

City of Dover

Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Narrative

Following is a general overview of the various responsibilities and functions of each city department as included in the Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget. This overview includes the department's mission, key strategic plan objectives and highlights of significant adjustments reflected within each department's budget for the coming year:

City Council:

The City Council, as a body, establishes policies and sets forth the long-term direction for municipal services. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and seven City Councilors comprise the City Council and together serve as the governing and legislative body of the municipality. The ultimate aim of the City Council is reflected in the community's vision "To be a city with an emerging urban vibrancy guided by a small town sense of community."

The City Council consists of nine elected officials, a Mayor and eight City Councilors, all elected at the same time to serve a two-year term. Voters within each of the City's six voting wards elect a person residing in their respective ward to serve as the Ward City Councilor. In addition, voters across the City elect two persons residing in the City to serve as At-Large City Councilors. Voters across the city also elect a person to serve as Mayor. One of the eight elected City Councilors is subsequently chosen by the Mayor and Council to serve as Deputy Mayor.

In addition to legislative responsibilities in adopting local ordinances and regulations, a key task of the City Council involves authorizing a careful plan of appropriations deemed necessary for the effective and efficient delivery of municipal services. The Mayor and Council work together in keeping communication open with and between the citizens of Dover, various boards and commissions of the City and the City Manager in delivering services meeting the needs of the community. The City Council function is funded within the General Fund portion of the City's Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed City Council budget for FY2024 maintains the funding necessary to support the governing and legislative function performed by the Mayor and Council. This includes funding the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councilor wages as required by the Dover City Charter along with providing funding for various supplies and services utilized by the City Council. The proposed City Council budget also allocates funds for grants and subsidies made to several non-profit organizations delivering services within the Dover community. In this area, there is a significant increase in funding for FY2024 being requested for COAST public transit services. However, this increase is offset partially by the use of grant funds intended for public transit services continuing into FY2025. There is a small increase in the amount planned for the McConnell Center building operations and tenant rent subsidies. This increase is due to a recent tenant vacancy that has gone unfilled in the building in recent months.

Executive Department:

The Executive Department is comprised of six executive offices responsible for specific functions supporting operations across all municipal departments. These offices and an overview of their responsibilities and proposed budget highlights include:

Office of the City Manager (OCM): The OCM mission is “To provide effective leadership and direction in the administration of policies established by the Mayor and City Council as well as to supervise and guide the efficient operation of all city departments.” Comprised of the City Manager and Executive Assistant to the City Manager, this office is responsible for coordinating the development and analysis of policy recommendations presented to the Mayor and City Council. And, in turn, the OCM directs and ensures the implementation of the policies enacted by the Mayor and City Council. The OCM is funded within the General Fund portion of the City’s Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed OCM budget for FY2024 maintains funding necessary to support the Mayor and Council in fulfilling their governing and legislative responsibilities and for the management of the overall administrative affairs of the City. Notable planned funding increases include a Cost of Living wage adjustment for the City Manager consistent with other employees and an adjustment for the Executive Assistant in accordance with implementation of the third year of the city-wide classification and wage plan.

Office of Human Resources (OHR): The OHR mission is “to support the goals and challenges of the City of Dover, NH, by providing services that promote a work environment characterized by fair treatment of staff, open communications, personal accountability, trust and mutual respect. The OHR seeks to provide solutions to workplace issues that support and optimize the operating principles of the organization.” In fulfilling this purpose, the OHR is responsible for recruitment, payroll processing, benefits administration, labor relations, employment law compliance, risk management and employee safety for nearly 425 employees occupying 343 FTE positions across all non-school departments. OHR also provides consultation to assist the School Department, as needed, in meeting human resources needs of an additional 730 employees for 596 FTE positions. The OHR is funded within the General Fund portion of the City’s Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed OHR budget for FY2024 maintains funding for the personnel, services, and supplies required to support the human resources function necessary for the effective performance of management and employees. Adjustments reflect the implementation of the third year of the city-wide classification and wage plan and the funding of a part-time clerical position remains offset by grant funds continuing into FY2025 allocated for recordkeeping requirements. Funding is also maintained for the administration of the National Citizen/Employee Surveys used for performance benchmarking across the municipal organization.

