



Robert S. Croslin
Interim Mayor

Tracey E. Douglas
City Administrator

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Interim Mayor Croslin and Members of the Hyattsville City Council:

I am submitting the Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) General Fund and Capital Improvement Budget Proposal for the City of Hyattsville. This year, the budget is being presented as balanced. A year ago, we presented the Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) budget unable to predict the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic would have on the economy, the community, and budget. As a result, we maximized the use of grants, volunteers, and partnerships, and maximized the use of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and American Rescue Plan Act funds to meet the eligible and qualifying needs of our residents and businesses. We will continue to leverage these funds as available in FY23.

As we gradually transition out of the economic, social, and emotional devastation caused by the pandemic, we are more confident in our revenue projections and optimistic about resuming programs and services.

The FY2023 budget submission reflects our ongoing commitment to the growth, revitalization, and wellbeing of our community and the delivery of responsive and reliable services. As such, the budget proposal includes funding for a facility feasibility study, traffic and road analysis and design, sustainability planning, park upgrades, technology, equipment and vehicle upgrades, construction of the new Public Safety Headquarters and completion of the Multigenerational Center. It also reflects our continued investment in smart and green technology, carbon footprint reductions, tax relief program modifications, and environmental programs. In addition, we included funding for police reform and mental health programming, increased public engagement, and expanded opportunities for our youth, seniors, and vulnerable populations.

The proposed budget has been prepared to align with the City's adopted goals and objectives reflected below:

HVL STRATEGIC GOALS & OBJECTIVES
Ensure a Transparent & Accessible Governance
Provide Safe and Secure Community
Economic Development & Environmental Sustainability
Strengthen Community Identity
Foster Excellence in City Operations

It also includes programs and priorities that align with the Mayor and Council's vision and the community's priorities provided through public participation in the City's action ready strategic plans as shown below:

STRATEGIC PLANS	
Speak-Up Sustainability Plan	
Affordable Housing Study	
Solid Waste Study	
Age Friendly Plan	
Transportation Study	
Police Reform Legislation	
Strategic Communications Plan	
Business Retention & Expansion Plan	
*Emergency Operations /Disaster Recovery	
*Race & Equity Plan	

***Ongoing/In development**

This year, funds are included to implement a Pedestrian Safety Plan, an automated traffic enforcement ramp-up, a West Hyattsville Traffic study, and a Roundabout study to determine if it will improve circulation and safety. We have also funded the acquisition and installation of an electronic sign on Ager Rd. Finally, this proposal includes funding for new initiatives such as a Youth Advisory Council, a stipend program for committee members, and City flag and logo branding campaign, grants for high school graduates and schools, and a mental health case manager to follow-up on police calls for service that are better handled by social service providers.

A summary chart of the FY23 budget revenues and expenditures is shown below and is followed by a more in-depth narrative of budget impact and focus areas.

FY23 PROPOSED BUDGET	
General Fund	
General Fund Revenues	\$22.291M
General Fund Expenditure (includes debt service)	\$25.983M
Transfer from General Fund Reserve Balance	\$3.692M
Total (Revenues – Expenditures)	0
Other Funds	
Special Revenue Funds	\$1.45M
Capital Improvement Funds	\$15.7M
Total All Funds	\$43.05M

FY23 budget revenues reflects a modest increase in property, income, and amusement taxes which indicates we are trending upward after a two-year pandemic. It also reflects an increase in debt services as the City proposes to increase staffing levels, increase contracted services and begins repaying the \$12.6M in municipal bonds borrowed complete the Public Works Facility and construct our Police and Public Safety Headquarters. The City continues to maintain a relatively healthy reserve fund balance estimated to be \$16.6M at which provides us the ability to sustain essential government operations and critical services. Our goal is to once again pursue federal and grant funding to offset the budget deficit.

The FY23 total operating budget, which includes all funds, is projected to be **\$43.05M**. The General Fund expenditures is projected to be **\$25.9M**; Special Revenue funds are presented with a slight increase and the Capital Improvements Fund projection is presented as **\$15.7M**.

