPD Officer Steve Heimsness on S. Baldwin St. His killing reminded me of a personal incident many years before, and the tragedy of Paul's death compelled me to take action. During this time, it became clear that the Police and Fire Commission (PFC) proved inadequate to take action against Heimsness for this senseless death.

For this reason, we have spent the past decade advocating for an independent oversight and investigative mechanism of the police. What we learned from looking into the history of our own police and fire commission and civilian oversight mechanisms around the country is that to be effective and equitable to the

complainants, the board needed to be made up of people who were diverse in identity, economic background and experience in their interactions with law enforcement.

I am writing to request that, no matter what happens with the referendum, you safeguard and maintain the already small budget of the Police and Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB) and Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM). I am urging you to acknowledge the tremendous work this past group has done to build out the department – the first of its kind in Madison and Wisconsin – and to also take into consideration that they did this uncharted work through the pandemic and other unforeseen circumstances which caused unavoidable delays in their ability to hire staff and start taking complaints.

Since they were created in 2020, during a pandemic, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was finally hired after twice recruiting nationally.
- A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
- A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
- A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
- A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD.



- A physical complaint form had recently been completed.
- A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
- Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
- The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
- Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
- Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

This is only phase one of the OIM and PCOB and, without a doubt, there have been missteps and a learning curve. For example, the city only followed through on giving the OIM an office last Thursday. But what new department doesn't have problems? Why is this group being unfairly targeted when they are doing what no other city has done in this state and accomplished a significant number of their promises in the first term?

The PCOB and OIM have completed phase one of building out the department, procedures and processes. Much has been learned along the way. Let them open shop, fully funded and with the assistance they need to function properly. To cut funding or

positions in the department now or to take away their independence would set the department on a course of guaranteed failure and that isn't fair to Madison residents who deserve an accessible and independent process to seek accountability when they feel they've been wronged by their police department.

Please vote for a budget amendment that fully restores the funding and positions of the OIM and PCOB.

Sincerely,  
Amy Miller

**From:** [Kamran Mirza](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item #17  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 4:32:58 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from kamirza23@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I am proud of this city for having a Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor. It is such an amazing thing to see! It saves the city money, we've already had to pay \$12,500,000 since 2015 settling lawsuits which this board helps prevent. It has led to fewer shootings of unarmed people and overall makes the community feel safer.

I am glad this city has developed these programs and hope to see them continued. Make Madison proud, help us live up to our values!

Please, protect the Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor.

Sincerely,  
Kamran Mirza

**From:** [Bill Newman](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Don't allow funding for the PCOB and OIM to be removed  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 4:29:22 PM

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You don't often get email from newmanwj@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for cuts or elimination.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if the growth was at time slow for this new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally.
- A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
- A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
- A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
- A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed.
- A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
- Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
- The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
- Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them.

The OIM and PCOB bring value to people in the community, particularly people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized

communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it and has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

The OIM and PCOB can and will, if funded, become critical pieces of helping to address one of the many areas of continued racial disparity in Madison. Please don't allow the funding to be pulled because this vital new department has, as can be expected, been slow to start but is now ready to make a difference in our community.

Sincerely,

Bill Newman

2037 Rutledge St

Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [MaryJane Niazi](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Office of Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board amendment  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:26:21 PM

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You don't often get email from mjbaxter4@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000. This has caused commensurate large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of

powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

**MaryJane Baxter Niazi**

**From:** [Amy Owen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** requesting an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 11:32:11 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from amydownen@hushmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear City of Madison Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial for financial security and community trust, and provide an essential service: a genuine accountability process and structure just like all other municipal bodies and expenditures must have. These models that were built over many years of community collaboration are valuable and must be preserved and funded. Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000. This has caused commensurate large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers. When residents have questions and tragedies occur, we want the OIM and PCOB in place to provide answers and an accountability process, not responses from the streets because frustration is high and no justice seems possible. Please preserve the hope that the OIM and PCOB can provide.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement



officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians. OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

I am concerned to learn that just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it, and has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Please support and preserve funding for both the OIM and the PCOB in the city budget, and support a budget for both of these that allows each to truly and fully accomplish their missions.

Thank you,

Amy Owen  
3129 Buena Vista Street  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Mike Panten](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Close IPC and COB  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 12:19:58 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from panten@sbcglobal.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Alders and Mayor,

I'm writing to voice my opinion that both the Office of the Independent Police Monitor, and the Civilian Oversight Board be unfunded and eliminated. As they have shown, they are unproductive offices, and have shown to be unaccountable and less than transparent in their processes and communications. In this Budget crunch, I think ALL taxpayer funded city offices, committees, boards, need to show responsible use of taxpayer funds and be accountable for spending. These entities have nothing to show but problems since their inception. Additionally, they offer already existing services... redundant. In my opinion, these can be, and should be, at the top of the list of budgetary savings, and be eliminated. Thank you,

Mike Panten  
601 S Sprecher Rd  
Madison WI 53718

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Please support funding the PCOB and OIM  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 16, 2024 4:00:11 PM

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Alders,

Following please find a message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Stephanie Rearick <[steph@stephanierearick.com](mailto:steph@stephanierearick.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 2:04 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Please support funding the PCOB and OIM

You don't often get email from [steph@stephanierearick.com](mailto:steph@stephanierearick.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear alders,

I'm writing to request that you make a strong defense of continuing full funding for Madison's Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor.

As you know, these ordinances were long fought for and hard-won, coming on the heels of too many police shootings of civilians. They are ground-breaking and should serve as a model for other cities around the US.

We are fortunate to have had no police shooting of unarmed civilians since the funding of these bodies. I appreciate the role of Chief Shon Barnes in overseeing positive changes in MPD. And the point of an institutionalized body such as the PCOB is to ensure that we as a community can help steer policing toward healthier practices no matter who we have as chief.

Please help to ensure that these bodies are funded and given all the support they need to develop into their full potential, creating a healthier and more public-safety focused relationship between police and the civilians they serve and protect.

Please vote for a budget amendment that fully restores the funding and positions of the

OIM and PCOB.

Thank you for your consideration,

Stephanie Rearick  
1340 E. Wilson St.  
Madison WI 53703

—

Stephanie Rearick  
[steph@stephanierearick.com](mailto:steph@stephanierearick.com)  
+1 (608) 443-8229

**From:** [Megan Reynolds](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** RESTORE FUNDING TO PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:26:27 PM

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You don't often get email from mreynolds3070@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000. This has caused commensurate large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison,

particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Megan Reynolds

**From:** [Kim I. Richman](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** PCOB elimination  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 7:55:43 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders, Madam Mayor,

As a taxpayer I find it very disturbing and a complete waste of funds (at over \$500,000 annually) that the Police Civilian Oversight Board continues to exist.  
Since 2020, they've been a solution in search of a problem and after almost 4 years they have yet to create a complaint process and are no further along today.  
With the \$22 million deficit, and departments being asked to cut their budgets (including essential services like first responders), I don't understand how this board's existence can be justified.

***Who is overseeing the Oversight Board?***

- Ironically, the most recent chair of the board is currently facing an ethics complaint for allegedly interfering with the arrest of her daughter, and that wasn't their first rodeo.
- Infighting among members - At one point, they couldn't even agree on a chair person.
- There have been two separate lawsuits filed against the board for discrimination.
- Almost 3 years ago, when Dylan Brogan was at the Isthmus, he reported, ***"It was a difficult first year for Madison's Police Civilian Oversight Board."***  
[https://isthmus.com/news/news/rocky-start/?fbclid=IwY2xjawF6jMlleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHSWMa8\\_9EJ1m\\_oXXq3I-e165QyDAYPLFf9HM4Uc1PcYIdx7B23FZR5QN2Q\\_aem\\_2-RkC2FzjWVdI-DeMypsgg](https://isthmus.com/news/news/rocky-start/?fbclid=IwY2xjawF6jMlleHRuA2FlbQIxMAABHSWMa8_9EJ1m_oXXq3I-e165QyDAYPLFf9HM4Uc1PcYIdx7B23FZR5QN2Q_aem_2-RkC2FzjWVdI-DeMypsgg)
- A one-time honorarium for tens of thousands of dollars was requested; for doing nothing?
- There have been PCOB meetings canceled because of a lack of quorum; where's the commitment?

Everybody knows the city is looking for ways to cut or eliminate. There is clear bipartisan support to eliminate the PCOB because of their incompetence.  
Eliminate the PCOB.

Thank you,

Kim Richman  
#  
District 16  
Madison

Sent with [Proton Mail](#) Encrypted Email.

**From:** [Allen Rickey](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fyi  
**Date:** Saturday, October 12, 2024 8:45:29 AM

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Lobbying efforts

<https://www.77squaremiles.com/post/the-value-of-long-term-lobbying-lessons-from-milwaukee-for-madison>

Al Rickey



**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [Finance Committee](#); [Tishler, Bill](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:30:22 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing in response to the push by some public commenters at Monday's Finance Committee meeting to restore full funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB).

I am not opposed to police oversight, in fact I think it's important. But this group has nothing to show for all the money that has been spent. Four years later, there is still no process by which to submit a complaint. Not one single complaint has been submitted, and zero investigations have taken place. Ironically the first complaint the Board got to deal with was the Chair of the Committee having an ethics complaint filed against her for abusing her power. Apparently she got a 90-day extension on her term anyway.

Many meetings, both full board meetings and subcommittee meetings, were canceled due to lack of quorum.

Despite many members timing out on Sept. 30, they had no replacements selected to take their places.

The organizations slated with nominating candidates didn't nominate candidates.

A member serving as Alternate was never able to become a voting member due to there always being a shortage of Board members. The Alternate (who actually showed up to the meetings) didn't get a vote, but she was needed to make quorum.

As one who has attended nearly every meeting and subcommittee meeting, I can tell you that the meetings reminded me of the movie Groundhog Day. It was basically a recap of the same agenda as the week, or month, before. Why? Because little to no progress had been made from the meeting before.

As I said, police oversight is very important to me. But so is fiscal responsibility, especially in times of a major structural deficit like we have now. When the Board shirks its statutory duties over and over (lack of complaint process, no timely reviews of the Police Chief and Independent Monitor) and cannot appropriately staff the Board despite being the only Board to award stipends, it's time to reallocate these funds.

I am in favor of cutting the entire OIM and PCOB and possibly trying again in the future, with a process that is not made to fail and at a time when the City's budget can afford it. Until that time, we have plenty of oversight between the Police and Fire Commission, MPD's Office of Professional Standards and Internal Affairs, the Public Safety Review Committee, the Mayor, and members of the Common Council.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

**From:** [Rachel Rovinsky](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item #17 for Finance Committee meeting on 10/14/2024 4:30 PM  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 4:29:19 PM

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You don't often get email from rachirovinsky828@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am a PhD student at UW-Madison writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

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Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison,

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But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Rachel Rovinsky  
746 W Main St  
Apt 306

Madison, WI 53715

**From:** [Nathan Royko Maurer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please Support the Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB) and the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM)  
**Date:** Sunday, October 13, 2024 6:57:32 PM

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Dear Members of the Common Council and Mayor Rhodes-Conway,

My name is Nathan Royko Maurer, a former resident who cherishes Madison, the city where I grew up, where I still work and which I hold dear. I was a friend and roommate of Paul Heenan, an unarmed Madisonian tragically killed in 2012 by rogue MPD officer Steven Heimsness in our front yard. Unbelievably, just two and a half years later, another family friend, Tony Robinson, also unarmed, was killed by MPD officer Matt Kenny only two blocks from where Paulie died.

These controversial killings fractured the city and caused immeasurable suffering for those family, friends and community members affected. They were also the spark that inspired this city to create one of the most progressive and visionary police oversight mechanisms in the nation.

Because of this, I am writing to urge you to continue supporting the Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB) and the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM). These entities are not only crucial for fostering trust and accountability within our community but also represent a significant financial safeguard for the city.

**Financial Prudence and Savings:** The collective cost of lawsuits against the Madison Police Department has exceeded \$12.5 million. Notable settlements include:

- Paul Heenan: Settlement amount \$2,300,000; total claim cost \$2,771,476
- Ashley DiPiazza: Settlement amount \$4,250,000; total claim cost \$4,692,085
- Tony Robinson: Settlement amount \$3,350,000; total claim cost \$3,953,767
- Clash-Miller excessive force suit (2022): Settlement amount \$1,100,000

In stark contrast, the total expenditure on the PCOB and OIM from 2020 through September 11, 2024, has been a mere \$411,000. This minimal investment has already yielded substantial benefits, including the hiring of key personnel, establishing a complaint process, and creating a memorandum of understanding with the MPD for data access. Misunderstandings about the budget should be clarified: the unspent

budgeted amounts have been returned to the city's general fund each year.

**Community Impact and Trust Building:** The PCOB and OIM play a vital role in bridging the gap between the police and the community, especially for those who are uncomfortable filing complaints directly with the police department. This mechanism is essential for restoring and maintaining trust, particularly among marginalized communities who often feel alienated and ignored. The diverse composition of the PCOB, the most diverse in the country, underscores its commitment to representing all segments of our community.

**Accomplishments and Forward-Looking Vision:** Despite a challenging start, the PCOB and OIM have made significant strides. They have hired an Independent Monitor, a program manager, and are on the brink of hiring a data analyst. They have begun to develop a detailed data analysis plan, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, and have created a complaint process that's all but ready to be released with assistance from the city IT staff. Their efforts have already correlated to a decrease in police shootings, particularly fatal shootings of unarmed residents, by promising to hold officers accountable and influencing policy and training decisions.

**Ongoing and Future Benefits:** The OIM and PCOB are instrumental in enacting recommendations from the OIR review and the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee. OIR, the firm retained to conduct a top-to-bottom review of MPD, emphasized the crucial importance of the OIM and PCOB in ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations are implemented and sustained. The Ad Hoc Committee report also highlighted the creation of an independent monitor and civilian review body as their top recommendation, essential for the successful implementation of all other recommendations.

Their continued analysis and advocacy are crucial for addressing racial disparities in policing outcomes, which remain among the highest in the nation. The presence of a civilian oversight agency with broad authority has been shown to reduce these disparities and improve overall policing outcomes.

**Community Support and Engagement:** Partner community organizations are actively recruiting new nominees for the PCOB, ensuring ongoing representation and engagement from Madison's most marginalized communities. The accomplishments of the PCOB and OIM, including national recruitment, community engagement, and policy recommendations, demonstrate their effectiveness and potential for future impact.

In conclusion, the PCOB and OIM are essential for both financial prudence and community trust. Their continued support and funding are vital for maintaining

accountability, reducing racial disparities, and fostering a safer, more inclusive Madison.

Thank you for your attention and continued support.

Sincerely,

Nathan Royko Maurer



**From:** [Dahlia Saba](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fund the OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 4:44:36 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from dahlia.saba@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

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Sincerely,

Dahlia Saba

**From:** [Brenda Salvo](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Community Oversight of Police Must Continue!!  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 4:42:08 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [brenda.salvo@gmail.com](mailto:brenda.salvo@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Alders,

I am a long time resident of Madison and am writing to urge you to fully fund the community oversight of MPD. Please take action to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB).

Community accountability is a core component of a democratic society, and Madison has been a leader in our country to ensure that the police are held accountable by the people they are sworn to protect. It is essential that we do everything we can to ensure that this continues.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss further and ask any questions you may have. This is not the year to lesson our local democratic protections or reduce our ability to keep each other safe.

-Brenda

--

Brenda Salvo  
*She, Her, Hers*

BLACK LIVES MATTER. Hold me accountable.

**From:** [Sami Schalk](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore funding  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 4:13:03 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sami.schalk@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear all,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments especially since these came about from activist and community demands for accountability. As someone recently harmed by police violence, it's important to at to me that MPD continue to have independent monitoring.

Dr. Sami Schalk  
District 9

**From:** [Molly Vande Slunt](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Finance committee 10/14/24 agenda item 17  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:25:51 PM

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You don't often get email from mollyvandeslunt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Molly Vande Slunt

**From:** [Steve Verburg](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please don't hamstring OIM / PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 8:17:25 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from stverburg@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Members of the Finance Committee:

I'm writing to urge you to reject the mayor's proposal to strip the Office of Independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board of the tools they need.

OIM/PCOB are the city's only ongoing budget expenditure that could plausibly begin to remedy the Madison Police Department's racist arrest practices, which result in Black people being 10 times as likely to be arrested as white people.

The Common Council spends more millions of dollars annually to fund MPD's reprehensible record than on any other city operation. Now the modest budget of the OIM/PCOB threatens to constrain Madison's harmful policing operation. Don't cut it.

Reject the proposal to cut the OIM/PCOB.

Instead, reduce the funding for the Madison Police Department. Every penny that goes to MPD is a penny spent on racist arrest practices that ruin lives.

Meanwhile, the bloated Madison Police Department budget year after year drains resources from efforts that actually reduce crime by improving living conditions — housing, food, health care and employment. Policing is expensive and ineffective at reducing crime. And, in Madison, even moreso than in the rest of the country, policing worsens inequality through extreme racial bias in arrests and prosecutions.

As you know and have known for years, Madison has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes among U.S. cities. It is crucial to better understand these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst — which the proposed budget would eliminate.

Research shows that civilian police oversight agencies reduce the unwarranted racial disparities in arrests on charges such as disorderly conduct, and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that reviewed all MPD operations, noted the crucial importance of the OIM/PCOB for implementing OIR recommendations and those of the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee. Very few of those recommendations have been implemented so far. Progress demanded by the public and promised by Madison

elected officials won't be accomplished without the analysis and advocacy of the OIM/PCOB.

The OIM/PCOB has hired an Independent Monitor, has hired a program manager (who is engaged with NGOs and the community), and is hiring a data analyst. The OIM/PCOB is negotiating and creating a memorandum of understanding with MPD for data and records access, creating a complaint process and complaint form, and meeting with Madison residents.

Don't cut this highly promising agency before it can fulfill its potential for good in Madison.

Reject the proposed cuts to the Office of Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board.

Thank you for considering this issue.

Sincerely,

Steve Verburg  
Wendy Lane  
Madison, Wisconsin  
608-212-9726



**From:** [Kathy Viets](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Police Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Sunday, October 13, 2024 2:08:56 PM

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Hello All,

With talk of the potential budget cuts, one positive outcome was the proposed elimination of the Police Civilian Oversight Board.

As you all know, this Board has been ineffective and, in my opinion, a complete waste of taxpayer money. Its creation was unnecessary, in the first place.

I was disappointed to hear that there is the possibility that this Board may continue to be funded.

If we, as a city, continue down the path we've been on, it's a matter of time before we become another San Francisco, Portland or Burlington .

Please try to save our City, before it can't be saved!

Respectfully,

Kathy Viets

**From:** [Valerie Walowit](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fund OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 12:28:51 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [vwalowit@gmail.com](mailto:vwalowit@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Sincerely,

Val Walowit

**From:** [Diana Wheeler](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore full funding for the OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, October 14, 2024 8:04:51 AM

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You don't often get email from dianagreene11@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000. This has caused commensurate large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. An Independent Monitor was hired after recruiting nationally. A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large. A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired. A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct. A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD, and a physical complaint form had recently been completed. A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access. Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation. The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S. Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks. Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide

variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the Mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Diana Wheeler  
221 Division Street

**From:** [cedar worth](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore full funding for the OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 15, 2024 4:26:11 PM

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You don't often get email from spiritrootart@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

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Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.