Office of Media Services (OMS): The OMS “develops and manages the City of Dover’s communications tools and resources, helps improve stakeholder relationships, public engagement, and community outreach, and delivers accessible and responsive communication and public information about government operations and services.” This is accomplished by OMS using a variety of communications platforms and resources, which include the city’s governmental and educational cable access channels, the public-facing website, electronic newsletters, social media, public information, media releases, special alerts and notifications, and public service announcements. OMS also maintains internal and external communications standards, ensures consistent messaging across all departments and services, and provides a wide variety of multimedia technical assistance to city and school operations, public bodies, and the public. OMS also oversees the city’s cable franchise agreements with Comcast and Breezeline. The OMS is funded within the General Fund portion of the City’s Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed OMS budget for FY2024 maintains funding for the personnel, services, and supplies required to support a comprehensive communications plan and access to information for all stakeholders and employees. Funding of a portion of the Director of Media Services position is offset by grant funds continuing into FY2025 supporting public communication needs. Notable budget adjustments reflect the needed equipment replacement for the operations of the citywide broadcast system. Also included is funding for continuing improvements to the city's website and e-commerce platforms in support of an ongoing commitment to transparency and open/accessible government. This will involve a significant redesign of the City's website.

Planned work in FY2024 also includes pursuing new delivery methods for some publications, and new communications tools. OMS will also continue to allocate staff time and resources to help inform the public about its public schools and educational initiatives and continue to assist the committee overseeing the celebration of Dover's 400th anniversary, including the production of oral histories and video content about Dover's rich history.

Office of the City Attorney (OCA): The OCA mission is "to provide proactive, high-quality, efficient, timely and cost-effective legal services, advocacy and advice to the City of Dover and its City Manager, City Council, subsidiary bodies, and City staff, delivered with a focus on the client, integrity, innovation, accountability and stewardship." This is accomplished by representing and advocating for the City of Dover municipal corporation in Court and administrative proceedings; assisting Boards, Commissions and Committees with procedures and laws; drafting and reviewing contracts, deeds, leases and other documents; conducting research and rendering legal opinions to support the City's decision-making; drafting and reviewing ordinances and resolutions; assisting with risk management activities and pursuit/resolution of claims; and, assisting with code enforcement. The OCA also provides legal services to the Dover School Department on a variety of issues important to helping it achieve its goals and defray expenses on use of outside legal counsel. This also includes continuing to facilitate the recent use of joint labor contract negotiator for City and School department collective bargaining agreements. The OCA is funded within the General Fund portion of the City's Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed OCA budget for FY2024 maintains funding necessary for provision of the legal services needed to support the operations of municipal government. Notable planned funding increases include the third-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan, contracted services for publishing and update of the Dover Code (when new ordinances or regulations are enacted), and required continuing education courses for our legal professionals.

Planned for FY2024, the OCA will continue to monitor changes in the law that do or could affect the City or its interests or operations; assist with and provide in-house counsel concerning environmental compliance; prosecute and defend litigation actions in the interests of the City that may arise over the course of the year, including code enforcement; provide further training and compliance monitoring on RSA chapter 91-A and other legal issues to City staff and public officials; provide staff support for the Municipal Records Committee, Ethics Commission and City Council Ordinance Committee; assist with major policy initiatives, such as the creation of a stormwater utility; and, assist with furthering City interests involved in economic development projects, public-private partnerships, and the management and disposition of City-owned real estate.

Office of Business Development (OBD): The OBD mission is “to sustain and grow our City’s vibrant businesses and outstanding quality of life, by providing leadership and resources for business creation, expansion, retention, new business recruitment and community development.”