Personal property taxes are projected to generate **\$930,000**, and City income taxes will generate approximately **\$2,527,000**. The real property tax rate is presented as unchanged **\$0.63 per \$100** of assessed valuation which will result in the City using approximately \$3.6M from the unreserved fund balance estimated at \$20,322,955 which will leave a projected balance of \$16,631,677 based on our most recently completed audited financial statements. The below narrative includes proposed budget highlights:

Employee Programs, Salaries, and Benefits: Employee salaries and benefits consume the greatest portion of the General Fund Budget. The FY23 budget includes salary increases for employees whose salary was identified as below average in the recently completed compensation study. The adjustments will ensure City employees are at, or slightly above market rates and will reflect our commitment to recruiting and retaining, a dedicated and professional workforce. Additionally, the budget reflects a **1.5%** Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) and a **3.5%** placeholder to cover benefits should the State of Maryland increase life and health insurance rates. The budget includes funding to implement a new pay for performance system to recognize high performing employees with appropriate compensation. This year, and perhaps most significantly, we are recommending an increase in staffing. The staff is operating beyond capacity so the recommended increases are to ensure we can build depth and accomplish the expanded portfolio of priorities and mission essential programs and services for a growing community. Below is a snapshot of staffing proposals:

Human Resources & Finance

- 1) **HR Generalist:** Manage recruitment and retention, policy development, internship program, and professional development and wellness training.
- 2) **Deputy Treasurer:** Manage grant program, contracts, and tax relief programs.

Hyattsville Police Department

- 3) **Training Coordinator:** Manage mandatory training requirements, police reform mandates, regional partnerships, officer qualifications, skill, and accreditation.

- 4) **Criminal Investigator:** Assist detectives in handling the increasing case load
- 5) **Dispatcher:** Allow for three-person coverage of all shifts
- 6) **Mental Health Case Manager:** Provide resident follow-up to calls for service

Department of Public Works

- 7) **Vehicle Maintenance Coordinator:** Manage and track maintenance and repair
- 8) **Environmental Coordinator:** Support Environment Officer with tree care and planting, rebate programs, living bus shelters, and other environmental priorities
- 9) **Transportation/Traffic Engineer:** Serve as primary contact to manage traffic studies, traffic petitions, road design, community coordination and engagement.

Dept of Economic Development

- 10) **Information Technology Coordinator**(part-time/contract) Manage cell phones, copiers, printers, and coordination for public online/hybrid meetings
- 11) **GIS Technician I** (part-time) Planning and analysis support
- 12) **Small Business Recovery Coordinator:** Manage business grant relief program and contact for Business Retention and Expansion objectives (**ARPA**)

Community Services

- 13) **Case Referral Manager and Resident Navigator:** Assist residents with navigating social services programs and respond to requests for support (**ARPA**)

Dept of Communications and Legislative Services

- 14) **Records and Public Information Act Manager:** Implement a record retention program and support the increase in public information act requests.

15) **Other additions:** The Animal Services Liaison will be absorbed into the duties of the media specialist, and the vacant Clean and Safe Team positions will be filled to increase presence, safety, and cleanliness in the business corridors.

Economic Development: Funding is included to update the 2023-2027 Sustainability Plan. The 5-year plan will require a firm to assist with public outreach, interviews, visioning sessions, analysis, feedback, packaging, and completion. Funding is included for the continuation of the City’s Corridor Investment Program, the production of the semi-annual Economic Development Reports, Business Roundtable events, and corridor meetings. The budget also includes a business liaison who in addition to managing the American Rescue Act grant program will work with the planning staff to more directly engage businesses to collaborate on needs, address marketing, opportunities and barriers, and other strategies to support growth. Funding is included for Phase II of the Hyattsville Crossing Business Improvement District (BID) Feasibility Study and for a part-time Geographic Information System (GIS) Analyst to support redistricting efforts, produce infrastructure and roadway data, conduct interdepartmental coordination, and provide project and planning support to enhance reporting and transparency.

Permitting & Licensing. The budget includes funding for the implementation of the new permitting module which will provide greater clarity, data driven information and a more efficient way to meet the increasing number of requests for licensing and permits. Funding is included to continue offering licensing and inspections six-days a week, with morning and evening hours. In addition, the Business Licensing and Property Maintenance brochures will be updated in English and Spanish.