Sincerely,  
Cedar Worth

From: [Nino Amato](#)  
To: [Ali Alders](#)  
Cc: [Mayor](#)  
Subject: Referendum Social Media Ad had over 7,723 views!  
Date: Friday, October 18, 2024 6:57:12 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

**On Or Before Nov. 5th  
VOTE NO  
On The Referendums!**

**I'm  
Voting  
NO New  
Taxes!**



**VoteNoMadison.com**



Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Nino Amato](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** The History Why To Vote No.  
**Date:** Monday, October 21, 2024 8:08:18 AM

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## A HISTORY WHY TO VOTE "NO"

Former Mayor Paul Soglin 10-18-24

- 2011 Scott Walker becomes Governor of Wisconsin
- 2011 Scott Walker introduces, Republican legislature adopts Act 10. Public employee unions are crushed, local municipalities are limited on raising property taxes (levy limits), state revenues to local governments are constrained. Instead of cutting public employee wages, Walker nullifies labor contract provisions and requires workers to make contributions to health insurance and pensions.
- 2011 Walker and the legislature terminate state laws that allow cities (except for Milwaukee) to establish Regional Transit Authorities.
- 2011 Paul Soglin becomes mayor of Madison and learns from the Finance Department that the city council and previous mayor are using borrowed money and one time revenues to finance the city's operating budget.
- 2012-19 While previous state governments fully or nearly funded the Payments for Municipal Services account, for which Madison received the most of Wisconsin cities, Walker allows the account to be cut in half.
- 2012-19 Soglin ends practice of using borrowed and one time funds for the operating budget antagonizing the spendthrifts on the city council. He further angers them by opposing the \$100 million they add to city budgets over the eight years driving up the debt and limiting the city's ability to finance social and economic justice programs.
- 2017-18 Soglin and Robin Vos meet to discuss the structure of a Regional Transit Authority, recognizing it cannot happen until Scott Walker is out of office.
- 2019 Tony Evers replaces Scott Walker as governor; Satya Rhodes-Conway replaces Paul Soglin as mayor of Madison.
- 2020 Satya Rhodes-Conway eliminates the city of Madison position of Government Relations/Lobbyist and terminates the contract with the lobbying firm with connections to Republicans in the legislature.
- 2023 Governor Evers' budget includes changes to Shared Revenue program, ability to create Regional Transit Authority (RTA).
- 2023 Milwaukee intensely lobbies the legislature, Madison does not show up. Milwaukee spends more time with Madison legislators than does Madison elected officials, Shared revenue payments are increased benefitting virtually every city in Wisconsin, except Madison.
- Madison does not see the creation of an RTA, an increase in payments of \$13.5 million in the Municipal Services program, or the Expenditure Restraint program.
- 2023 For the fifth year in a row the mayor and city council adopt a budget using borrowed money and one time revenue. The result is a structural deficit of \$22million for 2025.
- 2021-22 Non-profits funded by the city show lead staff receiving compensation of \$290,242; \$320,000; and \$545,038. There is no accountability or explanation as to why the public is funding organizations with such

extraordinary compensation.

- 2024 The city led by Mayor Satya Rhodes Conway and Council President Yanette Figueroa Cole blame the city's financial woes on the levy limits and the failure of the state (Republicans are singled out not the governor or Madison legislators) to increase Shared Revenues for Madison.
- No mention is made of the Expenditure Restraint program, Payment for Municipal Services programs or the failure of the city to lobbying the last state budget session.
- 2024 The mayor, many current alders, and many former spendthrift alders Denise Demarbo, Matt Phair, Mark Clear, and Shiva Bidar urge support for the \$22 million deficit referendum, which they created.
- 2024 When it suggested that by creating an RTA and getting increased funding for the Payments for Municipal Services account as an alternative solution, the mayor and her friends started chanting, "Robin Vos will never let it happen, Vos will never let it happen, Vos will never let it happen..."
- None of these people have spoken to Robin Vos on the subject. Phooey to the cynics.
- Next year we have a supportive Governor Evers, Democratic legislators from Madison who love our city, smaller Republican majorities, AND Republican legislators who want to see the same programs adopted that Madison desires including creation of an RTA and funding for the Municipal Services Payment account.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] BUDGET CUT - OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Thursday, October 24, 2024 5:22:06 PM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Thursday, October 24, 2024 – 5:18pm

Michael Barnett

He

4714 Agate Lane

Madison, Wisconsin. 53714 No, do not contact me. All Alders BUDGET CUT - OIM and PCOB As City homeowner & taxpayer for over 35 years please support the mayor and drastically cut or eliminate funding for office of independent monitor and police civilian oversight board.

**From:** [council](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Thursday, October 24, 2024 9:03:17 AM

---

Dear Alders,  
The message below was sent to the Council inbox.  
Best,  
Karen



**Karen Kapusta-Pofahl (she/they)**

**Chief of Staff**

City of Madison ● Office of the Common Council  
Room 505, City-County Building  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

**Tel** 608 261 9159 ● **Fax** 608 267 8669

**Email** [kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com](mailto:kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com)

**Web** <https://www.cityofmadison.com/Council/>

*In compliance with State public records law, the City of Madison retains copies of ALL email messages to and from this mailbox. Email messages may be released in response to appropriate open record requests.*

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**From:** Karen Craig <[kcraig1224@gmail.com](mailto:kcraig1224@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 4:27 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor

You don't often get email from [kcraig1224@gmail.com](mailto:kcraig1224@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Common Council members,  
I am writing to request that you support a budget amendment to restore all of the funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor. This funding is just a basic level of assurance that our city services are actually serving us. It's ridiculous to think that it's a good idea to let the police police themselves. It's a matter of life and death.

Thanks!  
Karen Craig  
317 Riverside Drive  
Madison, WI

--

Karen Craig  
[KCraig1224@gmail.com](mailto:KCraig1224@gmail.com)

**From:** [John Fons](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Occupant  
**Date:** Friday, October 25, 2024 9:21:27 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jefons@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

FYI

To Whom It May Concern:

The oversize blue postcard addressed to Occupant arrived today and sits upon my desk.  
"The City of Madison has a Municipal Referendum on the November 5 Ballot."  
This constitutes the first and last reliable statement contained in the bulk mailing marked US Postage PAID.

What the card says otherwise is no aspect of the current \$22 million city budget deficit is the fault of city administration or management. It avoids the term budget deficit. It refers instead to inflation and growth of the city as reasons for the budget deficit.

It refers to allowing city officials more time to get more money from state law makers. It refers to city investment and support for libraries and garbage pick-up and mental health if the referendum passes.

If the referendum does not pass it threatens to reduce library hours, reduce brush pickup, reduce funding for community support, reduce afterschool programming and reduce youth employment training. It threatens to fire 18 unspecified full-time city employees. Astonishingly, it threatens to reduce bus service in a city that just spent over \$350 million to glamorize Metro Transit Service and then again, in unspecified terms, threatens "Tens of millions in additional cuts will be needed in future budgets."

Never in my life have I read a more egregious, blatantly deceptive piece of propaganda posing as a public notice. All at city expense and therefore, at my expense and the expense of every property tax payer in Madison.

I will not throw this postcard away. I will vote NO on November 5.  
I will attach this postcard conspicuously to a wall in my bathroom.

Paper is paper.

John Fons  
4634 Tokay Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53711  
608-236-0844 Hm  
661-917-0850 cell  
[www.johnfons.com](http://www.johnfons.com)



**From:** [Sunshine Jones](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Item #17 2025 Executive Operating Budget, Vote to Restore Funding  
**Date:** Tuesday, October 22, 2024 1:23:43 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sunshinedjones@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Sunshine Jones  
4333 Crawford Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin  
53711

Dear Alders,

I strongly oppose the elimination, defunding, or cuts to Madison Civilian Police Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor.

I ask for their restoration in the City Budget and at the least one year of full funding. I strongly support programs that work toward the safeguarding of our most marginalized communities rather than eliminating them.

We know that Madison has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. Studies show evidence that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority reduces racial disparities in situations where officers have considerable discretion and reduces racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

Let us be a model of Justice with Integrity and Oversight in Madison.

Thank you for your service to our community.

With appreciation,

Sunshine Jones

**From:** [Holly Marley-Henschen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fund the Civilian Oversight Board and Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 8:05:01 AM

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You don't often get email from periodistalibre@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

It's of the utmost importance that you vote to fund Madison's Civilian Oversight Board and Independent Monitor. As a tax paying citizen, I want to live and work in a city where my money is being used in an equitable way. Just a democracy is not a democracy without civilian oversight of the military, a city is not a democratic city without civilian oversight of the police force.

Oversight must be independent and impartial. The citizens of Madison deserve to be represented to avoid a power imbalance and work toward a more diverse environment. Please practice what our city preaches and safeguard the Civilian Oversight Board and Independent Monitor.

Sincerely,

--

Holly Marley-Henschen  
*they, them, theirs*  
[brighterbrandmarketing.com](http://brighterbrandmarketing.com)

"The greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return."  
-Eden Abhez

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [Figueroa Cole, Yannette](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#); [Tishler, Bill](#)  
**Subject:** Infrastructure Special Charge  
**Date:** Sunday, October 20, 2024 8:33:08 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good morning President Figueroa-Cole,

I just read your blog post about the budget. Why not be real honest and let your constituents know that if the referendum **fails**, the \$10 million Infrastructure Special Charge (which then increases by \$5 million/year) begins in **2025**, and if the referendum **passes** the plan is for the same to happen in **2027**. Either way the Infrastructure Special Charge is on the plan to be implemented. The question is whether we'll have a **permanent**, annual **\$22 million increase to the levy in addition to that**.

It would also be more honest to acknowledge that the Rainy Day Fund is projected to end the year with **\$102 million** (and likely more), far higher than the 15% needed to retain the City's Triple A bond rating with Moody's.

Linked below is the City's 2024 Mid Year Budget Outlook. As you can see in the link (and the screenshot) the mid-year outlook shows the 2024 budget shrinking some and reveals that the \$9.2 million in "Rainy Day Funds" that were projected (last November) to need to be used to balance the 2024 budget will likely no longer be needed.

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=13162466&GUID=7B8D7CA9-1C46-460F-B658-F957C362D614>

Second screenshot is from the Wisconsin Policy Forum's Budget Brief and shows the \$9.2 million from the Rainy Day Fund as part of the one- time funds used to balance the 2024 budget.

Third screenshot shows the history of fund balance. Slide 12 of the presentation to the Finance Committee in May with a year-end review of 2023 attached to the file shows the history of fund balance and projection for 2024. 2023 ended with \$82.9 million in unassigned fund balance, 2024 is projected to end with \$92.9 million. It looks like we can now add the \$9.2 million (not needed after all to balance 2024) for a whopping total of **\$102.1 million in the Rainy Day Fund by end of 2024**. Even more over the 15% threshold than we thought a little while ago. Therefore increasing the share of Rainy Day Fund in both models is possible (the fund balance is not "fully expended" at \$25 million (above the 15% needed to retain).

<https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6655457&GUID=8D3864D0-9786-4B3B-A0BC-09C8E0674B33>

I'm sure you're aware that there will be legal challenges to in Infrastructure special charge, as there have been in other municipalities that have tried something similar.

Hopefully attempts will be made to work with the State (I'm not sure why more lobbying wasn't done starting back in October 2021 when Finance Director Schmiedicke clearly

explained this looming structural deficit that would really hit in 2025). No concerted effort has been made over this Mayor's term, and especially the first half of 2023 when the State was changing its funding structure for municipalities all across the State. Milwaukee showed up and Madison did not... look at the difference.

Now the Madison Mayor and many of you are lobbying for a referendum through various meetings and blogs.

Thursday night at the Wisconsin Policy Forum's "forum" on the referenda, many of you heard the Mayor admonish the attendees to hold her accountable to working with the State for more sources of revenue. Passing the referendum will buy time to do so (as if the previous three years weren't wasted).

Does everyone know the only contract lobbyist for the City of Madison (Nick Zavos) has left and the post has been vacant since the end of August? Thank you, Alder Verveer, for pointing out at last Tuesday's Finance Committee Meeting the misguided effort to act like he was still in the role when the post was vacant for months. The next budget season will be starting soon, yet the plan of the Mayor's Office is to wait until after the election to find a new contract lobbyist. The Mayor's Office shared at Finance Committee last Tuesday that the Mayor and her Chief of Staff Sam Munger do the lions share of the lobbying efforts with the State. My next email will detail the sorry extent of those efforts.

I hope that all of our elected Council members will take it upon themselves to learn about the City's (lack of) lobbying at the State level since 2019 and help the Mayor's Office stay true to their word, regardless of the results of the election. The tax base is already very burdened. Housing is already largely unaffordable for average folks and a **permanent** referendum followed by a huge, **growing**, regressive and likely illegal Infrastructure Special Charge will not help. Already burdened tax payers are paying the burden for the City's lack of negotiating with the State.

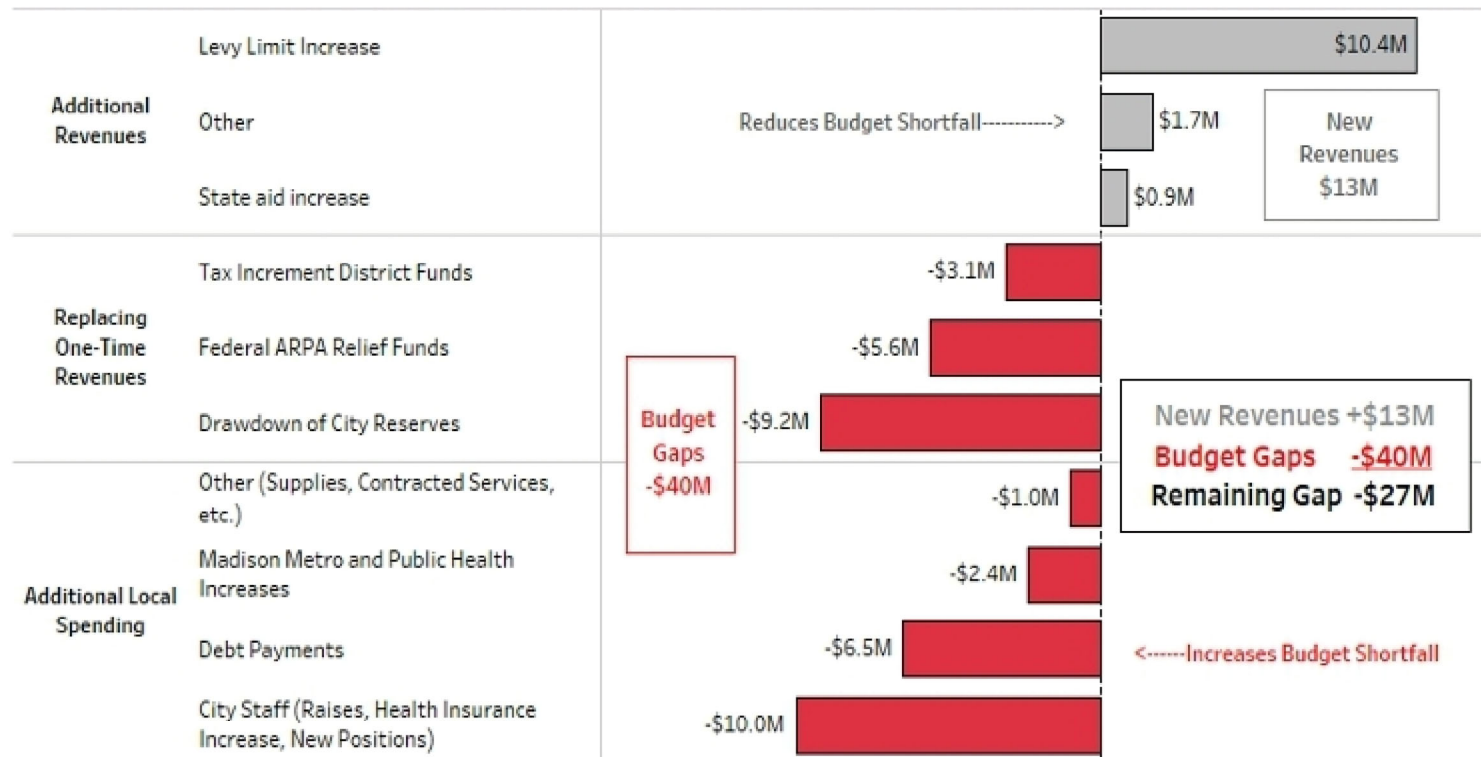
Please help your struggling residents by being a voice for the people.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

# MADISON'S 2025 BUDGET GAP

Breaking Down Madison's Projected \$27 Million Budget Gap for 2025



Source: City of Madison Finance Department

- Agency Highlights
- Review of the Midyear Appropriation

## 2024 PROJECTION: GENERAL & LIBRARY FUND

	2024 Adopted Budget			
	Adopted Budget	Revised Budget	Mid Year Projection	Difference (mid year proj. – revised)
General Fund Revenue	(\$118,871,051)	(\$118,871,051)	(\$118,424,692)	\$446,359
Property Taxes	(\$286,497,699)	(\$286,497,699)	(\$286,497,699)	\$0
Total Revenues	(\$405,368,750)	(\$405,368,750)	(\$404,922,390)	\$446,359
Agency Revenues	(\$12,816,574)	(\$13,469,602)	(\$13,501,397)	(\$31,795)
Expenditures	\$418,185,324	\$418,838,351	\$412,797,275	(\$6,041,076)
Total Expenses	\$405,368,750	\$405,368,750	\$399,295,878	(\$6,072,871)
Projected (Excess )/ Deficit			(\$5,626,512)	

*Note: Total expenses \$6.1m lower than budgeted. The contingent reserve (\$2.1m) and compensated absence escrow (\$4.3m), are centrally budgeted and projected at \$0. The year end appropriation will reallocate funds once needs are known. Projection column excludes fund balance applied (\$9.2 million).*

## HIGHLIGHTS: GENERAL FUND REVENUES

# nd balance history since 2020

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	2021	2022	2023	
Opening Unassigned Balance	43,978,379	56,371,768	66,120,952	
Revenues	327,368,857	340,298,754	378,385,393	
Expenditures	<u>320,373,928</u>	<u>328,648,521</u>	<u>347,163,791</u>	
Variance	6,994,929	11,650,233	31,221,602	
Assigned Change	5,273,487	(1,564,026)	(14,572,171)	
Other Changes	<u>124,973</u>	<u>(337,023)</u>	<u>83,347</u>	
Ending Unassigned Balance	56,371,768	66,120,952	82,853,730	
Subsequent Year Budgeted / Estimated Expenditures	341,372,269	362,725,000	384,620,273	
Fund Balance Share	16.5%	18.2%	21.5%	
Fund Balance Policy Target	15.0%	15.0%	15.0%	



**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [Figueroa Cole, Yannette](#)  
**Cc:** [Kapusta-Pofahl, Karen](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Infrastructure Special Charge  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 7:22:01 AM  
**Attachments:** [image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)  
[image.png](#)

---

President Figueroa-Cole,

Thank you for your response.

However, after reading it, I'm uncertain about your intent, and I feel it's important to express my concern about how our conversation has unfolded.

My original email raised specific concerns about the lack of transparency in your blog regarding the infrastructure special charge, which will be implemented whether or not the property tax referendum passes, and will grow from \$10 million in 2027 to \$25 million in 2030, a 250% increase in four years. Rather than addressing my concerns, your response shifted the focus to unrelated topics, such as my property tax contributions and other issues I did not raise.

While I understand that public officials face many pressures, deflecting the conversation from the issues I raised, and criticizing a constituent for asking questions about city business and the lack of transparency does not contribute to a constructive dialogue.

In particular, I found it troubling that you suggested Alder Tishler should answer my questions about a blog post you authored. I respectfully believe that as the author and an elected official, it is your responsibility to address the concerns raised, not to redirect them to someone else.