The OBD responsibilities include supporting the Dover Business and Industrial Development Authority (DBIDA) in reinvigorating its connections with the business community and advocacy for business and industrial growth across the community; coordinate (with the City Manager) the development and monitoring of Public Private Partnerships recommended by DBIDA and approved by the City Council; support the Cochecho Waterfront Development Advisory Committee (CWDAC) and coordinate responsibilities between all municipal departments to achieve a successful implementation of the waterfront development; enhance the marketing of Dover, its businesses and quality of life; administer the City’s established tax increment financing districts and coordinate other programs that support the desired growth and development of businesses throughout the community. The OBD is funded within the General Fund portion of the City’s Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed OBD budget for FY2024 includes the funding necessary to support the ongoing support and coordination of development activities and the related positions required, Deputy City Manager for Strategic Initiatives, Business Development Coordinator, and Business Development Specialist. The Deputy City Manager will continue to oversee the Business Development Coordinator position, which was filled beginning in January of this year. This new position is intended to coordinate activities and programs with Dover’s larger businesses and development entities. This position will also supervise the Business Development Specialist, who focuses more on smaller businesses. Both positions will continue to serve the needs of businesses and seek to be creative problem solvers helping our business community to grow and thrive. The funding for the Business Development Specialist position is offset by grant funds continuing into FY2025 to support business assistance efforts.

Planned for FY2024, the OBD will finalize updates to outreach efforts, including website redesign, increased metric tracking and reporting of economic data. The OBD began implementing a business visitation plan in 2023, and that will continue, as will exploring grants and funding opportunities for Brownfields and other development related projects. The office will work to include Dover projects within the Regional Comprehensive Economic Development strategy. Furthermore, the office will redefine the role it plays with regards to the overall development process in Dover, and be more integral to the code compliance process by reinforcing the OBD’s role as an information resource and advocate for the business and development community. Finally, OBD staff will provide project management supporting CWDAC in coordinating the City’s involvement in the waterfront development project, and oversee the implementation of the public improvements associated with the project.

Office of Information Technology (OIT): OIT “is a trusted partner in creating solutions and by consistently providing accurate and responsive data to support decision making. OIT leadership deploys forward-thinking and accessible technology for use by both municipal staff and the Dover community. OIT safeguards resources, actively listens at all levels of the municipal operation, transparently communicates and prioritizes OIT work.” OIT is responsible for the management and security of a comprehensive municipal voice and data network, referred to as “DoverNet”, that spans across all City departments. DoverNet, the overall Municipal Information Technology Systems

and Services (MITSS) essential to providing municipal services across all departments, involves the full spectrum of networking from the physical to application layers.

OIT performs an essential function that supports critical operations across the entire municipality. There are approximately 300 “connected” employees and user client systems, 80 physical and virtual servers and related applications, 200 cellular lines supporting cell phones, tablets, and internet hotspots providing information accessibility in the field, nearly 240 VoIP desk phones conference room phones and fax lines, 80 alarm lines, and roughly 220 board and commission members’ municipal mailboxes that are managed and supported by OIT. Additionally, OIT is responsible for supporting the management of all municipal infrastructure through the use of a municipal geographic information system (GIS), operation of enterprise applications that interface with GIS, and administration of Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems that are necessary to properly monitor and operate the public water and sewer utilities, traffic control systems, and building HVAC. The OIT is funded within the DoverNet Fund portion of the City’s Annual Operating Budget. Starting with the FY2023 budget and continuing into FY2024 and beyond, OIT is supporting administration and management of Public Safety server and application systems.

In FY2024, continuous improvement of the City’s cybersecurity posture will remain a priority. Grant funding supporting cybersecurity improvements is offsetting proposed increases throughout the DoverNet budget. The most significant changes are related to OIT organizational structure. FY2024 proposed budget removes a second Community Service IT administrator position and instead adds two IT technician positions supporting Public Safety and Utility Systems. This change allows for increased management of mobile devices, support of field personnel and adds redundancy in two critical service areas. Thirty percent of these two positions will be grant-funded for FY24 and FY25. This budget also adds a part-time Asset Management Assistant, tasked with reviewing, consolidating, scanning and archiving paper plan sets. Seventy-five percent of this position is grant funded for FY24 and FY25. Lastly in personnel, increased staff training reflects grant funding.

Also reflected in FY2024 proposed budget is increased funding for digital signing services that have proven effective and, with increased use, are proving to be more timely and operationally efficient. Due to shared value across the organization and the public, DoverNet will assume full cost of imagery services. As we have completed work in pulling all municipal vehicles into a single system for monitoring and deployment during emergency management operations, maintenance for this service has been added.