Parking: The Parking Compliance Division will upgrade parking meters to 4G and conduct a parking meter pay structure assessment. The upgrades are necessary to ensure the equipment will continue to operate as 3G technology is phased out. The Parking Division will continue managing permit renewals in the City's Residential Parking Zone (RPZ) program and the bi-annual renewal cycle in Spring 2023. The parking fee schedule revision approved by Council in FY21 was implemented in FY22. As anticipated, it has reduced revenues, but we continue to seek ways to reduce costs.

Infrastructure and Facility Investment: In FY23 we will move into the construction phase of the adaptive reuse of the Public Safety Headquarters and the Teen and Multigenerational Center. There is a significant increase in construction costs due to the escalating price of steel, gas, materials, and other factors. In response, the budget proposal includes funding to secure a consultant to acquire notes in anticipation of a bond to cover the gap. In addition, the debt service payments on the bond secured in 2020 to complete the Public Works facility and the Public Safety Headquarters is included as an ongoing expense/payment. Funds are also allocated to conduct a feasibility study to advise on upgrading or relocating the municipal building.

Traffic and Transportation: The FY23 budget includes funding for a Traffic/Transportation specialist to manage petitions, roadway improvements, coordinate wayfinding signage, implement sidewalk repair projects, oversee the West Hyattsville traffic study, roundabout study, and a pedestrian study to improve safety and strengthen connectivity for walkers and cyclists.

Community Programs and Services: This year, as we transition out of a successful social distanced and an online program platform, we are thrilled that we can safely return to in-person engagement. The department will introduce new creative programs and bring back most of our staple programs such as the Anniversary Festival and themed Summer Jams which will include the International Festival, Juneteenth, Pride, and other themes. The budget includes funds to implement a formal internship program (paid & unpaid), and expand senior and youth outings, continue senior exercise classes, and more cultural and wellness events and activities. We have had a significant spike in residents desiring mental health and social services and want to help meet the growing need in our community. We are requesting the use of American Rescue Act funds to hire a case manager/navigator to provide application assistance and referral support. Other Community Service priorities include:

Partnerships: We recognize the importance of working together to create synergy, reduce costs, and be more efficient and effective. We included funds to partner with community business corridors for events and programs and new organizations such as the Fenwick Foundation. We will also expand outreach, and pursue greater collaboration with surrounding municipalities, school officials, clergy, businesses, non-profits, and a host of others which will result in greater cost savings.

Age Friendly and Senior Programming: Funding has been included for Age Friendly Programming, priorities, Senior Services, and Call-A-Bus transportation. The FY23 Age Friendly Action Plan priorities include completing the voluntary vulnerable

populations registry and database, updating the senior services directory, expanding the Call-A-Bus transportation service with two (2) grant funded wheelchair accessible buses and a full-time driver. Funding has also been included to expand the Meals on Wheels program and conduct workshops for seniors.

Youth Programming: Spring, Summer, and Winter camps will return to in-person formats. The department is planning to expand youth programs. Funding has been included to create a Youth Advisory Council to engage youth in decision making and leadership opportunities. In addition, the budget allows for the expansion of the creative mind's toddler program. The expanded program will serve children ages 1- 5 years old. The youth staff will also implement College Preparation, Job Readiness, and Career exploration activities to prepare students for career options and learn of available resources for higher education. Funding is included to outfit the Teen and Multigenerational Center and to sponsor field trips, technical training labs, tutoring and mentoring programs, educational equipment and resources. Funding is also included to expand the bilingual parent and, teen workshops, and manage sports fields.

Communications and Legislative Services: The prolonged pandemic created more of a reliance on accurate and timely information. The Communications Department developed new and creative ways to reach residents and to keep the community informed. In FY23 funds are included to acquire new technology and innovative approaches to ensure constant, reliable, and transparent two-way communication. Funding has also been included to implement priorities outlined in the Strategic Communications Plan and new civic engagement platforms which will provide improved access and more user-friendly options to sign up. We have also included funding to expand original content production and introduce expanded marketing and outreach campaigns. This will include using a variety of advertising mediums such as smart trash receptacles, City vehicle decals, bus shelters, metro stations, the Mall at Prince George's, as well as electronic signs. The Office of the City Clerk budgeted for a Public Information Act (PIA) Program Manager to address the significant increase and complexity of PIA requests due to the new requirements outlined in the Police Reform Act. A dedicated PIA and records manager will help improve processes, efficiency, and response times. The staff has been preparing for the transition to hybrid Council and committee meetings and expects to incur some operational costs associated with the transition. Additionally, the department will undertake redistricting and included funding to administer a Special Election, should one be needed after the June 2022 Mayoral election.