This is not the first time I've observed or experienced communication like this from you. I've copied all alders on this message because I believe it's important that constituents are met with transparency, respect, and answers that are on point when they raise legitimate concerns about city business. Shifting the focus away from the legitimate concerns they raise and making the conversation personal does not serve our community well and undermines the trust that should exist between elected officials and the people they represent.

I hope we can return to a discussion focused on the issues I wrote about—the misleading information on your blog about the infrastructure special charge and its impact on residents. I believe all of us want to work toward a better city, and clear, direct, and respectful communication is essential to that process.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope that our future communication will remain focused on the issues at hand, not personal attacks or deflections.

Best regards,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11



On Sun, Oct 20, 2024, 10:06 AM Figueroa Cole, Yannette <[district10@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district10@cityofmadison.com)> wrote:

Thank you for your message, Bonnie. I'm glad you included your alder; he might be able to dedicate time to your inquiries. I will only address the "Why not be real honest"; that's as far as I got to be honest.

Let's be "real honest" and acknowledge the significant role your \$2600 tax contribution plays in our community. It's about \$50 per week that returns:

1. Weekly garbage pickup (perhaps get a quote from Pellitteri's to see what they can accommodate for \$50)
2. Access to free parks
3. Access to a library within walking distance
4. Fire response times
5. Police services (including the use of funds for Coffee with a Cop; this should be itemized on the budget to determine who is served and measure effectiveness)
6. Police & Fire Academy
7. Leaves/Snow Removal and Streets cleanup, a service that keeps our streets and lakes clean and safe, especially during the winter months
8. There are a variety of transportation options (transit, multiuse all-ability paths for bikers and pedestrians) and fairly good roads across the city.
9. The list goes on and on; for a complete list, open the budget book and read the narratives.

I recommend adding a disclaimer to your Budget communications, something like this: "I supported police count increases and COPPS grants over the years, but now I don't want to pay for it."

COPPS Grants are the gift that keeps giving. The latest one was last year, with an impact until at least 2027's budget.



### **2023 COPPS GRANT**



Thanks,

Yannette

Alder Figueroa Cole

[Subscribe for Updates](#)

---

**From:** Bonnie Roe <[bonnie.roe@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.roe@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 20, 2024 8:32 AM  
**To:** Figueroa Cole, Yannette <[district10@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district10@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Cc:** All Alders <[allalders@cityofmadison.com](mailto:allalders@cityofmadison.com)>; Tishler, Bill <[district11@cityofmadison.com](mailto:district11@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Infrastructure Special Charge

Good morning President Figueroa-Cole,

I just read your blog post about the budget. Why not be real honest and let your constituents know that if the referendum **fails**, the \$10 million Infrastructure Special Charge (which then increases by \$5 million/year) begins in **2025**, and if the referendum **passes** the plan is for the same to happen in **2027**. Either way the Infrastructure Special Charge is on the plan to be implemented. The question is whether we'll have a **permanent**, annual **\$22 million increase to the levy in addition to that**.

It would also be more honest to acknowledge that the Rainy Day Fund is projected to end the year with **\$102 million** (and likely more), far higher than the 15% needed to retain the City's Triple A bond rating with Moody's.

Linked below is the City's 2024 Mid Year Budget Outlook. As you can see in the link (and the screenshot) the mid-year outlook shows the 2024 budget shrinking some and reveals that the \$9.2 million in "Rainy Day Funds" that were projected (last November) to need to be used to balance the 2024 budget will likely no longer be needed.

<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=13162466&GUID=7B8D7CA9-1C46-460F-B658-F957C362D614>

Second screenshot is from the Wisconsin Policy Forum's Budget Brief and shows the \$9.2 million from the Rainy Day Fund as part of the one- time funds used to balance the 2024 budget.

Third screenshot shows the history of fund balance. Slide 12 of the presentation to the Finance Committee in May with a year-end review of 2023 attached to the file shows the history of fund balance and projection for 2024. 2023 ended with \$82.9 million in unassigned fund balance, 2024 is projected to end with \$92.9 million. It looks like we can now add the \$9.2 million (not needed after all to balance 2024) for a whopping total of **\$102.1 million in the Rainy Day Fund by end of 2024**. Even more over the 15% threshold than we thought a little while ago. Therefore increasing the share of Rainy Day Fund in both

models is possible (the fund balance is not "fully expended" at \$25 million (above the 15% needed to retain)).

<https://madison.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=6655457&GUID=8D3864D0-9786-4B3B-A0BC-09C8E0674B33>

I'm sure you're aware that there will be legal challenges to in Infrastructure special charge, as there have been in other municipalities that have tried something similar.

Hopefully attempts will be made to work with the State (I'm not sure why more lobbying wasn't done starting back in October 2021 when Finance Director Schmiedicke clearly explained this looming structural deficit that would really hit in 2025). No concerted effort has been made over this Mayor's term, and especially the first half of 2023 when the State was changing its funding structure for municipalities all across the State. Milwaukee showed up and Madison did not... look at the difference.

Now the Madison Mayor and many of you are lobbying for a referendum through various meetings and blogs.

Thursday night at the Wisconsin Policy Forum's "forum" on the referenda, many of you heard the Mayor admonish the attendees to hold her accountable to working with the State for more sources of revenue. Passing the referendum will buy time to do so (as if the previous three years weren't wasted).

Does everyone know the only contract lobbyist for the City of Madison (Nick Zavos) has left and the post has been vacant since the end of August? Thank you, Alder Verveer, for pointing out at last Tuesday's Finance Committee Meeting the misguided effort to act like he was still in the role when the post was vacant for months. The next budget season will be starting soon, yet the plan of the Mayor's Office is to wait until after the election to find a new contract lobbyist. The Mayor's Office shared at Finance Committee last Tuesday that the Mayor and her Chief of Staff Sam Munger do the lions share of the lobbying efforts with the State. My next email will detail the sorry extent of those efforts.

I hope that all of our elected Council members will take it upon themselves to learn about the City's (lack of) lobbying at the State level since 2019 and help the Mayor's Office stay true to their word, regardless of the results of the election. The tax base is already very burdened. Housing is already largely unaffordable for average folks and a **permanent** referendum followed by a huge, **growing**, regressive and likely illegal Infrastructure Special Charge will not help. Already burdened tax payers are paying the burden for the City's lack of negotiating with the State.

Please help your struggling residents by being a voice for the people.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

Tax Information			
Taxing Jurisdiction	2022 Net Tax	2023 Net Tax	% Tax Change
DANE COUNTY	937.19	1,044.70	11.5%
MATC	273.09	275.02	0.7%
CITY OF MADISON	2,789.87	2,937.08	5.3%
MADISON SCHOOL	3,182.91	3,297.68	3.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,183.06</b>	<b>7,554.48</b>	<b>5.2%</b>
<u>First Dollar Credit</u>	-84.75	-88.15	4.0%
Lottery & Gaming Credit	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Net Property Tax	7,098.31	7,466.33	5.2%



<b>Police Budget (General Funds - Levy)</b>				
<b>2021 Actual</b>	<b>2022 Actual</b>	<b>2023 Actual</b>	<b>2024 Adopted</b>	<b>2025 Executive</b>
<b>83,022,652</b>	<b>83,367,492</b>	<b>86,403,470</b>	<b>91,033,353</b>	<b>96,160,249</b>

File #	Budget Year	# of officers	Matching funds	Grant Total	City Budget Matching
69481	2023	6	\$ 750,000	\$1,549,614	\$ 799,614

**From:** [council](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Thursday, October 24, 2024 9:05:28 AM

---

Dear Alders,  
This message to the alders was sent to the Council inbox.  
Best,  
Karen



---

**Karen Kapusta-Pofahl (she/they)**

**Chief of Staff**

City of Madison ● Office of the Common Council  
Room 505, City-County Building  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703

**Tel** 608 261 9159 ● **Fax** 608 267 8669

**Email** [kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com](mailto:kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com)

**Web** <https://www.cityofmadison.com/Council/>

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*In compliance with State public records law, the City of Madison retains copies of ALL email messages to and from this mailbox. Email messages may be released in response to appropriate open record requests.*

---

**From:** Melissa Rosenkranz <[melissarosenkranz@gmail.com](mailto:melissarosenkranz@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 2:16 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor

You don't often get email from [melissarosenkranz@gmail.com](mailto:melissarosenkranz@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alderpeople,

I urge you to support a budget amendment to restore all of the funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor. This board serves an essential function in our city and will only be more necessary in years to come. We cannot afford to go back!

Please give this matter your most serious consideration,

Melissa Rosenkranz  
1854 Jenifer St, Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [council](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Police Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Thursday, October 24, 2024 9:01:51 AM

---

Dear Alders,  
The message below was received in the Council inbox.  
Best,  
Karen

Karen Kapusta-Pofahl (she/they)  
Chief of Staff  
City of Madison • Office of the Common Council  
Room 505, City-County Building  
210 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, Wisconsin 53703  
Tel 608 261 9159 • Fax 608 267 8669  
Email [kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com](mailto:kkapusta-pofahl@cityofmadison.com)  
Web <https://www.cityofmadison.com/Council/>

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-----Original Message-----

From: Barbara Schwab <[bschwab57@gmail.com](mailto:bschwab57@gmail.com)>  
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 6:37 AM  
To: council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
Subject: Police Civilian Oversight Board

[You don't often get email from [bschwab57@gmail.com](mailto:bschwab57@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please support the amendment preserving this oversight board and the important work they are doing for our community.

Barbara Schwab  
522 N Pinckney St  
Madison



**From:** [Keith Schlesinger](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Tax Referendum  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 23, 2024 7:38:52 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from keith.schlesinger@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders,

I am reading an online story on WKOW and it said the Mayor is listening to residents on how to deal with the deficit.

First of all, listen to your taxpayers when they send a suggestion to the Mayor's office. She has a staff but NOBODY bothered to respond to my email.

I am addressing the park and ride lot at Dutch Mill Road, in southeast Madison. You are giving FREE PARKING to people in that parking lot while they hop a coach to O'Hare or Midway. Dane County charges \$10 per day to park at the MSN airport. The City of Madison is working AGAINST the County of Dane by giving away free parking at Dutch Mill.

Look at how many parking spaces you have there. Yes, go out there and count them. If it is a true park and ride facility, give them a 24 hour in and out policy with no charge. Otherwise , \$10 a day to park there.

You are missing revenue big time. You need to make this a user fee parking lot if parked for more than 24 hours. It is a simple ticket in ticket out system.

I just hope you guys listen to taxpayers. The Mayor's office does not.

By the way, I will vote NO on your referendum to raise taxes. I am retired.

Keith Schlesinger  
District 16  
Madison

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

**From:** [annewalker@homelandgarden.com](mailto:annewalker@homelandgarden.com)  
**To:** Mayor; All Alders  
**Subject:** Our City Budget  
**Date:** Sunday, October 20, 2024 3:57:22 PM  
**Attachments:** -  
-

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [annewalker@homelandgarden.com](mailto:annewalker@homelandgarden.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor Rhodes-Conway and Alders,

I'm a long time neighborhood volunteer from Marsha Rummel's district. The Mayors Office, and Council are discussing how to best move forward with our city budget. I wanted to share some of my observations from working on city projects over the years.

In one of our Common Council approved documents, its says....I'm paraphrasing....city departments should work **with** each other (bold type my addition). I think it's in the City of Madison Sustainability Plan. It's kinda brilliant right....and sensible...right?

Which doesn't mean that that's how things have worked in the past. I don't know the politics of the different departments these days, but back when I did, city engineering and traffic engineering didn't really mesh. Or, to put it more bluntly, were not working well together. I often worked with both departments. Doing so, I found out that both departments could be studying an area, they just didn't know that. So both departments were spending money, and employee time on studying the same thing. Not the best use of resources.

I've also found it fascinating to ask city employees, in the field, what they think of the job they are doing, and what works and doesn't work. They often have valuable insights to share. I worked on the Capital Square for years. I often chatted with the crew that worked on the beautiful fountains lining the square. Their opinion on where the mechanicals were located (underground), and how often the fountains didn't work was VERY informative. And, a reality check if we want to budget better.

Back in the day, engineering would say 'yes' to some project, like the fountains, but once it was built, the maintenance would fall to the parks department, forestry or the streets department. There was a feeling that engineering was a bit 'detached' from the consequences and cost of their choices. Again, I haven't completely followed the politics of the city for some time, and I know that there are new department heads in those positions, so I don't know how things are working, or not. But ultimately, how much money we spend as a city has a lot to do with how well we are working **with** each other.

With respect and hope,

Anne Walker  
District 6  
(no attachments)

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Please: Be thoughtful. Be tolerant of opposing views.

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---

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[annewalker@homelandgarden.com]

----- End of forwarded message -----

**From:** [Ginny White](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#); [Conklin, Nikki](#)  
**Subject:** Referendum Mailer  
**Date:** Friday, October 25, 2024 1:03:29 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ginnywerginwhite@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Mayor Rhodes-Conway and Alders:

We received a blue card in the mail today with slanted information about the city's \$22 million referendum.

We object to the city using our tax dollars to lobby us to vote to permanently raise our own property taxes.

This PR maneuver demonstrates how unserious you are about addressing the budget deficit. You're threatening a loss of popular services instead of looking for ways to trim inessential programs and pet projects. It's irresponsible and will just lead to future deficits.

Sincerely,

Ginny and Larry White  
71 Oak Creek Trail  
Madison 53717

**From:** [Jessica Dye](#)  
**To:** [disrtrict12@cityofmadison.com](mailto:disrtrict12@cityofmadison.com); [All Alders](#); [Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Inappropriate mailer from city of madison  
**Date:** Friday, October 25, 2024 4:05:07 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jess\_dettmann@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders and Mayor,

I received a flyer in the mail yesterday from the city of Madison concerning the upcoming muninciple referendum. To put it mildly I found it to be deeply troubling and unethical. In the name of honesty this referendum is on the ballot to cover the costs of many unnecessary and extravagant projects such as the public market and the John Nolen lake front project. We already pay for police, fire, garbage collection, parks and libraries. To threaten to take away services we all care about and pay for in our taxes is beyond irresponsible and just plain wrong. I know, it's all being blamed on the legislature, but that isn't quite right is it? If we still had our lobbyists, which the mayor eliminated we might not be in this situation even with the wild, irresponsible spending of this city. This tactic of strong arming the citizens of Madison into paying for the projects that should be put on hold until basic services can be met is repulsive. When it's time to tighten our belts and live within our means it should be the unnecessaries that get cut, not basic city services. Any responsible human should understand this concept. The flyer in the mail and its wording is inappropriate, I used to expect more out of Madison. Please help to get us back on the right path and get spending under control. Thank you for taking the time to hear me out.

Jess Dye

Sent from my Galaxy

## The City of Madison has a Municipal Referendum on the November 5 Ballot



PRSRT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
MADISON WI  
PERMIT NO 1949

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

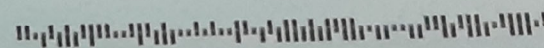
A measure to allow the City of Madison to raise \$22 million has been placed on the November ballot. Wisconsin law requires voter approval to increase the property tax levy above state-imposed caps.

This measure would allow the City to permanently increase the property tax levy starting in the next fiscal year (2025) for the purpose of funding police, fire, garbage collection, parks and library operations and other City services and operations. Without this measure, the City will need to enact significant budget cuts in order to comply with state law.



**For more information visit**  
**[cityofmadison.com/referendum](https://cityofmadison.com/referendum)**

# CITY OF MADISON



\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSH\*\*C017  
10775 E-9  
OCCUPANT  
2205 FREMONT AVE  
MADISON WI 53704-3301



**From:** [Jon Becker](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [county\\_board\\_recipients@co.dane.wi.us](mailto:county_board_recipients@co.dane.wi.us)  
**Cc:** [sparkman@countyofdane.com](mailto:sparkman@countyofdane.com); [Kumar, Kristy](#); [Sagqaf, Tariq](#); [julies.majerus@wisconsin.gov](mailto:julies.majerus@wisconsin.gov)  
**Subject:** For equity, will Madison use an "infrastructure special charge" (TUF) to fund Fare Free Public Transit via Metro?  
**Date:** Thursday, November 7, 2024 10:01:50 AM

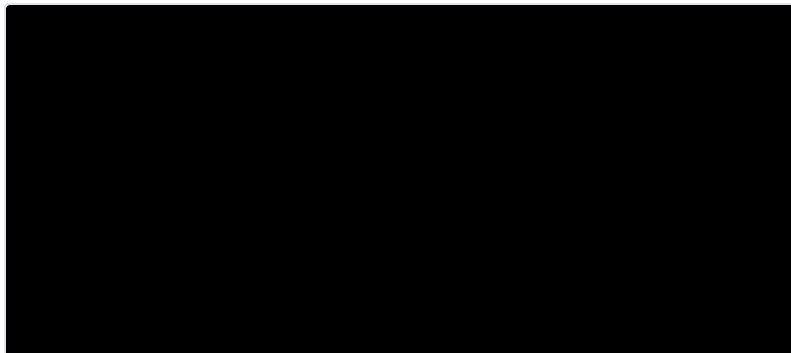
---

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Why no mention of using this revenue to fund Fare Free Public Transportation (FFPT)?

Corvallis OR funds its FFPT system with a Transportation Utility Fee (TUF) of ~\$3-4/mo/residence, along with commercial fees (determined using formulae based on property-specific transportation infrastructure use).

[Madison's financial future may hinge on new infrastructure fee](#)



### Madison's financial future may hinge on new infrastructure fee

Lucas Robinson | Wisconsin State Journal

The city is counting on an untested infrastructure charge to bring it tens of millions of dollars by the end of ...

## **Madison's financial future may hinge on new infrastructure fee**

Madison residents dodged having to pay a new infrastructure charge with the success of the city's \$22 million referendum Tuesday — but plans still call for the property-by-property fee to eventually be implemented in the years ahead.

Residents and property owners will have to pay a monthly "infrastructure special charge" by 2027 to help the city continue balancing its budget if more financial support from the state Legislature doesn't materialize in budget talks next year.

Even with the referendum's success, the city is counting on the untested charge to bring in millions in revenue every year by the end of the decade. But similar fees attempted by municipalities have been struck down by the Wisconsin court system.

Properties would be charged based on the amount of traffic they generate, with the money balancing how much the city spends on upkeep for its roads and infrastructure.



The monthly charge for a single-family home would be \$6.35, according to the city.

If the referendum had failed, the charge would have been enacted for 2025, and the city relied on estimates that it would generate \$10 million in revenue to help close its \$22 million budget gap.

The city has grown more reliant on residents paying monthly charges and other fees to balance its budget since state limits on property tax hikes were implemented in 2011. Since 2015, three new fees and charges have brought in \$87.3 million in revenue for city coffers.

### **Untested charge**

Under current plans, Madison would rely on the infrastructure charge to fill \$10 million of the city's budget in 2027 and \$25 million by 2030.

But if implemented, the charge could face legal challenges, according to a report on the city's budget from the Wisconsin Policy Forum.

Two other local governments in Wisconsin — the city of Pewaukee in Waukesha County and the town of Buchanan in Outagamie County — have attempted to create transportation utility fees in recent years.

Buchanan's fee faced a legal challenge by the Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, a well-known conservative legal group.

WILL successfully argued before the state Supreme Court that the fee constituted an unlawful tax that violated how state law requires roads to be financed through property taxes.

The Supreme Court refused to take up the question of Pewaukee's fee, which an appellate court struck down citing the Buchanan case as precedent.

Madison has said it would have relied on a different state statute from what other communities relied on, but the language creating the charge had not been fully drafted before the referendum succeeded, noted Jason Stein, the president of the Wisconsin Policy Forum.

But the legal nuances of the charge could be moot.

Madison has vowed to lobby the state Legislature to secure some sort of financial relief, either through changes to property tax law or greater funding for municipalities through shared revenue or other aid.

But with Republicans retaining control of the state Legislature in Tuesday's elections, how successful the city will be in such a lobbying effort remains uncertain.

If no help comes in state budget talks slated to begin in the coming months, the city may implement the special charge in the 2027 budget to avert another budget gap and potential cuts.

### **Other charges**

The infrastructure charge is the latest in the city's growing reliance on newly created fees and charges to balance its budget over the past decade.

Since 2015, an urban forestry charge, which helps sustain the city's tree canopy, has brought \$45.8 million to city coffers, including \$7 million in 2024.

A vehicle registration fee has brought in \$6.7 million a year on average since being created in 2020. The newest charge, for recycling, brought in \$3.4 million this year, its third year on the books.

---

## Hands Off PCOB

---

**From** Mahnker Dahnweih <mdahnweih@freedom-inc.org>

**Date** Mon 11/4/2024 11:04 AM

**To** All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>

**Cc** Bianca Gomez <bgomez@freedom-inc.org>; Chai Moua <cmoua@freedom-inc.org>

 1 attachments (102 KB)

FI Letter about Civilian Oversight Board.pdf;

Some people who received this message don't often get email from mdahnweih@freedom-inc.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Madison Common Council,

It is very disturbing that a proposed "police" budget cut is coming from the PCOB, the one mechanism for police transparency and accountability in Madison. Please get it together expeditiously. When we say the police department should #eatthecuts, we mean less personnel, weapons, equipment, and surveillance technology.

Attached is our letter concerning this matter. It was a central focus of our last organizing meeting and your constituents are confused and disappointed by this proposal.

Best,

Mahnker Dahnweih  
Director of Community Power Building  
Freedom, Inc.

Office: 608-716- 7324

Direct Number: 608-716-3845



2110 Luann Ln, Madison, WI 53713 | 608.716.7324 | [info@freedom-inc.org](mailto:info@freedom-inc.org)

City of Madison Common Council Office  
210 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd  
Madison, WI 53703

November 1, 2024

Dear Madison Common Council,

We at Freedom, Inc. are writing to express our outrage and disappointment over the discussion of defunding the Civilian Oversight Board. Freedom, Inc. believes that communities deserve control over all of the forces that impact the quality of their lives, from land and housing to food to education and even to safety. Therefore, there must be democratic community control over Police, with the full ability of the community to determine priorities, policies and practices of their force. Although the current Civilian Oversight Board does not fully meet our demand for complete community control over the police, we have considered this an important step towards police accountability.

This current board is not just a line item in the budget; it represents a hard-fought victory for our community—one that demands accountability and transparency in a system that often fails us. Even considering cuts is a slap in the face to everyone who has fought for real accountability and change in this community. The board represents an important check on police power—something we desperately need in a system that has repeatedly failed our communities. This board is tasked with ensuring transparency and investigating complaints against law enforcement. Without it, we are left vulnerable to the very abuses that led to its creation in the first place.

The police need to #eatthecuts. Meaning, cut personnel, cut equipment & technology, etc. it is insidious to go directly to cutting the institutions designed to safeguard our rights. The Civilian Oversight Board must be fully funded and empowered to do its crucial work. We demand that you prioritize our community's safety, dignity, and rights over any political games or misguided priorities.

We deserve leaders who are willing to stand up for us, not sell us out. This is non-negotiable. We will not stay silent or let this issue slide. We are demanding justice, transparency, and accountability, and we're ready to fight for it. You need to show up for the community and commit to the values that we all deserve.

Until Liberation,  
Freedom, Inc.

---

## The budget for the OIM and PCOB!

---

**From** Deborah Elsas <deborahelsas@gmail.com>

**Date** Sun 11/3/2024 8:12 PM

**To** All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from deborahelsas@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please maintain full funding for these important functions and keep them separate from the police!!!  
Thank you for making sure there is an independent review available for us citizens when there is the possibility of official misconduct.

I appreciate your consideration.

Deb Elsas

207 S Whitney Way

Madison, WI 53705

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: TRAIN HORNS BLASTING ACROSS MY CITY  
**Date:** Thursday, October 31, 2024 11:38:23 AM

---

Alders,

I'm forwarding along this message that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thanks,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** mark france <markwfrance@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 31, 2024 8:36 AM  
**To:** council <council@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** TRAIN HORNS BLASTING ACROSS MY CITY

You don't often get email from [markwfrance@gmail.com](mailto:markwfrance@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hi Madison Alders and the council,  
I am so angry that this is not on our ballot and that funding for silencing the train horns has not been a major Madison issue. I am not voting for increasing my taxes until this issue is addressed aggressively.  
Mark France  
Madison Resident

**From:** [Lisa Hansen](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please vote to restore funding for police oversight in our city  
**Date:** Thursday, November 7, 2024 7:59:17 AM

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You don't often get email from laax86@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I believe oversight of the Madison police should be handled by an independent agency that is safeguarded from political influence. Therefore, all funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board must be restored.

Regards,  
Lisa

**From:** [Horstman, Diane](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Rhodes-Conway, Satya V.](#)  
**Subject:** Parking for city employees  
**Date:** Monday, November 4, 2024 5:23:11 PM

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With the new budget right around the corner, I would like to suggest that the Common Council put forth an amendment (not sure if that's the correct term) to offer parking to City of Madison employees at a city ramp at a reduced rate. I did read that the Mayor is interested in having the ramps utilized more, and this would help solve that problem. Also, it would bring in income that is not currently available.

In particular, there are Madison Police Department employees (commissioned and non-commissioned) for whom riding a bus is not an option. Many officers choose to live outside the city, and there are no bus routes available. Also, if they are working a Third Detail spot and their shifts run over, there would be no bus for them to return home. If a First Detail officer starts at 6 AM, there are frequently no buses that early.

For those of us who work a different shift (in my case, 2 PM to 10 PM), there are not always buses available. I have one co-worker who finishes his shift at 10:45 pm; there is no bus to return him home, so he has to drive. Another co-worker would have to wait until 10:45 PM to catch the bus, then walk half a mile home after; he was riding his bike one evening after work and was struck by a car. Yet another co-worker took an Uber home every night as there was no bus available. I, myself, do not feel safe waiting for the 10:15 PM bus where it would pick up. I did inquire with Chief Barnes about teaching self-defense to civilians; however, his response was that the liability was too high.

It is difficult for Records, Court Services, etc., to retain employees due to the hardships of parking. By the same token, officers are hesitant to sign on here because of the parking situation.

I wonder how many alders, when you have to come downtown for meetings, actually take the bus. If we're expected to use the bus services, that should pertain to alders as well.

*Diane Horstman*

Third Detail Control Point PRT Angel  
Dhorstman@cityofmadison.com



**From:** [Rymii Kaio](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Maintain OIM and PCOB full independence and reinstate full funding  
**Date:** Thursday, November 7, 2024 9:26:06 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from rymii.kaio@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am writing to ask you to maintain the OIM and PCOB's full independence from the city and police department and amend the budget to reinstate full funding and all positions for the board and the Office of the Independent Monitor - including the Data Analyst.

Housing the OIM and PCOB with the Department of Civil Rights is a non-starter. It will strip away the safeguard that protects the mechanism from the political influence of city politicians. If that happens, this will be just another useless board without even the appearance of independence. This has been demonstrated in other cities which is why we fought so hard to avoid it.

I am writing as an individual, though I observe court as part of Nehemiah's Justified Anger program.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Ryminhild Kaio  
822 E Washington Avenue, Apt 415  
Madison, Wi. 53703  
206-724-8061

**From:** [Mary Kateada](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Funding for OIM & PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, November 4, 2024 2:48:07 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from marykateada@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Alders of Madison -

I hope you are getting emails filled with critical detail and analysis as to why it is important for you to maintain **full funding and independence** from city and police departments **for the Office of Independent Monitoring (OIM) and the Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB)**.

I'm writing to you as a solitary and concerned, elderly, white, long time citizen of Madison. I was so appreciative when these structures were put in place. I was hopeful. I wanted to believe that we were doing something of substance to combat the systemic racism that has deep roots in our city (and in our country).

Please, you made a good start. These structures work. Let us keep at it. It's going to be a long road, to undo decades of tracks. Stay the course. Please.

And know that my plea includes the full restoration of funding for the Data Analyst position. Again, please. And thank you for your time and consideration.

Mary Kateada  
3529 Lucia Crest  
Madison

**From:** [Erin Lemley](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore Funding to Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 6, 2024 7:18:08 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from afuzzybird@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Alders,

I'm writing you this morning to ask that you restore all funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor and Civilian Oversight Board. Yes, it has been a long time getting off the ground. Even getting the positions the first time took years of work. But things are ready to take off now! Cutting the office's funding when it hasn't actually had a chance to succeed is a bad call. In nearly every city where independent police review boards exist, they don't have enough power or money to actually do their jobs---don't let Madison become another one of these. We worked so hard to make sure that Madison bucked the trend, let this be something we can be proud of.

Restore all funding to the office of the independent monitor, including the positions that were cut just as they were filled. Keep oversight of the police handled by a truly independent department.

Sincerely,  
Erin M Lemley  
1703 Rowland Ave #1  
Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DANE COUNTY NAACP SUPPORTS CITIES' REFERENDUMS: MAINTAIN SERVICES FOR ALL  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 5, 2024 10:38:18 AM

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Alders,

The following email was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thank you,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Greg Jones <gcjones15@att.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 5, 2024 10:35 AM  
**To:** Madison Mayor <madisonmayor@cityofmadison.com>; council <council@cityofmadison.com>; Julia Arata <Julia.Arata-Fratta@fitchburgwi.gov>; Dave.Herbst@fitchburgwi.gov; Maldonado, Joe <Joe.Maldonado@fitchburgwi.gov>; Bill.Jetzer@fitchburgwi.gov; Gabriella.Gerhardt@fitchburgwi.gov; Jay Allen <Jay.Allen@fitchburgwi.gov>; Donald.Dantzler@fitchburgwi.gov; Jim.Wheeler@fitchburgwi.gov; Nicole.Vafadari@fitchburgwi.gov; CouncilandMayor@cityofsunprairie.com; Changb@deforestwi.gov  
**Subject:** Fw: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DANE COUNTY NAACP SUPPORTS CITIES' REFERENDUMS: MAINTAIN SERVICES FOR ALL

You don't often get email from [gcjones15@att.net](mailto:gcjones15@att.net). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good morning,

I want to share the NAACP's statement supporting the referendums.

Greg Jones



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Greg Jones  
Email: [gjones15@att.net](mailto:gjones15@att.net)  
Phone: 608-335-2001

## **DANE COUNTY NAACP SUPPORTS CITIES' REFERENDUMS: MAINTAIN SERVICES FOR ALL**

**MADISON, WI (November 1, 2024)**—Property tax referendums will be on the November 5<sup>th</sup> ballots across Madison, Fitchburg, Monona, Maple Bluff, Sun Prairie, DeForest, McFarland and Marshall.

State limits on cities' authority to raise revenue are causing services and infrastructure to lag behind population growth, said the mayors of certain cities. Cities are limited from increasing their property tax levies beyond the added value of net new construction. When allowable tax increases are based solely on construction value, "you cannot keep up with both inflation and a growing community," Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway said. "It's just not possible."

In Monona, the new construction translated into a levy increase of \$25,000 for 2025, Mayor Mary O'Connor said. "That \$25,000 is supposed to cover pay increases for 75 full-time employees, along with increases in their health insurance premiums, supplies and equipment and third-party contracts, not to mention inflation," O'Connor said. "Our garbage and recycling collection costs alone have increased by \$100,000 in the past year."

In Fitchburg, the population has risen by a third in the past decade, straining police, fire, and transit services. The city opted for a referendum this November in large part to avoid further overextending those resources, Fitchburg Mayor Julia Arata-Fratta said. Other communities face a growing structural deficit resulting from declining revenue from the State.

Reducing services impacts the quality of life for all. For some, it is an inconvenience. For others, the reduction has a greater impact on their ability to thrive. It is essential that services are maintained to provide public safety (police and fire), road maintenance, waste management (garbage and recycling collection), clean water, snow removal, municipal court, parks, transportation, libraries, and health departments. Low-income residents who are dependent on public transportation will be greatly affected by a reduction in service or increase in cost. Similarly, increased population growth brings greater attention to routine and recurring road maintenance resulting from increased traffic. Thus, maintaining roads in a reasonably good condition is critical.

The November 5<sup>th</sup> referendums will provide equal access to services for all communities including low income and minority communities. These communities are often the first to feel the effect of reduced services and programs during fiscal crises. The cuts would disproportionately affect low- and moderate-income people, including parents, children, seniors, and people with disabilities. The Dane County NAACP encourages voters to prevent a deepening of poverty and hardship by supporting the November 5<sup>th</sup> referendums.

##

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P.O. Box 44366 • MADISON, WI 53744 • Email: [NAACP36AB@GMAIL.COM](mailto:NAACP36AB@GMAIL.COM)



**From:** [Louka Patenaude](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board must be restored!  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 6, 2024 7:32:20 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from loukapatenaude@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Madison Alders

- I believe oversight of the Madison police should be handled by an independent agency that is safeguarded from political influence!
- All funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board must be restored!

Thank you!

--

Louka

<https://www.music.wisc.edu/faculty/louka-patenaude/>

<https://www.loukasound.com>

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: referendums  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 6, 2024 4:15:08 PM

---

Alders,

I'm forwarding along this email that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Best,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

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**From:** Ron Roberts <[rrobertswis@gmail.com](mailto:rrobertswis@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 6, 2024 10:19 AM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** referendums

You don't often get email from [rrobertswis@gmail.com](mailto:rrobertswis@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Madison Common Council,

The mayor thanked the citizens for passing your referendums?

NOW, I do have a few comments and questions.

Kindly tell me HOW senior citizens will be able to stay in their homes after their property tax bill exceeds their fixed incomes?

Kindly tell me HOW people who work 2 jobs to make ends meet are going to afford to stay in their homes or apartments? You HAVE to know that mortgages and rents are going to go up because of these referendums.

Kindly tell me HOW we as single people are going to afford to live in this city if rents and property taxes are going to get so high?

It appears that you and the MMSB have given absolutely NO thought and you DO NOT even care that you will be forcing people out of their homes. I also know that you will never even acknowledge that you received this email or address the concerns of an average citizen.

Madison a top place in the country to live??? I think not any longer. Nobody in the current Madison school board or Madison city government will get my vote come re-



election time.

Sincerely

-Ronald Roberts-

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**Restoration of total funding to OIM and PCOB (last email didn't send as PDF)**

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**From** Devon Snyder <snydz120@gmail.com>

**Date** Thu 10/31/2024 6:22 PM

**To** All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>

 1 attachments (107 KB)

Community Oversight Board.pdf;

Some people who received this message don't often get email from snydz120@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Good evening,

Attached is a letter of support for the restoration of the total funding to the Office of Independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board on behalf of Urban Triage.

Thanks,

Devon Snyder



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## Community Oversight Board Letter of Support

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10/31/24

Brandi Grayson  
Urban Triage, Inc  
2312 S Park St  
Madison WI 53713

Attn: City Council Board Members  
**210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room 417**  
**Madison, WI 53703**

Dear Members of the Common Council,

I urge you to restore total funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and the Community Police Oversight Board (CPOB). Our community demands this restoration now more than ever. The moment after Tony Robinson Jr. was killed, Madison exploded. How soon you all forget. Then came the George Floyd protests, filled with many beautiful, brilliant people fed up with oppression.

In the wake of these events, Madison politicians sought to take credit for establishing a police oversight agency. Yet, many failed to provide the resources needed to succeed and set it adrift. Now that the spotlight is off, too many Madison politicians seem content to dismantle it, just as this vital entity is finally starting to take complaints and investigate MPD officers. This reversal is disheartening, especially in a city that has shown a troubling pattern of systemic racism, where the police department often unfairly targets Black bodies.

Research has demonstrated that the creation of a police oversight agency significantly reduces racial disparities in arrests and officer-involved deaths. The work of the OIM, mainly through the Data Analyst position, has been pivotal in identifying and addressing racially biased policing in our city. Without the restoration of funding, these essential efforts cannot proceed.

Community oversight is not just a matter of policy; it is a matter of justice. The murder of Tony Robinson Jr., the beating of David Clash-Miller, and the brutalization of Genele

Laird highlights the urgent need for civilian oversight and community control of the police. We know that the police are too often brutal, violent, and sometimes downright criminal. How can we be expected to ignore that?

A well-funded OIM/CPOB will enhance trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. With adequate resources, the CPOB can conduct thorough investigations, address citizen complaints, and recommend necessary policy changes that prioritize public safety while respecting civil liberties. This investment will foster collaborative relationships between law enforcement and community members, creating an environment where residents feel heard and valued.

Moreover, with restored funding, the CPOB can engage more effectively with diverse communities across Madison. Educational workshops and outreach initiatives can empower residents, providing them with the knowledge they need to participate meaningfully in discussions about policing and public safety.

Together, we can ensure that our city takes the necessary steps to eliminate racially biased policing and promote a culture of accountability. In conclusion, please prioritize the restoration of funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and the Community Police Oversight Board. This is an investment in justice, equity, and a brighter future for all Madison residents.

Thank you for your attention to this crucial matter. I look forward to seeing our city commit to effective oversight and accountability in our law enforcement practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandi Grayson', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Brandi Grayson  
Founder/CEO

**From:** [Devon Snyder](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, November 4, 2024 6:57:41 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from snydz120@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

Studies show that police are more likely to use excessive or fatal force in areas with high crime rates, economic disadvantage, and low-income populations-more specifically, communities of color. As I detailed in my viral article, “The Never-ending Timeline of Racism,” at the age of 12 I was illegally stopped and searched by the police for simply jogging while being black. I have been pulled over for owning a nice vehicle, and then after questioned on how I could afford it. The disparities in policing in communities of color have caused distrust between those said communities and the police. This is why the Police Civilian Oversight Board is essential to my and other people of color’s livelihoods.

I am writing to request for the restoration of funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board. This police oversight agency provides functions that are essential to achieving racial and social equity in this city. The creation of a police oversight agency in a city has been shown to reduce racial disparities in arrests and officer-involved deaths. The OIM and PCOB need adequate funding to continue researching racially-biased policing to ensure of its erasure.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, especially people of color who have a history of mistrust and mistreatment with police. It is important to rebuild this trust, and foster an environment where people of color can feel heard, feel protected, and feel safe from police harm. We have the power to eliminate racially biased policing. Time after time, “brotherhood” always protects “brotherhood.” It’s time to promote a culture where police are held accountable. It’s time to create a culture where people of color don’t have to have fear for their safety while interacting with the police.

As the Urban Triage nominee for the PCOB, and as a black male, I respectfully request for the prioritization of funding restoration to the Office of the Independent Monitor and to

the Police Civilian Oversight Board. These programs are vital to the livelihoods of people of color.