Police and Public Safety: The police department is fully committed to protecting lives, reducing crime, and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our residents as well as our officers. As such, the Chief of Police has prioritized the investment in reliable technology and equipment. The FY23 budget includes funds to acquire new and advanced Body Worn Cameras (BWC), In-Car Video Cameras (ICV), and upgraded computers. The new cameras will automatically activate which will eliminate the reliance on officers to self-activate their camera systems. The cameras will automatically classify and assign video recordings, identify proper retention periods, and allow for simultaneous viewing of multiple videos of an incident. Other new technology includes a virtual reality (VR) training

simulator which will enhance our new training programs. The department will hire a full-time training coordinator to ensure training and certification requirements are met. The manager will oversee regional collaborative training, research and/or develop progressive programs that will focus on advanced de-escalation techniques, crisis communication, peer intervention, leadership development, and mental health and co-responder programs to name a few. The budget also includes funds for an additional detective in the criminal investigative section. This addition will not only assist with the investigating the growing caseload, but also contribute to the goal of creating a more comprehensive crime prevention strategy. The department will continue community policing efforts and work hard to build relationships and trust in the community. Officers will continue engaging and creating supportive community programming to expand opportunities for positive interactions with youth, seniors, businesses, and the greater community. This will include leveraging communication platforms to improve transparency, information sharing, collaboration, and outreach. Finally, funding is included to continue the partnership with Lexipol for researching and preparing progressive policies which will contribute to building a culture, of accountability, transparency, mental health, and reform.

Mental Health Training. The department will continue its commitment to understanding mental illness and other social service conditions. The Mental Health Program Manager and Chief of Police will continue networking and collaborating locally and nationally to ensure our mental health programs support our officers, the community and serve as an example for surrounding jurisdictions.

Technology and Environment: The City invested heavily in updating technology at the height of the pandemic. As we transition back to in-office work schedules we are evaluating and investing in technology for secure access and upgrades to allow the Council and community to transition to hybrid meetings and programming.

Technology: The budget includes funding to upgrade or install equipment, servers, cabling, and networks in the municipal building, the Teen and Multigenerational Center, the Driskell Park building, and the Public Safety Headquarters. The budget also an IT Coordinator to coordinate user support, manage lifecycle replacement of phones and equipment, conduct training, and support our IT provider with equipment deployment and project coordination. We will move into the implementation phase of the ERP to improve efficiency, reduce costs, and ensure data accuracy.

The Environment. To reinforce our commitment to green energy we will continue pursuing environmentally friendly initiatives and alternatives. This includes growing our fleet of electric or hybrid vehicles whenever feasible, evaluating solar panels, using smart environmental design, stormwater management, tree restoration and planting, and ambient lighting in parks and on the Trolley Trail. Funds are also included for smart 'power plant' structures to provide charging and internet access in our local parks and implementing Healthy Trees Hyattsville (HTH) initiatives. We will continue consulting with Neighborhood Design Center for other initiatives such as education and planting 500 new trees. We will expand the compost program, institute a living bus shelter, and a community garden in West Hyattsville. The City plans to complete the design and phased upgrades

to David C. Driskell Park, begin the lower Ward 1 stormwater management, and construct a submerged wetland at 42nd and Charles Armentrout. Minimal funds were included to begin the concept design for the Environmental Depot which will allow residents to drop off and pick up of hazardous materials and bulk items.

In conclusion, the FY23 budget proposal includes projects and priorities that reflect the City's commitment to our residents and businesses. We have outlined plans for implementing, improving, or sustaining essential services, and a myriad of projects and priorities to support our growing community. While expenditures have increased, the staff remains committed to the responsible management and execution of tax-payer dollars and resources. We will once again offset costs by leveraging partnerships, securing grants, improving efficiency, ensuring best value for contracts and purchases, and putting competitive processes in place to achieve savings.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and commend the City Treasurer, Ron Brooks, for his detailed and deliberate planning and guidance, and the dedicated department directors and staff who invested significant time, effort, and energy to ensuring that the proposed budget meets or exceeds the needs, priorities and expectations of our deserving residents and community.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tracey Douglas