Thank you for your attention on this consequential matter,

Devon Snyder

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## Referendum Analysis

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**From** Ginny White <ginnywerginwhite@gmail.com>

**Date** Mon 11/4/2024 8:26 AM

**To** Mayor <Mayor@cityofmadison.com>; All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>; Conklin, Nikki <district9@cityofmadison.com>

Some people who received this message don't often get email from ginnywerginwhite@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

[https://captimes.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/letter-city-ignored-single-family-homeowners/article\\_ce2140aa-9931-11ef-95b9-6ff7599a4f34.html](https://captimes.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/letter-city-ignored-single-family-homeowners/article_ce2140aa-9931-11ef-95b9-6ff7599a4f34.html)

**From:** [Jake Winkler](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** COB and OIM funding  
**Date:** Sunday, October 27, 2024 11:09:48 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from trappedinink@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request that you restore funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board. This police oversight agency provides functions that are essential to achieving racial and social equity in this city. The creation of a police oversight agency in a city has been shown to reduce racial disparities in arrests and officer-involved deaths. The top priority in the OIM data analysis plan had been to determine the extent of racially-biased policing occurring in Madison, so that it could be understood, addressed, and eliminated. However, this will no longer be possible, because the Data Analyst position is being eliminated instead. The OIM and PCOB should have sustained adequate levels of funding – it should not be the case that the need for police oversight is only considered after a tragedy.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. Complaints to MPD that are investigated internally are rarely upheld, since the department is essentially investigating itself. A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department and are alienated from it. The Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board provide the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities. Adequately-funded civilian oversight of police leaves everyone better off, from police officers to marginalized communities to the public at large.

Sincerely,  
Jake Winkler  
Union St



**From:** [Jolie Andrusz](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding oversight of the Madison Police Department  
**Date:** Sunday, November 10, 2024 8:04:13 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jolie.andrusz@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I believe oversight of the Madison Police Department should be handled by an independent agency that is safeguarded from political influence.

I am also asking that all funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board to be restored.

Thanks,  
Jolie Andrusz  
5038 Starker Ave  
Madison, WI 53716

**From:** [c aniel](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment #4  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 4:21:07 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from caaniel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I am a Madison senior that has critically benefited from New Bridges, including assistance from a case manager.

I request that you support to support amendment #4,  
that reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP.

Thank you for your consideration.

Carl Aniel

2625 Union St.

Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [Allison Bartz](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 4:55:15 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from allison.bartz1@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hi Madison Alders,

I am writing in support of amendment #4, which reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP. I volunteer with NewBridge, and I think it would be a tragedy to cut so deeply into services for older adults in Madison, especially those who are already low-income or don't have any other options. Please vote in favor of amendment #4 so NewBridge can continue offering programs like meal support and case management.

Thank you!  
Allison Bartz, Madison resident

**From:** [Sarah Beach](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Concern in Reducing Budget of Office of the Independent Police Monitor  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 10:29:07 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sbeachinc@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

My name is Sarah Beach and I live in District 1. I am concerned there is a budget that will reduce the budget of the Office of the Independent Police Monitor before it can make a real impact in our community. Change cannot happen immediately, and as this is the first Office of this kind in Wisconsin.

As of 2021, Wisconsin has the highest arrest rate for Black men (<https://www.wpr.org/justice/wisconsin-imprisons-1-36-black-adults-no-state-has-higher-rate>). It is part of a long, racist history that many in our nation and in Wisconsin will work hard to reject (<https://pbswisconsin.org/news-item/a-legacy-of-racial-inequality-before-the-law-in-wisconsin/>). We need to be able to speak to the reality of the situation, and to do that we must face it head on. Only then can we understand, and ever hope to combat and improve.

The Office of the Independent Police Monitor is doing incredibly important work for my community and I want to see it continue, fully funded. Thank you,

Sarah Beach

**From:** [Melissa Bennett](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore funding to Independent Monitor and PCOB  
**Date:** Saturday, November 9, 2024 8:31:47 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from melissa.bennett.90@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

I am writing today due to concern over the police civilian oversight board and the office of the independent monitor losing funding. In order for these offices to remain free from police or political influence they need to be fully funded! I am concerned for the safety of my fellow citizens in Madison and want to see that the police force is kept in check and accountable as publicly funded organization should be.

Thank you for taking the time to listen and consider my concerns,

Melissa Bennett

1117 Valley Stream Dr, Madison, WI 53711

**From:** [Fred Bergmann](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget amendment to restore funding for OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Sunday, November 10, 2024 3:56:13 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [fwb@innoveering.com](mailto:fwb@innoveering.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Please, let's move forward.

Sincerely,

Fred W. Bergmann  
27 Anniversary Ct  
Madison, WI 53704  
[fwb@innoveering.com](mailto:fwb@innoveering.com)

**From:** [Leona Bergmann](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor & Police Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Saturday, November 9, 2024 7:14:24 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from leona.bergmann@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

This is an issue very important to me for a lot of reasons. But most importantly, that fatal shootings of black men across the nation has shone a spotlight on the grievous misconduct of police officers everywhere and on the inability of internal oversight agencies to hold them accountable for their actions. This is why I believe our Independent Monitor and Civilian Oversight Board is so important to our communities.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000 for officer-involved killings that occurred between 2012 and 2015. This has caused large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, of which I was a part of, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was hired after twice recruiting nationally.
- A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
- A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
- A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
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- Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
- The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
- Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
- Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally (by MPD themselves) are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves.

A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized



communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Leona Bergmann  
27 Anniversary Ct  
Madison WI  
53704

**From:** [Philippa Bergmann](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** PCOB & Office of the Independent Monitor  
**Date:** Friday, November 8, 2024 8:44:45 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from pb.supercherie@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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All Alders,

I urge you to restore all funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board and to keep it independent and safeguarded.

We have long been waiting for this as a community to restore faith, trust, and oversight in our police. Good for the police, good for the community! I cannot wait for Madison to be a leader on this front.

Thank you so much for your work,

Philippa Bergmann  
27 Anniversary Ct, Madison, WI 53704

[pb.supercherie@gmail.com](mailto:pb.supercherie@gmail.com)

**From:** [Dorothy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** agenda item #2  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 2:44:47 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from dborchardt1@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

**TO:** Madison City Council  
**FROM:** Dorothy Borchardt  
**DATE:** 11-12-24  
**RE:** DDC Older Adult Funding

The New Bridge Senior programs need your support. The budget amendment adding \$100,000 to the DDC Older Adult Programs is a step in the right direction but not enough. New Bridge should be fully funded by NOT funding Urban Triage or any other non-profit with a high amount of staff compensation. Urban Triage CEO is making \$290,242. The taxpayers should not be funding agencies that pay outrageous amount of compensation. All of the agencies must be looked at to discover the non-profits that are receiving outrageous staff compensation.

Actually, with the growing number of seniors more funding should go to the successful senior programs that are meeting their measurable goals. I certainly hope staff is keeping up on the outcomes along with the cost to run the programs.

Thanks for your time and attention.

Dorothy Borchardt

**From:** [Brigitte Boucher](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore Funding for Police Oversight in Madison  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 8:03:19 AM

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You don't often get email from [brigitte.rose@gmail.com](mailto:brigitte.rose@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

My name is Brigitte Boucher and I am a Madison resident living at 6223 University Avenue. I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Fatal police shootings of members of my community are deeply disturbing to me as a Madison citizen and human being. Knowing that Madison, a city that I love, still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities is a cause for outrage. It doesn't have to be this way.

When I heard that settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000 for officer-involved killings that occurred between 2012 and 2015, this furthered my feelings of outrage. If something is a moral issue as well as a financial detriment to the city, it is abundantly clear that it does not serve Madison or our communities.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community—especially marginalized communities that are disproportionately affected by police violence—providing a bridge to residents and restoring trust.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side

of history.

Sincerely,

Brigitte Boucher

6223 University Ave., #102

Madison, WI 53705

**From:** [Gail Brooks](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment #4!!!!  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:03:18 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from gbrooks@colonialclub.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

The City of Madison has proposed substantial budget cuts to NewBridge for older adult services to include case management services, older adult activities, home/chore food bridge programs and the volunteer guardian/representative payee program. All of these services are vital to older adults in their service area.

Please support amendment #4 at the Common Council meeting this evening. Amendment #4 reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP to NewBridge.

Gail

-----

***Gail Brooks, Case Management Coordinator***

Colonial Club Senior Activity Center

301 Blankenheim Lane

Sun Prairie, Wisconsin 53590

Phone: 608 837-4611, Ext. 127

Email: [gbrooks@colonialclub.org](mailto:gbrooks@colonialclub.org)

Fax: 608 837-9302

Website: [www.colonialclub.org](http://www.colonialclub.org)



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**From:** [Rita Baldacchino](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment #4  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 3:40:19 PM

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Dear Aldermen,

Please support amendment #4, that reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP.

Thank you,  
Rita Cairns  
1622 Lake View Avenue  
Madison, WI 53704

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Terri D](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment #4  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 4:44:35 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from terrideist@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders,

Please support amendment #4, that reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP.

These services are extremely important for the well-being of our senior citizens.

Thank you for your consideration.

Terri Deist



**From:** [vocalist@chorus.net](mailto:vocalist@chorus.net)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Madison Police Oversight  
**Date:** Saturday, November 9, 2024 5:57:24 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from vocalist@chorus.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear All Alders,

I believe oversight of the Madison police should be handled by an independent agency that is safeguarded from political influence! All funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board must be restored!

Marilyn Fisher  
Concerned Citizen

**From:** [Gregory Gelembiuk](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Letter from YWCA  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 10:16:36 AM  
**Attachments:** [YWCA Madison Letter](#) [PCOB Restoration of Funds.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from gwgelemb@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

Please see attached a letter from YWCA Madison CEO Gery Paredes Vásquez, addressed to Members of the Madison Common Council, requesting restoration of funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board. YWCA Madison is one of the community partners of the Police Civilian Oversight Board.

Sincerely,

Dr. Gregory Gelembiuk  
Data Analyst  
Office of the Independent Monitor

11/10/2024

Gery Paredes Vásquez  
YWCA Madison  
101 East Mifflin Street, Suite 100  
Madison, WI 53703

Madison Common Council  
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
Madison, WI 53703



Dear Members of the Madison Common Council,

I am writing on behalf of YWCA Madison to request the restoration of funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board.

YWCA Madison's mission is rooted in eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, and dignity for all. The work of the Office of the Independent Monitor directly aligns with our mission by helping to address systemic racial disparities in policing. Research shows that police oversight agencies can reduce racial disparities in arrests and officer-involved incidents, making them vital to fostering a just and equitable community.

One of the critical roles of the Office's Data Analyst is to assess the extent of racially biased policing in Madison, particularly at the level of neighborhoods disproportionately affected by racial stigmatization. This data-driven approach is essential for understanding and eliminating racially biased practices. Without funding, this critical work cannot move forward.

We urge the Madison Common Council to support budget amendments to restore funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board. These bodies depend on the integrity of our city's efforts toward racial justice, and with them, the opportunity to address systemic bias in policing will be supported.

Thank you for considering our request. YWCA Madison stands ready to support these efforts to ensure our city remains committed to racial equity and justice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gery Paredes Vásquez".

Gery Paredes Vásquez  
YWCA Madison, CEO

**From:** [Grant Gelhar](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** New Bridge  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 10:26:39 AM

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Please restore funding for New Bridge and support amendment 4. They are a case mgr to over 1000. They provide rep payees and guardians and mental health help. They have 260 programs for food, nutrition and home help. I am one of the volunteers who works with them to help others. They are an essential part of our community.

If you want to cut dollars, cut from the bus company or spend less on the homeless. We must support social services agencies. Tks.

Grant M. Gelhar, Madison

**From:** [Brian Gnojek](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Saturday, November 9, 2024 9:20:50 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from bgnojek@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination. Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard. Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000 for officer-involved killings that occurred between 2012 and 2015. This has caused large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers. Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability. Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was hired after twice recruiting nationally.
- A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
- A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
- A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
- A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD.
- A physical complaint form had recently been completed.
- A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
- Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
- The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
- Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.

- Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them.

And the list of achievements goes on. Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, *particularly* for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally (by MPD themselves) are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves.

A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians. OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor".

Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB. But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget. Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian Gnojek, resident and homeowner in the Dunn Marsh area

**From:** [Debbie Griffin](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Police Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:18:42 AM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

Please vote to restore all funding and independence to the Office of the Independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board.

Thank you!

Debbie Griffin  
Madison 53704

Sent from my iPhone



**From:** [haidis@aol.com](mailto:haidis@aol.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment #4  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 10:21:25 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from haidis@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Please support amendment #4, that reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP. Older adults need and deserve your support.

Shirley Haidinger  
949 E Gorham St  
Madison, WI 53703

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Upcoming budget amendments  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 9:51:32 AM

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Recipient: All Alders:

Monday, November 11, 2024 – 9:50am

Brian Hanneman  
4901 Altem Cir

Madison, Wisconsin. 53711 Yes, by email. [bhannema@yahoo.com](mailto:bhannema@yahoo.com) All Alders Upcoming budget amendments I registered in opposition to the upcoming budget amendments because it looks to restore the Independent Police Monitor/Citizen oversight board. It's been a colossal half million expense we've been carrying and a complaint form is all they've accomplished. The money is better served toward housing, police officers to make sure Rapid Bus Service is safe for citizens or refunded to taxpayers.

**From:** [Ray Hayes](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Operating Budget Amendment Request  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 9:27:25 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [rjhayes1994@outlook.com](mailto:rjhayes1994@outlook.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

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  - A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
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  - A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
  - Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
  - The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
  - Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
  - Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.
- Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally (by MPD themselves) are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves.

A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Ray Hayes

**From:** [Dawn Hinebaugh](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Budget Agenda: OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 11:33:54 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from hinebd@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

Please restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Civilian Oversight Board, and restore the position of Data Analyst.

While I understand that it is easy to zero in on vacant positions and cut them, in this case, it is unwarranted. As a new agency, it takes time to become fully staffed, which it is intending to do now. Please do not waste the years of pre-work and public input that went into creating this very important agency. Please give it a chance to succeed before making a premature decision.

Thank you.  
Dawn Hinebaugh  
Madison

**From:** [Dawn Hinebaugh](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [annewalker@homelandgarden.com](mailto:annewalker@homelandgarden.com); [Carlton 8895](#)  
**Subject:** Budget: Parks pilot program  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 11:45:52 AM

---

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Dear alders,

Please reject the Finance Committee's amendment for a parking pilot program at city parks. While I appreciate finding new solutions for budgetary woes, I respectfully disagree that charging people to park at our city parks is the answer. Certainly, one could argue that getting non-city folks (commuters) to pay "their fair share" for city services is a good thing, however, this program may disenfranchise city of madison folks who use the park for a variety of reasons.

Please work with the Parks commission to put together more details and get public input BEFORE we go down this path.

Thank you.  
Dawn Hinebaugh  
District 18 Madison

**From:** [jhirsch@chorus.net](mailto:jhirsch@chorus.net)  
**To:** [Conklin, Nikki](#)  
**Cc:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** City Budget  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 7:34:18 AM

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Alder Conklin:

You have a busy week as you go through the final budget process. While the referendum to increase property taxes was approved in other areas of the City, the "no" votes in this ward resoundingly outnumbered those in support of the referendum. The additional property tax increase is NOT supported.

As our elected representative, it is important that your votes on the budget and amendments reflect the wishes of your constituents.

We expect that your votes will:

- 1. consider any effect which will negatively impact District 9.**
- 2. NOT spend all of the \$22 million of the levy increase.**
- 3. vote "no" on expenses which will continue the deficit into future budgets.**

Sincerely,  
Janet Hirsch  
District 9

**From:** [jhirsch@chorus.net](mailto:jhirsch@chorus.net)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Item #3 Budget General Property Tax  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 10:47:00 AM

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Alders:

Item #3... When you adopt the 2025 budget and authorize the property tax levy, I ask you to **remove the inclusion of the Five-Year Budget Plan**

The Five-Year Budget Plan takes away any meaningful discussion of future budgets.

In the next 5 years, the Plan allows the Common Council to take the easy route and add New Special Charges which increase up to \$25 million in 2030. Whether it comes from property taxes or special fees, it does nothing to improve affordability in Madison or to deal with an ongoing deficit.

Madison constituents expect fiscal responsibility from the Common Council. The mayor and alders have done little to earn the trust of the Madison population. There have been no meaningful attempts to review existing expenses, prioritize projects or hold contractors accountable. It is much easier to ask for more money and then, spend every penny of it.

Please remove the Five-Year Budget Plan.

Janet Hirsch  
Madison Resident



**From:** [Richard Jones](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore civilian police oversight to budget  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 2:40:01 PM

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Dear alders

As a tax paying citizen, someone who has owned property, raised children and had a small business in Madison for over 30 years I would like to express my support for alder Rummel and others to reinstate funding for

***POLICE CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT BOARD*** (PCOB) and THE ***OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITOR*** (OIM).

Thank you

Richard Jones

S T U D I O P A R A N

2051 Winnebago Street

Madison WI 53704

608-242-111

[www.studioparan.com](http://www.studioparan.com)

**From:** [Adria Kaufman](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** OIM + PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 8:08:29 AM

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[You don't often get email from [adria.kaufman@gmail.com](mailto:adria.kaufman@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000 for officer-involved killings that occurred between 2012 and 2015. This has caused large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was hired after twice recruiting nationally.
- A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
- A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
- A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
- A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD.
- A physical complaint form had recently been completed.
- A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
- Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
- The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
- Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
- Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.

Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally (by MPD themselves) are rarely upheld, since officers are basically investigating themselves.

A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,  
Adria Kaufman  
552 Apollo Way  
Madison, WI 53718

**From:** [Linda Ketcham](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restoration of full funding to the Office of Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 4:17:53 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from linda@justdane.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

I am writing on behalf of JustDane to ask for the restoration of full funding to the OIM and PCOB. I sat on the Ad-Hoc Committee for the entirety of the Committee's work as we heard data, input from people with lived experience, research, and as we carefully crafted recommendations focused on further increasing the professionalism, accountability, and transparency of the MPD while reducing the racial disparities in that permeate our policing policies, practices and systems. All of the recommendations, and especially those related to the creation of the OIM and PCOB, serve to increase trust of the MPD within our community.

The result of last Tuesday's election makes the OIM and PCOB even more important as the next Administration has said that it will move to provide prosecutorial immunity to police officers. If law enforcement officers cannot be held criminally accountable for their actions, then the work of OIM and PCOB are critical to maintaining trust, transparency and accountability by providing an outlet for investigation of complaints and for action when bad actors within the MPD commit crimes.

Madison and MPD have made strides in needed reforms, we cannot afford to lose ground or go back, especially knowing we have an administration at the Federal level that seeks to condone, excuse and pardon criminal activity by law enforcement officers. Please fully fund the OIM and PCOB to maintain police accountability and to increase public safety.

Sincerely,

Linda Ketcham (she, her, hers)  
Executive Director  
JustDane, Inc.  
128 E. Olin Ave. Suite 202  
Madison, WI 53713  
608-256-0906  
She, her, hers

*"Compassion and justice are companions, not choices." Wm. Sloane Coffin*



**From:** [Carolyn Kuban](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support+Amendment+#4  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 8:39:32 PM

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Support+amendment+#4,+that+reallocates+\$103,870+to+purchased+services+for+the+older+adult+services+RFP.

To the Aldermen:

I strongly encourage you to continue all funding possible in support of the elderly living in Dane County, particularly through the the social agency, NewBridge.

My own experience with them was one of survival of a family member. My brother, a Dane County resident, was a 74 year old mentally disabled man with an extreme walking deficit, who lived alone.in his home. It is partly due to the NewBridge care program and their caring and diligence that he isnflourishing today.

My story is that my brother was discovered during the pandemic to be in dire straits: without healthy food, decent personal hygiene, or a clean living space. Our family thought he was fine as he never discussed his situation. NewBridge was alerted by his doctor that he was without funds, almost immobile, and needing help. NewBridge immediately provided him with hot daily nutritious meals, helped secure a housecleaning service, provided him with a wheelchair, and checked in with his family about his condition. Even after the family was informed, learning that he had some funds and stepping in with decision-making, NewBridge supported us with recommendations and connections of local resources for the elderly. They were awesome all the way and abolutely need to be there for our lost loved ones as they age.

Thank you for listening and voting the right way in this matter.  
Yours, Carolyn Kuban, sister and power-of-attorney of my brother

**From:** [Brian Lavendel](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Police Oversight and Office of the Independent Police Monitor  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 8:02:07 AM

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**From:** [Carol Eunmi LEE](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding Operating Budget Amendment 5  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 9:55:15 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from carollee@wisc.edu. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Dear Alders,

I am writing in support of the 2025 Operating Budget Amendment 5, which would partially restore funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board.

Civilian oversight of the police is essential for multiple reasons. Oversight reduces the likelihood of police shootings and civil rights violations, and the financial burden on taxpayers of lawsuits after such incidents. It also provides the most effective means of reducing the current sky-high racial disparities in arrests and police encounters in Madison. As a non-white resident of Madison, this issue is of concern to me.

As a scientist, I recognize the critical importance of employing a data analyst to perform the work of the Independent Monitor. The data analyst performs analyses to understand and diagnose potential problems in MPD. The Office of the Independent Monitor cannot use MPD data analysts for this function, given the clear conflict of interest. Leaving the data analyst position unfunded would impose a grave deficit and impede the function of the Office of the Independent Monitor.

Ultimately, I would like to see more funding of civilian police oversight in Madison. Ordinances should be passed mandating that our police oversight agency have a budget that is at least 1% of the budget of MPD.

Moreover, it is crucial that our police oversight agency remain fully structurally independent and not housed within the Executive branch of government. Working within a governmental structure to hold other parts of the same government accountable leaves an oversight agency vulnerable to either overt political or subtle interference. The Mayor is legally the head of MPD, and placing the Office of the Independent Monitor under the Mayor (for example, within another city department) would completely undermine its mission.

Thus, my request is to keep our police oversight agency independent and fully funded.... and to pass Operating Budget Amendment 5.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carol Lee  
915 East Dayton Street.

**From:** [Amanda Leipold](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fund OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 5:20:01 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from amandaleipold@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Madison Alders,

I support Alders Rummel, Madison and Duncan's budget amendment to restore majority of the funding to the OIM and PCOB. I support maintaining the independence and keep the office and board whole. Please make no changes to this amendment of funding unless it increases the funding.

Thank you,

Amanda Leipold  
1122 Melby Dr, Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Parking fees for City parks  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:17:07 PM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Tuesday, November 12, 2024 – 1:12pm

A. Pat Malcolm

She/her

206 Davidson St

Apt 2

Madison, Wisconsin. 53716 Yes, by phone. [6085209301](tel:6085209301) Call after 10 am or text anytime All Alders Parking fees for City parks Please do not even consider parking fees for Madison city parks. The parks are for everyone and for many they are the backyard that allows vital active play for families and children. Many families are facing severely constrained budgets that don't allow for visits to the Madison Children's Museum or similar venues. Even poor kids deserve to be able to play in a park. Even poor families deserve a place to play with their kids and socialize with family and other adults while enjoying picnics, volunteering and organized activities in the parks. Everyone should be able to attend Mallard games and other sports without tacking a parking fee onto the cost of tickets. Please keep the parks for everyone and not just an elite few.



**From:** [Amelia Royko Maurer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Difference between OIM/PCOB, MPD and PFC  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:29:45 AM  
**Attachments:** [OIM VS PFC.png](#)  
[DIF BETWEEN DATA ANALYSTS.png](#)

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## MADISON POLICE OVERSIGHT MECHANISMS: HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

### OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT MONITOR/ POLICE CIVILIAN OVERSIGHT BOARD

- Nominated mostly by community. Appointed by council and mayor.
- no city/political/police influence.
- no former police officers.
- board must also reflect most impacted community.
- produces data to improve MPD outcomes and public safety.
- makes policy recommendations to improve MPD outcomes and public safety.
- conducts investigations and monitors MPD.
- can refer complainants to the PFC and provide them with attorneys, to level the playing field in PFC hearings, but has no power to impose discipline on MPD officers.
- conducts outreach and solicits community input.

### POLICE AND FIRE COMMISSION

- Nominated and appointed by mayor.
- city/political/police influence.
- includes former police officers.
- board doesn't need to reflect most impacted community
- doesn't produce data to improve MPD outcomes.
- doesn't make policy recommendations to improve MPD outcomes.
- does not conduct investigations or monitor MPD.
- provides a quasi-judicial tribunal that imposes discipline, hires and fires.
- does not provide public complainants with attorneys.
- does not solicit community input.

## OIM DATA ANALYST VS MPD DATA ANALYST: HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

### OIM DATA ANALYST

- functions as an independent third party, performing data analyses to diagnose potential problems in MPD (something that a police department cannot properly do for itself, given inherent conflict of interest).
- looks at sources of friction between MPD and the community, to help bridge that gap.
- performs analyses with a mission of improving problems in MPD, essentially applying problem-oriented policing approaches to MPD itself..

### MPD DATA ANALYST

- perform analyses of crime patterns in Madison and also collect statistics on certain MPD responses
- performs analyses with a mission of attempting crime control in Madison, including via application of problem-oriented policing.

MPD DATA ANALYSTS HAVE A COMPLETELY  
DIFFERENT AIM  
THAN THE OIM DATA ANALYST.

**From:** [Amanda Merkwae](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** ACLU-WI Letter re OIM, PCOB Budget  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 10:01:08 AM  
**Attachments:** [ACLU-WI Letter re OIM, PCOB.pdf](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from [amerkwae@aclu-wi.org](mailto:amerkwae@aclu-wi.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good Morning,

Attached is a letter from the ACLU of Wisconsin respectfully requesting the Common Council support a budget amendment to restore funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board.

Thank you,  
Amanda Merkwae

--

**Amanda Merkwae** (she/her)  
Advocacy Director  
American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin  
207 E. Buffalo Street, Suite 325  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
(414) 272-4032 x239 | [amerkwae@aclu-wi.org](mailto:amerkwae@aclu-wi.org)



207 East Buffalo Street, Ste 325  
Milwaukee, WI 53202  
(414) 272-4032  
[aclu-wi.org](http://aclu-wi.org)

November 12, 2024

Dear Honorable Members of the Madison Common Council:

The ACLU of Wisconsin has deep concerns with the mayor's proposal to make significant cuts to the budget of Madison's Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and the Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). Such a move would severely undermine civilian oversight of law enforcement in Madison, effectively dismantling protections that were hard-won through years of community organizing, development of the OIR Group recommendations, and the comprehensive work of the Madison Police Department Police & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee. We respectfully request that the Common Council support a budget amendment to restore funding to the OIM and PCOB.

Madison's oversight structures were designed to be highly independent and community-centered, empowering residents to have a critical voice in law enforcement accountability. This aligns with best practices across the country. In Milwaukee, the Fire and Police Commission (FPC) has long served as a necessary check on the Milwaukee Police Department, providing critical research and analysis of policies and procedures, and giving the community a say in how they were policed. Devastatingly, the state legislature stripped the FPC of its policy-making authority through Act 12, depriving residents of the primary avenue of independent civilian oversight over the police. Madison must not follow this same path of regression.

We know from both local and national experience that law enforcement cannot effectively investigate or hold itself accountable. The pervasive culture of the "Blue Wall of Silence" within police forces makes officers more likely to protect each other than the public they serve. Public relations efforts by police departments often prioritize shaping favorable narratives rather than ensuring transparency and accountability. These realities highlight why independent civilian oversight—adequately funded and staffed and free from political interference—is essential to community safety.

The ACLU of Wisconsin urges you to protect the budget and independence of the OIM and PCOB. These institutions are not luxuries to be discarded in times of fiscal pressure—they are necessities that safeguard the public from abuses of power. Weakening oversight sends the message that accountability is conditional and that the safety and dignity of Madison's residents are expendable. At a time when communities across the country continue reckoning with police violence and demanding greater transparency, Madison must stand firm in its commitment to meaningful civilian oversight of police, ensuring that the promise of justice and accountability made in 2020 is not broken. Thank you.

**From:** [Bill Monkemeyer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment #4  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:55:11 AM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-BSP PRIVAT](#)

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [bill.monkemeyer@bankofsunprairie.com](mailto:bill.monkemeyer@bankofsunprairie.com).

[Learn why this is important](#)

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Please support amendment #4, that reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP.

Thanks,

Bill Monkemeyer  
Private Banker  
NMLS# 2525543  
[bill.monkemeyer@bankofsunprairie.com](mailto:bill.monkemeyer@bankofsunprairie.com)  
608-467-1740 Direct  
608-576-5048 Cell

To apply for a mortgage or home equity click here - [Bank Of Sun Prairie - William H Monkemeyer \(mymortgage-online.com\)](#)

**Voted Best Financial Institution in 2023 Best of Cottage Grove *and* Best of Sun Prairie Awards!**



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**Voted Best Financial Institution in 2024 Best of Sun Prairie Awards!**

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Parking Fees and Keeping Madison's Parks Accessible for People with Disabilities  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 12:57:25 PM

---

Alders,

Following please find an email that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thank you,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

---

**From:** Disability Pride Madison <[disabilitypridemadison@gmail.com](mailto:disabilitypridemadison@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, November 11, 2024 12:14 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Cc:** Hoyt, Rebecca <[RHoyt@cityofmadison.com](mailto:RHoyt@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Parking Fees and Keeping Madison's Parks Accessible for People with Disabilities

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear members of the Madison City Council,

I am writing to you on behalf of Disability Pride Madison, the organization responsible for producing the annual Disability Pride Festival, which takes place around the anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in late July. As a member of the executive board and having raised the funds to pay for the festival since 2013, I want to express our gratitude for the ongoing support from the City of Madison, the Department of Civil Rights, and various local organizations that help make this event possible.

The fees associated with renting city parks for our festival are already steep. Currently, we rely on sponsorship to cover these costs, which exceed \$2,500. While we are fortunate to have support from local hospitals, managed care organizations, and others, this fee burden remains a substantial challenge for a

community that already faces significant financial disparities. By adding parking fees to Warner and other city parks, you shift the debt to people attending our festivals. This is even more concerning.

As you may know, people with disabilities represent one of the lowest-paid demographics in our region, earning, on average, only 66 cents for every dollar earned by their non-disabled peers. Additionally, in Wisconsin, it is still legal to pay individuals with disabilities a subminimum wage—sometimes as low as \$1 per hour. Given these realities, the cost of parking at public parks for events like ours is a heavy financial burden on a community that is already struggling.

It is particularly concerning that additional fees, such as parking charges, could further exclude many people with disabilities from participating in our festival. For example, the \$8 parking fee at the Alliant Energy Center would likely price out a significant portion of our attendees, many of whom already face financial hardship. Many individuals with disabilities live in group homes or subsidized housing managed by nonprofit organizations that are chronically underfunded. These organizations often have limited resources to cover such costs, and residents, who receive as little as the federally mandated \$55 a month after their care expenses, cannot afford additional fees for parking or park access.

Charging fees to access public parks, especially for events that are meant to be inclusive, risks excluding those people who need the most support and resources. We believe there must be a better, more equitable way to raise funds for park maintenance and events without placing an undue burden on



the most vulnerable people these parks are intended to serve.

We respectfully ask that the City of Madison consider alternatives to the current fee structure. Public parks should be accessible to everyone, regardless of income or disability status, and we urge you to explore funding mechanisms that do not disproportionately impact our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to working with you to ensure that Madison remains a welcoming and accessible place for all of its residents.

Sincerely,

Kate Moran

Treasurer Disability Pride Madison

608-838-7011

[Website](#) || [Instagram](#) || [Facebook](#)

**From:** [Ed Niles](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Feedback on proposed amendment: Partial OIM [funding] restoration  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 10:38:02 AM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from eniles@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders,

Since I have little faith that my alder would take this commentary under consideration, as she is co-sponsoring the proposed amendment, I feel the need to share my thoughts with you all. The mayor and council's decision to limit funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) was one of the few concrete examples of making hard choices to limit spending before the property tax levy referendum went to a vote this year. It would be a shame to reverse one of the few points of fiscal restraint which the city has shown in spending recently. Personally, I've always felt the OIM and associated Police Civilian Oversight Board are duplicative with limited actual power to effect change, and both entities have an extremely limited track record for producing actual work or data while spending hundreds of thousands of dollars.

I strongly urge you to reject the proposed amendment to restore partial OIM funding when it comes up.

-Ed Niles  
2129 Linden Ave, Madison, WI 53704

**From:** [BJ Obermeyer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment #4  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 7:05:38 PM

---

Some people who received this message don't often get email from obermeyer32@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Support amendment #4, that reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP. I have found New Bridge helpful in their assistance to find a new apartment when I couldn't afford my house any longer. I also appreciate the activities set up for different cultures and sometimes wish I could take activities with other cultures.

BJ Obermeyer  
Westminster Senior Apts.

**From:** [irisheyescu7@gmail.com](mailto:irisheyescu7@gmail.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support+Amendment+#4  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 7:29:10 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from [irisheyescu7@gmail.com](mailto:irisheyescu7@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Support+amendment+#4,+that+reallocates+\$103,870+to+purchased+services+for+the+older+adult+services+RFP

It is with great concern that I write this comment!

Yet again another human resource budget is being attacked! You can't keep cutting funding and hope for quality care for the elder and challenged population.

Please take great consideration in restoring funding to amendment #4.

Sincerely  
Ellin Purpora  
Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [audreraephoto@gmail.com](mailto:audreraephoto@gmail.com)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore funding for police oversight  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 8:08:23 AM

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[You don't often get email from [audreraephoto@gmail.com](mailto:audreraephoto@gmail.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

Did you know that Madison's PCOB and OIM are considered among the most cutting-edge, independent, and empowered civilian police oversight agencies in the nation, looked to by other cities as a model? Did you know that they have been lauded by Barack Obama? As the saying goes, sometimes people don't recognize the prophet in their own backyard.

Settlements from lawsuits against the Madison Police Department since 2015 have cost over \$12,500,000 for officer-involved killings that occurred between 2012 and 2015. This has caused large increases in the cost of insurance, a huge burden on city taxpayers. The OIM and PCOB protect the city, reducing the likelihood of civil rights violations and costly lawsuits against MPD and its officers.

Fatal police shootings have dropped in Madison (and especially police shootings of unarmed people) and a lot of it is because police know they will be held accountable. Fatal police shootings, which had been occurring at the rate of 1-2 per year and were on an increasing trend, dropped after 2016. It was a direct result of the community protests, changes in policy pushed through by those mobilizations, and a spotlight on MPD, culminating in the creation of the OIM and PCOB to provide enduring accountability.

Since they were created in 2020, the PCOB and OIM have spent only \$411,000. With that relatively small expenditure and meeting only one time a month, there have been major accomplishments, even if there were at times growing pains in booting up this whole new city department.

- An Independent Monitor was hired after twice recruiting nationally.
  - A program manager was hired and is now engaged in outreach to community organizations and the community at large.
  - A data analyst was chosen and was in the process of being hired until the Mayor ordered city staff not to permit the individual to be hired.
  - A detailed data analysis plan was developed, focusing on racial disparities in policing outcomes, data-driven identification of officers at risk of misconduct or other adverse outcomes, and detection and disruption of networks of officer misconduct.
  - A process was developed for handling and investigating complaints filed against MPD.
  - A physical complaint form had recently been completed.
  - A memorandum of understanding was negotiated with MPD, for data and records access.
  - Extensive training had been obtained from the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE) and the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, including on complaint investigation.
  - The OIM and members of the PCOB have attended NACOLE conferences and networked with members of civilian police oversight bodies in cities across the U.S.
  - Policies were crafted to govern the functioning of the PCOB and a subcommittee structure developed, for efficient completion of tasks.
  - Community listening sessions were held in neighborhoods across Madison, resulting in a report summarizing insights and emergent themes arising from a wide variety of powerful first-hand accounts of encounters with law enforcement officers voiced by the civilians that experienced them. And the list of achievements goes on.
- Alders should recognize the value that the OIM and PCOB bring to people in the community, particularly for people who are not comfortable filing complaints with the police department. It is also worth noting that complaints to MPD that are investigated internally (by MPD themselves) are rarely upheld, since officers are basically

investigating themselves.

A large segment of the population of Madison, particularly in more marginalized communities, consist of people who don't trust the police department, are alienated from it, and won't cooperate with it. The OIM and PCOB provides the mechanism needed to provide a bridge to all those residents, and to restore trust. The needs of this large segment of the community are often ignored by the segments of the community that are more privileged. This city agency is very unusual, in that it was deliberately designed to represent and empower Madison's most marginalized communities.

Madison still has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. In Madison in 2023, a Black individual was over 8 times more likely to be arrested at least once than a white individual. Benchmarked to population numbers, a disorderly conduct charge was over 13 times more likely to be against someone who was Black than someone who was white. It is crucial to better understand the sources of these disparities so they can be addressed, and this is a key role of the OIM data analyst. Studies have clearly shown that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority (investigative authority, etc.), as in Madison, reduces racial disparities in disorderly conduct arrests rates (i.e., a type of arrest for which officers have considerable discretion) and racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

OIR, the firm that did a top-to-bottom review of MPD, made creation of a civilian police monitor and oversight board a cornerstone of their recommendations, with one of the oversight entities' most critical roles being "Ensuring that the adopted findings and recommendations of the current review process be implemented and sustained." As the MPD Policy & Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee report states: "the Committee believes that creating an independent monitor and civilian review body is so critical, both in its own right and to ensure successful implementation of all of the other recommendations the Committee is making, that we have moved this up as our first recommendation, and we pulled it out and forwarded it separately to the Common Council and Mayor". Only a small fraction of those recommendations have been enacted so far, and this won't change without the ongoing analysis and advocacy of the OIM and PCOB.

But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Audre Rae

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** [Karen Reece](#)  
**To:** [Knox Jr., Isadore](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** In SUPPORT of the Office on Independent Monitor and PCOB  
**Date:** Friday, November 8, 2024 4:13:28 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from inkreece@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Alder Knox and all alders,

The Office of Independent Monitor **needs renewed funding to ensure success** for an initiative that was demanded by residents seeking to feel safe and for greater accountability with our police departments and city decision making. **To cut the initiative now would be a slap in the face to the diverse group of people, many who have experienced police violence, who invested years of effort to achieve this outcome.** To cut the OIM now says to residents that their years of hard **volunteer** work and advocacy is not worth anything.

The OIM is not a novel concept. Cities around the country have seen reductions in disparities and improved confidence from residents. Over time, this will also save the City money. While the OIM has had it's challenges, cutting it now when it has just become fully staffed would be a mistake.

While the OIM was launched in 2020, it should not be evaluated as a four year old project given that it had to endure **pandemic** conditions like the rest of us. The office has not been fully staffed until recently, so the development and success of a major city initiative fell on the backs of **volunteer resident committee members**. Furthermore, many people in the city, including the Police and Fire Commission and especially some within Madison Police Department are not fully supportive of this office and have made it difficult to agree on processes or to move things forward. We need full cooperation and support from the city to make this work.

Alder Evers recently stated in an email to his constituents that "If the City had funded a non-profit in 2020 and progress reports in ensuing years showed only halting steps toward achieving stated goals, we likely would have pulled the plug."  
This is apples to oranges and **not a fair comparison**. If the City had funded a non-profit or if this was a small business, the project would have been fully staff by appropriately compensated employees with a level of expertise in the work. That absolutely did not happen here.

While the thoughts I share in this email are entirely my own and do not necessarily represent my employer, I work for one of the nonprofits tasked with nominating members for the PCOB committee. Much of my job is focused on reducing racial disparities, criminal legal system reform, and training organizations to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. The past 10 years have shown a heart wrenching and despicable amount of tragedy and community disruption at the hands of police departments across the country, including our own police department. We should want to do what it takes to have procedures in place that will protect all residents of our city, but especially Black residents and residents of color who have disproportionately received unequal treatment for so long. These are not opinions, these are facts that the people who fought for this office to exist spent a lot of time researching,

outlining, and strategizing to change.

Especially given the potential for a contentious climate over the next four years, it is critical that you do not eliminate the OIM or the PCOB, but give it a fair chance and the right support it needs to succeed.

I am more than happy to discuss anything I've shared in this letter. Please contact me if this would be helpful.

--

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Karen Reece, PhD (pronouns: she/her/they/them)  
District 14 - Alder Knox



**From:** [Allen Rickey](#)  
**To:** [Bonnie Roe](#); [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Office of the Independent Monitor/PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 2:08:57 PM

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It seems to have self corrected

[Sent from AT&T Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

On Tuesday, November 12, 2024, 1:19 PM, Bonnie Roe <[bonnie.roe@gmail.com](mailto:bonnie.roe@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Alders,

The topic of the Office of the Independent Monitor/PCOB has really been full of surprises lately. I'm not sure what I'm more surprised by, the fact that the Mayor threatened to cut it completely if the referendum failed and cut it some even if it passed, or the fact that Alders Rummel, Madison, and Duncan created an amendment to re-fund it.

Where the money came from to provide this additional funding, also surprising. If only there had been that kind of budget scrutinizing before asking residents to vote in a permanent increase on our property taxes...

Police accountability and oversight is really important to me. It's why I attend nearly every one of the PCOB/IM meetings, as well as the PSRC meetings and the PFC meetings. But this particular system is not working and continued funding has not been earned.

As you listen to all the public comments tonight, just keep in mind:

- Not one complaint has been submitted
- Not one investigation carried out

And despite all the Powers and Duties of the OIM and PCOB, as laid out in the ordinance linked below for reference, the following expectations of the Office have not been met:

- The have not *Monitored Activities and Conducted Independent Investigations*

They have not *Made Recommendations to the Chief of Police*

- They have not *Made Referrals to the Police and Fire Commission*
- They have not *Appointed Counsel for Aggrieved Individuals*
- They have not *Conducted a single Annual Review of the Chief of Police*
- They have not *Processed a single Complaint*
- They have not *Staffed the PCOB* (positions have sat vacant, leading to many meetings canceled last minute due to lack of quorum)
- They have not *Issued a single Public Report* despite very clear guidance and deadlines (*"The OIM shall submit an Annual Public Report ("Annual Report") to the Mayor and Common Council by March 15. At a minimum, the Annual Report shall:"* [see link for detail])
- They have not *Maintained an Ongoing Status Report*
- I can't imagine this was done, but I guess you would know: "Evaluate Effectiveness of the Monitor's Office. The Board shall provide input to the Mayor and Common Council regarding the effectiveness of the Office of the Independent Monitor."

<https://www.lwm-info.org/DocumentCenter/View/4216/10-Madison-ordinances-adopted>

In short, this is not personal. I have enjoyed getting to know IM Robin Copley and the members of the PCOB through their meetings. And I truly value police oversight. But I believe (and hope) that any other City department or agency would face an evaluation on a regular basis to see if ongoing funding is earned. An objective review would show otherwise.

Please vote no on Amendment #5.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11

**From:** [Jake Rodgers](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:09:57 AM

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You don't often get email from jjrodgers1994@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to request an operating budget amendment to restore full funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These police oversight bodies are crucial to the future wellbeing of our city, and should be treated equivalently to other city departments, rather than being singled out for draconian cuts or elimination.

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But at this point, just as the OIM is about to start fully functioning, just as it is about to start receiving complaints, just as it is about to start performing data analysis to determine if there

is evidence of MPD officers engaging in racially discriminatory policing, the mayor is seeking to defund it and potentially kill it. And has intervened to prevent the chosen data analyst from being hired while subsequently declaring that the vacant position justifies slashing the agency's budget.

Most fundamentally, this is a deeply moral issue, concerning the wellbeing of members of marginalized communities. I fervently hope that you choose to stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,

Jake Rodgers

**From:** [Bonnie Roe](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Office of the Independent Monitor/PCOB  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 1:19:25 PM

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Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

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- I can't imagine this was done, but I guess you would know: "Evaluate Effectiveness of the Monitor's Office. The Board shall provide input to the Mayor and Common Council regarding the effectiveness of the Office of the Independent Monitor."

<https://www.lwm-info.org/DocumentCenter/View/4216/10-Madison-ordinances-adopted>

In short, this is not personal. I have enjoyed getting to know IM Robin Copley and the members of the PCOB through their meetings. And I truly value police oversight. But I believe (and hope) that any other City department or agency would face an evaluation on a regular basis to see if ongoing funding is earned. An objective review would show otherwise.

Please vote no on Amendment #5.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe  
District 11



**From:** [Steve Starkey](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [T Sneed](#); [AJ Hardie](#); [Tarah Stangler](#)  
**Subject:** Letter in support of funding for the PCOB & OIM  
**Date:** Sunday, November 10, 2024 2:50:05 PM  
**Attachments:** [Alders PCOB Letter 2024.pdf](#)

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Dear City of Madison Alders,

I have attached our letter in support of full funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB) and Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM).

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Thank you,

Steve Starkey,

Executive Director, OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center



#### Board of Directors

T Sneed  
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Wayne Gathright  
*Vice-President*

Dragan Mikulin  
*Co-secretary*

Valerie Walowit  
*Treasurer*

Shannon Johnson-Windsor  
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*IT & Media Director*

DaMontae January, MS, Ed.  
*EverStrong Program Director*

Tarah Stangler  
*Harm Reduction Services Director*



November 2024

Dear Alders,

OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center has supported the LGBTQ+ community of Madison, WI and Dane County for over 50 years. From the start, our work has been driven by the needs of our community and has continuously evolved to ensure that all members of our community feel represented by the services we provide and the advocacy we partake in. It is for this reason that we are writing to request that you restore funding for the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB).

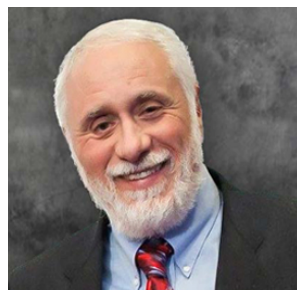
People in the LGBTQ+ community are uniquely vulnerable to victimization and negative experiences in interactions with the police because of the pervasiveness of discrimination and stigma towards our identities. As documented in the 2024 Policing Pride report from the American Civil Liberties Union, transgender people of all races and LGBTQ+ people of color experience involuntary police-initiated contact (e.g., searches), insulting language and verbal harassment, and use of physical force at significantly higher rates than the cisgender, heterosexual community.

As a result of these experiences, people in our community are less trusting of the police and often do not view them as a legitimate resource for assistance. In fact, people in the LGBTQ+ community are often less willing to report crimes to the police due to the mistreatment many of us have experienced in police interactions.

Given the stark reality that exists for our community in our interactions with the police, the PCOB and OIM are absolutely critical mechanisms for advocacy in instances of injustice. The ACLU Policing Pride report itself states that the implementation of "strong oversight with meaningful community involvement to ensure that police are held accountable for violations and mistreatment of LGBTQ+ people" (pg. 38) are necessary to address anti-LGBTQ+ violence and abuse perpetrated by the police.

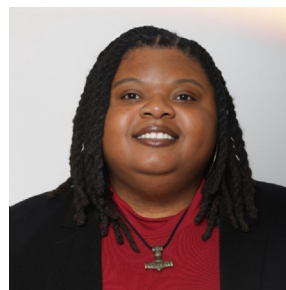
The PCOB and OIM are two of the only methods available by which our community can maintain meaningful involvement in police oversight and accountability, and OutReach LGBTQ+ Community Center strongly supports the restoration and maintenance of their funding as part of the City of Madison's commitments to LGBTQ+ equity and representation.

For OutReach,



A blue ink signature of Steve Starkey.

**Steve Starkey**  
Executive Director



A blue ink signature of T Sneed.

**T Sneed**  
OutReach Board President

**From:** [Christopher Stern](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore funding for the Independent Monitor & Civilian Oversight Board of the Madison Police  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 2:42:42 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from crstern@uwalumni.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to implore you to please take any action necessary to fully restore and maintain funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor (OIM) and the Police Civilian Oversight Board (PCOB). These two key oversight bodies are only in their infancy, and I believe they are already providing valuable work and services to the community and large. I believe they are integral for maintaining public trust and support for the Madison Police Department.

I am hopeful that the OIM and PCOB will not only continue, but will continue as independent and non-politicized bodies that can help Madisonian's feel safe reporting concerns with their policing. I also believe that this type of accountability and oversight is the bare minimum to building a path toward just policing and racial equity in Madison.

Please amend the operating budget and restore full funding for the OIM and PCOB.

Sincerely,

Christopher Stern  
2019 Vondron Road,  
Madison, WI 53716

--

[Christopher Stern](#)

he/him/his  
[crstern@uwalumni.com](mailto:crstern@uwalumni.com)  
608.345.0006

**From:** [Estelle Wagner](#)  
**To:** [All Alders; council](#)  
**Subject:** Opinion regarding 11/12/2024 budget meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:10:02 AM

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You don't often get email from sl128gm@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I am a 28 year old trans woman writing to oppose the mayor's proposed budget, and support alderpersons Rummel, Madison, and Duncan's amendment restoring funding to the OIM and PCOB.

The incoming president is a fan of police violence, who admires the former Philippine dictator Rodrigo Duterte's police death squads, and called for "one very violent day" of police violence against suspected criminals over mere shoplifting. Nearly four years ago, over a dozen police officers betrayed the law, country, and their communities by participating in the January 6th attempt to steal the presidential election on the incoming president's behalf. A police organization representing over 200,000 officers endorsed him as a candidate this year, and police almost everywhere support his party substantially more than civilians in general. In the coming years, the most violent and hateful members of the force may be emboldened to 'go rogue' and follow their president in breaking the law. Police oversight and scrutiny will become more important than ever. Additionally, the monitor may be capable of providing data that could make it easier for the chief of police to discipline officers who engage in misconduct -- something that is often difficult even in the cases where there are good people at the top.

When the incoming administration follows its plans to rapidly restrict hormone replacement therapy and the public participation of transgender Americans (in sports, bathrooms, or elsewhere), we will become early targets. Although I hope the state of Wisconsin and the city of Madison implement protections for us, there will certainly be officers who choose to enforce national law over local law. This will set the stage for increased conflict between us and the police because of our procurement of medicine through means that aren't legally sanctioned, and through protest, and even just our insistence on existing among other humans. The Office of the Independent Monitor is one of the few places we can confidently go as an independent municipal force to advocate for our civil rights.

The Madison police are funded to the tune of approximately \$100M dollars. That the Office of the Independent Monitor is currently receiving only half of a percent of that, and may be reduced by almost another half, is a deep insult to all of us who need it to be a functioning office. I want to believe in Madison as a place that will be liveable for us, but I simply won't be able to trust any local protections if one of the most crucial mechanisms for enforcing them is gutted. In the coming years, we will see a flood of bad national laws, and bad laws make for bad law enforcement. This is the time for safeguards, more than any other.

--

Estelle Wagner

**From:** [Carol Walker](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** New Bridge  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 2:53:25 PM

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To Whom It May Concern,

I live in district 12 and use New Bridge for activities and socialization. I have been participating since they were NESCO. I call bingo, play drums, eat lunch, as well as chair yoga. I learned about Sherman Glen where I live from New Bridge. Please support new funding for New Bridge so I can enjoy my friends and be social. I wrote earlier about many years of joy.

**From:** [Carol Walker](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: New Bridge funding cuts  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 12:45:48 PM

---

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To Whom It May Concern,

----- Forwarded Message -----

**Subject:**New Bridge funding cuts  
**Date:**Wed, 2 Oct 2024 13:24:52 -0500  
**From:**Carol Walker <[clmwrgw@gmail.com](mailto:clmwrgw@gmail.com)>  
**To:**[CommitteeOnAging@cityofmadison.com](mailto:CommitteeOnAging@cityofmadison.com)

From my brother, William Marsh

Good Morning!

I am writing to oppose cuts to the support for NewBridge Senior Center, While I live in Texas now, I grew up in Madison, graduating from West High and UW. My father, William Marsh, was the last principal of Central High and President of the Board of Madison Neighborhood Center.

Madison has been a community that cared for its people. My sister, Carol Marsh Walker, regularly participates in the NewBridge Activities. She is almost totally blind, but finds activities that stimulate her, including Drum Circle, Chair Yoga, lunches with friends, and calling bingo.

From Carol Walker

Mr. Amani Latimer Burris

I learned to day that New Bridge at Warner Park may have severe financial challenges from the city of Madison program cuts. Some of the city concern is people of color in activities which has already happened. But the city wants more. New Bridge has attended city meetings/hearings for this.

I have attended activities via formally NESCO North Eastside Senior Coalition which is now New Bridge. I learned about Sherman Glen via New Bridge from asking participants about Sherman Glen. Everyone said that they like it. So here I am!

I have lived in District 12 for almost two years. Formerly I owned a home on N. Fair Oaks Ave. in the city of Madison. I am 73 years old and New Bridge needs a participant to be sixty years old. I started out by attending bingo at Rhythm And Booms (fireworks at Warner Park). I make a point of treating everyone fairly.

If the funding situation requires it, I would be happy to contribute financially to an activity. I am a New Bridge member.

The activities that I enjoy on a weekly basis are Drum Circle, Chair Yoga, lunches with friends, bilingual bingo and calling bingo. Euchre via Trickstercards is from New Bridge. This has been my life since the 1990s. I purchased my home on N. Fair Oaks in 1993.

In addition, I am visually impaired and I am Caucasian. All of my life but especially at New Bridge, I have many friends of color Hispanic, Black, Japanese, and other. I am very socially conscious. I have no time for criticism either racially or other. A friend assists me with calling bingo. I call the balls and the friend puts the balls on the ball tray. The bingo players like me calling even with assistance. People are accepting and thank me.

I sincerely hope that my email is helpful for you.

**From:** [Jake Winkler](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Office of Independent Monitor and PCOB  
**Date:** Monday, November 11, 2024 4:43:26 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from trappedinink@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Restore the funding of the Office of the Independent Monitor and Police Civilian Oversight Board. Even with the city tax referendum passing, the budget is cutting it by nearly half.

Worth noting the police are getting almost \$1M \*more\* than they asked for from the mayor <https://www.cityofmadison.com/finance/documents/budget/2025/operating/OpEx2025-Police.pdf> (top of p280, compare 2025 Request vs 2025 Executive). That's 5x the amount the mayor is proposing to cut the OIM/PCOB by.

After the 2020 protests, why is the budget pushing us back to the way things used to be?



**From:** [Patty Witte](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Please support Amendment #4  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 12:47:51 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from patty\_witte@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Alders,

Thank you for your time with reading my email. I am asking for you to support amendment #4 tonight, that reallocates \$103,870 to purchased services for the older adult services RFP.

I am a burned-out family medicine physician going for a second career. As a physician, I attracted a large number of older adults. Seeing their issues close up led me to want to help them succeed when I left my medical practice. I have been with NewBridge Madison for over a year, first as an intern and now as a case manager. From the time I first heard about NewBridge, I was extremely impressed with their services. This also helped me better understand the needs of older adults in our community. Community Development RFP process brought to light several great projects, but I need your support to fund more services rather than cutting what we already have.

Sincerely,

Patricia Witte, MD

1022 Midland St.

Madison WI 53715

**From:** [Madelene Wright](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 9:13:25 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sunwords@charter.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

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By cutting funds from Newbridge Senior Services budget. Will have unfortunate results.  
Newbridge fights off many problems for seniors.

The biggest is loneliness. Newbridge outreach, saves lives. Just having lunch with other people may be the highlight of their life. I am in a Drum Circle once a week. Which is very important to me. I know where I will be on Thursday at 12 pm each week.

Loneliness is the killer of senior citizens.

Please don't cut the funding for Newbridge.

Thank you

M.L. Wright

**From:** [JENNIFER LYNN KOEHLER](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Meeting 34124 Agenda item #2  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 4:03:15 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jlkoehler3@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good Afternoon,

I am a Madison resident and voter.

I am reaching out to submit a comment regarding the new budget for the PCOB and OIM. I would like the city to restore ALL funding to the PCOB and OIM. I believe it is important to have an independent body who oversees the police. Furthermore, I want the city to keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM and safeguard its independence from the police. All of these measures are important for a community minded police force that is responsive to the needs of our diverse community. Without these institutions in place (PCOB and OIM) our city feels less safe. As a member of this community I hope that the city works to keep the checks and balances we have in place protected.

Best,

Jennifer

Jennifer Koehler (they/them)  
Ph.D student - Roopra Lab  
Molecular and Cellular Pharmacology  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

**From:** [H. Carol Murphy](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [Susan Watson](#); [Katie Gallagher](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 3:36:15 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from nanacarol200@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Alders of Madison:

Re: Agenda Item #2, # 85264-2025 Amendment #4

I am an 88-year old grandmother, retired RN, who thought she had made proper and adequate preparations for retirement. 2008 changed all that. I lost EVERYTHING!

I raised 5 children as a single parent (after a divorce), and managed to get by. I went back to school for a nursing degree, and once working, saved every penny.

When 2008 happened, all of a sudden I had nothing but social security to live on, and not so much of that as I had only worked outside the home for about 15 years.

I had no experience as to how to go about meeting my needs in this new situation. Fortunately NewBridge was there to help. At age 72, I needed help finding resources, and how to get them. My case worker helped me do this, as well as guide me through the process, act as an advocate, help me meet deadlines, explain things, participate in phone calls to resources, correct my mistakes, and was always be available and reliable. As a result, I have a workable living situation and necessary resources.

It is difficult to imagine where I would be today without this help. PLEASE support proposed amendment #4 to add funds to services for older adult services. There are lots of us out there who need them, and whose quality of life would be seriously affected without them. Thank you for your consideration,  
H, Carol Murphy

**From:** [genevieve parmentier](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Support Budgetary Amendment to Restore Funding  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 3:51:19 PM

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**From:** genevieve parmentier <genev5@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 9:31 PM  
**To:** allaladers@cityofmadison.com <allaladers@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Support Budgetary Amendment to Restore Funding

Hello,

I am writing to voice my support for the budgetary amendment proposed by Alders Rummel, Madison, and Duncan that will restore funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board, keeping it independent and whole.

I urge Council members to support the amendment so that we can maintain and build upon the work of these agencies that help to insure civilian safety and healthy communities.

As a resident and parent in the City of Madison I will be watching the outcome of this with confidence in your votes of support for these essential services.

Sincerely,

Genevieve Parmentier

**From:** [Harry Richardson](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** support funding police monitoring board  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 3:17:45 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from richardsonharry348@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Greetings,

I would like to urge our city alders to support the amendment No. 5 to the operating budget that calls for the partial restoration of funding for the Police monitoring board. Although this new agency has had some problems getting going, it is important to continue its funding to fulfill its important mission to help community members who have complaints about police interactions. The people of the city deserve an independent board to make sure the police are accountable to the general public. Unfortunately Madison has experienced several police killings of unarmed civilians in recent years in my own near east side neighborhood.. A monitoring board would be helpful should this occur again. Thank you for considering this important amendment.

Sincerely,

-Harry Richardson  
456 N Few St  
Madison  
608-242-9232

**From:** [noreply](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** [All Alders] Fund Civilian Oversight of Police  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 3:47:13 PM

---

Recipient: All Alders:

Tuesday, November 12, 2024 – 3:45pm

Brenda salvo  
she/her or ze/zir  
216 Campbell St  
1

Madison, Wisconsin. 53711 Yes, by email. [brenda.salvo@gmail.com](mailto:brenda.salvo@gmail.com) All Alders Fund Civilian Oversight of Police Hello Alders,

Quick call to preserve and expand funding for civilian oversight of the police. It is one of the last safeguards we have for democracy and against fascism.

1. RESTORE ALL FUNDING to the PCOB and OIM.
2. Keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM-- funding should remain for stipends for community members AND we need our data analysts!
3. Safeguard the independence the PCOB and OIM have from the city and the police!

Thank you,  
Brenda

**From:** [Katie Brietzman](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support Amendment  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:02:34 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [katieb@newbridgemadison.org](mailto:katieb@newbridgemadison.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear City Council Members,

I am the volunteer coordinator for the Volunteer Guardianship and Representative Payee programs at NewBridge (and also a resident in the 19th district). The guardianship program was developed in 2001 and the representative payee, which I developed, started in 2006. I have been with NewBridge for over 26 years and coordinating the guardianship program for about 23 years and the representative payee program, as mentioned above, since 2006.

The impact these two programs have on the city of Madison is immeasurable. The cost is not just in dollars, but in the dignity and quality of life for the older adults we work with.

For example, the program received a referral for a man who was found wandering the beltline and was taken to the hospital by the police. He had memory impairment and was unsafe to live alone nor had family to turn to. A volunteer guardian was appointed and that man was able to move into a safe living environment, receive the services he needed and had a sound decision maker to ensure his rights were protected.

This is simply one example of the impact this program has had on your community. There are hundreds of stories of people who have had the benefit of having a volunteer guardian or representative payee to ensure their safety, keep them off the street and protect them from financial abuse.

I strongly urge you to support the amendment presented tonight so that our older adults in the city of Madison can continue to live with dignity and respect.

Sincerely,

Katie Brietzman

**Katie Brietzman, BSW, CSW**  
Community Outreach & Support Specialist  
Pronouns: *she/her/hers*

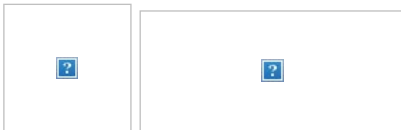
NewBridge Madison, Inc.  
1625 Northport Dr. #125, Madison, WI 53704  
5724 Raymond Rd. Madison, WI 53711  
5700 Pheasant Hill Rd. Monona, WI 53716

P: (608) 512-0000 Ext. 1002

F: (608) 299-0700

[newbridgemadison.org](http://newbridgemadison.org)

Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#)



*NewBridge provides older adults a bridge to successful aging.*

**Funded by Dane County, City of Madison, City of Monona, United Way of Dane County, and private donors.**

**Proud partner with United Way of Dane County.**

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**From:** [Jessica Dalby](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Retain funding for the police civilian oversight board  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 6:11:32 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jessiedalby@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear city of Madison Alders, I am writing tonight to encourage your support and continued funding of the police civilian oversight board. This community panel is critical for providing feedback and direction to our community patrols. It is necessary now more than ever to support the well-being of the community through the participation of this board.

Thank you for your support and leadership.

Dr. Jessica Dalby  
Family Physician  
District 10 Resident

**From:** [Alex Dudek](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda Item 2  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:33:08 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from alexdudek10@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear City of Madison Alders,

I am writing to you today as a resident of the City of Madison who owns a home on the Near West Side. I also work as a public health nurse and have a background as a first responder (EMT). I registered to neither oppose nor support agenda item 2 for tonight's meeting because I want to urge you to maintain funding for the Police Civilian Oversight Board. Police violence is a public health issue as stated by the American Public Health Association (APHA) in [2018](#) and [2020](#). Maintaining independent oversight by the public is one of many ways to protect the health of the public. I am happy to answer any questions or concerns about this topic.

Sincerely,  
Alex Dudek, MPH, BSN, RN, EMT-B

**From:** [Jennifer Eklof](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support of Agenda Item #2  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 8:07:17 AM

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You don't often get email from hannahshousellc@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear City Alders,

I am reaching out to ask that you oppose the proposed \$277,970, or 44%, funding cut to NewBridge Madison, Inc.

I have been involved with NewBridge in the past and think the organization's dedication and provision to many is too important to be overlooked. They continue to support with dignity and passion. I have witnessed first hand their integrity and knowledge. Cutting funding means losing many veteran workers with insight and wisdom continuing to find creative ways to serve older adults.

NewBridge currently serves 3,500 older adults in the City of Madison. This includes a case management program that provides 1,100 older adults with the support needed to live independently by identifying resources and coordinating services related to housing, home chore, public benefits, food insecurity, and transportation. Support provided through case management can be as serious as securing housing for an older adult who is about to be evicted or helping them apply for energy assistance to keep their electricity on or Home Delivered Meals to make sure they get proper nutrition. NewBridge also assists with basic household chores to 378 older adults - 35% are BIPOC - through its home chore program, which already carries a waitlist of 8-12 weeks with 50 older adults, and assistance with critical financial and medical decisions to 33 older adults through its volunteer guardianship program.

If enacted, the proposed funding cut will likely lead to the return of the 8-10 week waitlist or case management services, a reduction in home chore staff right as we enter the winter season, and the potential end of volunteer guardianship program services to City of Madison residents.

It is my understanding that NewBridge's budget is being cut to provide funding to eight additional organizations. If the City wishes to expand older adult services, they need to provide additional funding in the budget instead of cutting funding from one organization.

NewBridge has been serving older adults in Madison for nearly 50 years and has a proven track record. Please oppose the proposed cuts to NewBridge's budget.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Eklof



**From:** [ANNA MARIE GEBARSKI](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** PCOB Comment  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:46:30 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from agebarski@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello Alders,

I want to put in my support for preserving and expanding the funding for civilian oversight of the police. It is one of the last safeguards we have for democracy and against fascism.

1. RESTORE ALL FUNDING to the PCOB and OIM.
2. Keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM-- funding should remain for stipends for community members AND we need our data analysts!
3. Safeguard the independence the PCOB and OIM have from the city and the police!

Thank you for your consideration,  
Anna

**Anna Gebarski** *they/them*

PhD Student | Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies

Teaching Assistant | AMERIND100: Introduction to American Indian Studies

University of Wisconsin, Madison | Teejop, Ho-Chunk Land

[agebarski@wisc.edu](mailto:agebarski@wisc.edu)

**From:** [Ro Grok-Gallagher](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Common Council 11/12/2024 Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 8:07:28 AM

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[You don't often get email from [nerogallagher@outlook.com](mailto:nerogallagher@outlook.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Hello,

I am attending the common council meeting from Crowdcast and would like to submit my comment regarding agenda item #2. First of all, I want the city to restore all funding to the PCOB and OIM. Second, I want the city to keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM; funding should remain for stipends for community members and we need our data analysts. Finally, I want to safeguard the independence the PCOB and OIM have from the city and the police. Thank you.

Kindly,

-Nero Grok-Gallagher

**From:** [Sunshine Jones](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Madison Civilian Police Oversight Board/ Opposition to defunding  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 6:32:06 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from sunshinedjones@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Sunshine Jones  
4333 Crawford Drive  
Madison, Wisconsin  
53711

Dear Alders,

I strongly oppose the elimination, defunding, or cuts to Madison Civilian Police Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor.

I ask for their restoration in the City Budget and at the least one year of full funding. I strongly support programs that work toward the safeguarding of our most marginalized communities rather than eliminating them.

With the complete control of our federal government in January of 2024 by Trump with his commitment to militarized policing and targeting marginalized communities such oversight is even more critical.

We also know that Madison has one of the highest racial disparities in policing outcomes (arrest and charging rates, etc.) among U.S. cities. Studies show evidence that the presence of a civilian police oversight agency with a broad scope of authority reduces racial disparities in situations where officers have considerable discretion and reduces racial disparities in police killings of civilians.

Let us be a model of Justice with Integrity and Oversight in Madison.

Thank you for your service to our community.

With appreciation,

Sunshine Jones

**From:** [jo kelley](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Urge support for Budget Amendment #5  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 6:48:29 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jokelley360@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Madison Alders,

**I urge you to pass Amendment 5 for the city operating budget to protect the rights of our residents and support the independence of our local officials and law enforcement.**

The Office of the independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board will play essential roles to protect the rights of our residents from and to support our local law enforcement to not comply with the upcoming unconstitutional, coercive demands from the Trump administration. We know efforts by the Trump administration will be aggressive and will seek to force local law enforcement to comply with their illegal demands. Through the OIM and PCOB, our local officials can point to local government policies and practices which they are required to follow as reasons for them not to comply with intrusive federal demands. In addition the OIM and PCOB will provide transparency of illegal and unconditional federal actions which otherwise would be hidden.

Sincerely,

Joann Kelley

4333 Crawford Dr

Madison, WI

53711



**From:** [Maddie Loeffler](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Item 2 - 85264  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 8:07:53 AM

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You don't often get email from madelyn0312@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to express my support for the operating budget amendment proposed by Alder Rummel, Alder Madison, and Alder Duncan. The Police Civilian Oversight Board and Office of the Independent Monitor are critical to holding the Madison Police Department accountable to residents, especially Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), the queer community, formerly incarcerated individuals, and other marginalized communities. As many stated in their oral comments, taking away this funding would stifle progress and further enable ongoing systemic injustice, police brutality, and murder.

Please support the proposed amendments and prioritize this critical ongoing work in our community, ensuring members of PCOB are compensated for their labor. Madison residents should not have to continuously fight for the bare minimum from the government that is supposed to serve them - I ask that support for the PCOB and OIM is a top priority going forward.

Sincerely,

Maddie Loeffler

818 North Star Dr, Apt 403

Madison, WI 53718

--

Maddie Loeffler

E: [madelyn0312@gmail.com](mailto:madelyn0312@gmail.com)

C: 608-322-9654

**From:** [Kelli Martino](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** 11/12/24 5:30pm council meeting agenda 2  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:20:16 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from kelli.martino@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Hi, I selected neither approve or oppose this because the city of Madison should keep all PCOB and OIM positions and funding. We need to keep community control of those who police us. Without this accountability the police will not police themselves and will cause our community immeasurable harm.

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Philip Renner  
**To:** All Alders  
**Subject:** Preserve and expand funding  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:22:58 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from plrenner@me.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Hello Alders,

Quick call to preserve and expand funding for civilian oversight of the police. It is one of the last safeguards we have for democracy and against fascism.

1. RESTORE ALL FUNDING to the PCOB and OIM.
2. Keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM-- funding should remain for stipends for community members AND we need our data analysts!
3. Safeguard the independence the PCOB and OIM have from the city and the police!

Thank you!  
Philip R.

**From:** [Rachel Rovinsky](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Agenda item 2 for 11/12/2024 common council meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 8:07:29 AM

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You don't often get email from rachirovinsky828@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders,

I am a PhD student at UW-Madison urging you to preserve and expand funding for civilian oversight of the police. It is one of the last safeguards we have for democracy and against fascism.

1. RESTORE ALL FUNDING to the PCOB and OIM.
2. Keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM- funding should remain for stipends for community members AND we need our data analysts!
3. Safeguard the independence the PCOB and OIM have from the city and the police!

Thank you,  
Rachel Rovinsky

746 W Main St, Apt 306, Madison, WI 53715

**From:** [Dahlia Saba](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore funding to the PCOB and OIM  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:03:09 PM

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[Some people who received this message don't often get email from dahliasaba@comcast.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

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Hello Alders,

I urge you to preserve and expand funding for civilian oversight of the police. Given the history of police violence in this country and in this city, these civilian oversight bodies are crucial to protecting our communities.

1. RESTORE ALL FUNDING to the PCOB and OIM.
2. Keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM-- funding should remain for stipends for community members AND we need our data analysts!
3. Safeguard the independence the PCOB and OIM have from the city and the police!

Thank you,  
Dahlia

**From:** [Sawyer](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#); [council](#)  
**Subject:** Comment on OIM Funding  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 8:06:58 AM

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You don't often get email from hansonssawyer6@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

My name is Sawyer Hanson and I live in Fitchburg but work in Madison and often go into Madison to buy stuff.

I am incredibly concerned for my safety as a queer individual as well as that of women and other minorities if funding to the OIM is cut especially with Donald Trump being elected.

We know that the incoming president supports police violence based on his admiration of Rodrigo Duterte's extrajudicial killings of suspected criminals via police death squads.

We also know that many police participated in the January 6th insurrection and are therefore more loyal to Trump than they are to the law or their community.

Trump is also planning to place restrictions on HRT, which will lead to many trans individuals having to find ways to access hormones without going through their doctor's and thus leading to increased interactions between police and trans individuals. This increased interaction will put transgender individuals in danger especially if there is less oversight on the police.

It is horrifying that cuts to the OIM's budget are even being considered when the proposed cuts only save the city a quarter of a percent of the police budget.

Please don't allow the OIM's budget to be cut.

**From:** [Fields, Debbie](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Civilian oversight monitor of Police  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 4:34:26 PM

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Alders,

Following please find an email that was received in the Council Office inbox.

Thanks,  
Debbie Fields  
Program Assistant 2  
Common Council Office  
608-266-4297

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**From:** Kristen Schoepke <[kschoepke@yahoo.com](mailto:kschoepke@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 4:13 PM  
**To:** council <[council@cityofmadison.com](mailto:council@cityofmadison.com)>  
**Subject:** Civilian oversight monitor of Police

You don't often get email from [kschoepke@yahoo.com](mailto:kschoepke@yahoo.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Council,

I understand the Police Oversight Board was foolishly offered up to the chopping block as a possibility before the referendum passed. However, the referendum has passed so there is no reason to get rid of this at all.

Please pass the amendment for restoring funding to the board.

Honestly you guys shouldn't be monkeying around with this at all. It is too important to do anything but support it. We are the envy of the nation with the way it is designed. That is why it has taken so long to be operative. We are leading the way. Don't send us back to suffering and being killed with no accountability. I will vote against anyone who does not support this Board every time you have to vote on it. I don't care how much we are otherwise in alignment. In this issue I will be a single issue voter. It is that important.

Sincerely,

Kristen Schoepke

Madison resident and voter

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

**From:** [Kyla Smith](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Restore PCOB and OIM Funding  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 8:22:24 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from kylatats@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello Alders,

Quick call to preserve and expand funding for civilian oversight of the police. It is one of the last safeguards we have for democracy and against fascism. 1. RESTORE ALL FUNDING to the PCOB and OIM. 2. Keep all current positions of the PCOB and OIM-- funding should remain for stipends for community members AND we need our data anylsts! 3. Safeguard the independence the PCOB and OIM have from the city and the police!

Thank you,

Kyla Smith (she/her)  
[kylatats@gmail.com](mailto:kylatats@gmail.com)



**From:** [Victor Toniolo](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** OIM and PCOB amendment  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 5:11:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [Copley on reddit.PNG](#)

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from vatoniolo@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Alders,

I am writing to ask that you vote against the proposed amendment to spend \$195k on the OIM position, legal services, and PCOB.

First of all, the PCOB should be like any other volunteer committee and not require city funding. The data analyst position seems extraneous given that the office of the monitor has not collected any data thus far. I urge you to reassess the need for this position next year after the office has accomplished anything of note.

As of now this office is a laughing stock. It is often cited as an example of wasteful spending and I tend to agree. I was hopeful that the office would have more to show after 4 years, but the only things I read about them are negative.

The chair of the PCOB should be removed for interfering with her daughter's arrest, and the independent monitor should be censured for her public remarks. For those unaware, she took to online forums to defend her position amid the lack of progress the office has shown, calling people that disagreed with her "bootlickers". That statement is included as a screenshot with some context.

I had and still have hope that this will be a productive office. However I do not agree with adding positions until AFTER they have at least something to show for themselves.

Best regards,

Victor Toniolo

SupesUniqueUsername • 1h ago •

What would they have to do? Be specific.

↑ -6 ↓ Reply Award Share ...

ManateePro • 1h ago •

Fielded at least one complaint since their first meeting in November of 2020.

⊖ ↑ 10 ↓ Reply Award Share ...

SupesUniqueUsername • 56m ago •

They didn't even have a monitor until 2022 so that's quite an ask considering MPD wouldn't share data with them otherwise. The MOU between MPD and OIM wasn't even agreed on until the start of this year.

⊖ ↑ -3 ↓ Reply Award Share ...

ManateePro • 53m ago •

Another excellent example; 2 years to hire the independent monitor is also unacceptable.

⊖ ↑ 6 ↓ Reply Award Share ...

SupesUniqueUsername • 49m ago •

Have you been following this process at all? Copley was the 4th person they offered the job to. The mayor made the PCOB do the entire hiring process all over again after the first offer. Idk, I'm really not seeing your point and Im really trying to.

It's bad they haven't taken a complaint since 2020, even if they couldn't? Bootlickers gonna lick, I guess.

⊖ ↑ -5 ↓ Reply Award Share ...

ManateePro • 41m ago •

The redundancy of this board is frustrating. The DEC also does

r/madisonwi

Joined

Madison, WI

The subreddit for the best place in the world: Madison, WI.

Created Oct 3, 2009

Public

119K

Members

97

Online

Top 2%

Rank by size ↗

USER FLAIR

leovinuss

RULES

- 1 Be Respectful - no attacks, bigotry, condescension
- 2 No discrediting without unbiased source or proof
- 3 No non-constructive circlejerk/troll/shit posting
- 4 No posting or requesting personal information (doxxing)
- 5 No commercial/classified/for sale posts
- 6 News post title must match

**From:** [Jayden West](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Cc:** [Madison, Sabrina](#)  
**Subject:** Keep the Police Civilian Oversight Board funded!  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 12, 2024 4:44:37 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from jwest9@wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Hello,

This is Jayden West, a graduate student at UW Madison.

I am writing to ask the city of Madison to restore all funding to the Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Monitor. There are few things more important to safeguarding our republic than a robust system of checks and balances, and maintaining this office as a well-funded independent entity from the city and police is a crucial aspect of this.

Further, such an office gives reassurance to a population which has expressed doubts about police methodology over the last five years, and help maintain the people's faith in their law enforcement. Who watches the watchers?

Madison is a leader in Wisconsin, and we should be a model for effective, measured, and fair law enforcement. Such bodies as the PCOB and OIM can both protect the population from abuses at the hands of police, and assure officers that they will be treated fairly and are not unjustly vilified when they act ethically and in good faith.

In summary, please restore all funding to the Police Civilian Oversight Board and the Office of the Independent Monitor!

Thank you,  
-Jayden West

**From:** [Diana Wheeler](#)  
**To:** [All Alders](#)  
**Subject:** Support the OIM and PCOB  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 13, 2024 8:07:20 AM

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You don't often get email from dianagreene11@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Dear Alders,

I am writing to strongly urge you to support the budget amendment proposed by Alders Rummel, Madison, and Duncan, to **restore funding to the Office of the Independent Monitor and the Police Civilian Oversight Board.**

The police have an important and dangerous job. They also hold a great amount of power, including the power of force - life and death. With that power comes responsibility and the need for a rigorous and continued commitment to reflection, learning, and self-improvement in the service of public safety. Being responsible for public safety means also being accountable when it is the police themselves who compromise public safety.

A Police Department worthy of public trust is one that values accountability within its ranks and does not fear independent civilian oversight. Independent civilian oversight is not the enemy of a PD that doesn't feel that it has things to hide.

The OIM and PCOB ask questions the MPD doesn't ask of itself and collects data not subject to biased interpretation, protectionism, and closing of ranks. The transparency they foster helps all citizens regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or other factors.

The MPD, City Council, and Mayor should embrace the valuable public service OIM and PCOB provide, not attempt to discard it.

Thank you,  
Diana Wheeler