DoverNet telecommunications budget reflects a shift to funding all fiber optic voice and data services that support our enterprise wide area network. It also accounts for increases in Comcast services. The City is leveraging grant funding to support new VoIP services citywide from November 2022 through December 2026.

Lastly, FY24 DoverNet proposed budget reflects grant-funded threat protection, vulnerability management, password management and centralized switch management items.

Finance Department:

The Finance Department is the trusted safeguard of the City’s financial resources and public records. The department is comprised of four divisions responsible for functions supporting the

financial and recordkeeping operations across all municipal departments. These divisions and an overview of their responsibilities and proposed budget highlights include:

Finance, Accounting and Purchasing Division (FAP): This division’s mission is “to handle the financial resources of the City in a safe, fair, accurate, efficient and professional manner to meet all areas of responsibilities, including compliance with Federal, State and local laws and generally accepted accounting principles, and to timely report the financial position and performance of the City to the City Council, management, debt underwriters, rating agencies and the public”. It is responsible for the accounting and management of the overall financial resources of the City by administering all the cash management, accounting/financial reporting and purchasing and accounts payable functions across the municipal corporation. This division provides administrative support to the Board of Trustees of Trust Funds. This division is funded in the General Fund portion of the City’s Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed FAP budget for FY2024 maintains funding necessary for provision of the financial management, accounting and purchasing services needed to support the operations of municipal government. Notable planned funding increases include the final-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan along with increased software maintenance costs for the City’s enterprise wide financial resource management system relied upon by all municipal departments inclusive of the School Department.

Planned for FY2024, FAP will be implementing a comprehensive Electronic Public Procurement platform (EPP) and expanding use of the debt management application. The EPP will replace the current manual system streamlining the submission and review process while also aiding with increasing bid responses. The debt management software will further be utilized to provide improved tracking and reporting on leases to meet the financial reporting standard of Governmental Accounting Standards Boards (GASB) Statement 87. Also, being addressed is a new GASB Statement 96 requirement for the tracking and reporting of subscription based technology services in the City’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report.

Tax Assessment Division (TAD): This division’s mission is “to increase the quantity and quality of professional appraisal and assessment services to the taxpayers and the public at large, through the application of advanced technology and modern management practices.” Responsibilities include maintaining annual assessments of properties at market value; administering tax exemptions and credits; conducting field inspection of all properties on a cyclical basis; maintain the Computer Aided Mass Appraisal (CAMA) database; processing and resolving abatements; administering the assessment of timber and excavation taxes; and administering current use assessment and land use change tax. This division is funded in the General Fund portion of the City’s Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed TAD budget for FY2024 maintains the funding necessary for the proper assessment of property taxes and other related services required by State law. Notable planned funding increases include the final-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan along with the funding the contractual vendor obligations for field inspection and data collection services. Also included is the cost for the final year of funding needed for the replacement of the existing CAMA application as reflected in the most recent six-year Capital Improvements Program.

In FY2024, TAD is planning to implement the use of a new CAMA software system. The FY2023 budget provided the final year funding needed for replacement of the existing CAMA system. Undertaking the conversion and ensuring a new CAMA system is fully tested and operational will be a priority given that an updated and fully functioning CAMA system is essential for ensuring fair and equitable taxation of property throughout the community.

City Clerk/Tax Collection Division (CC/TC): This division's mission is "to serve all our customers in a timely and professional manner; which includes the governing body, legislative body, residents and city staff; to dutifully record and preserve the Vital Records of this community for historical continuity as mandated by New Hampshire Statute and support the City Clerk/Tax Collector serving as the election official for all elections held in Dover; and, to ensure the safe and accurate collection and timely deposit of city moneys while serving customers in a professional and courteous manner." Responsibilities include recording and issuing vital records; receiving and recording water/sewer bill payments; collecting property tax payments; processing State of NH motor vehicle registrations; accounting for and depositing daily collections received from all other municipal departments; archiving official city records; and, administering local, state and federal elections. This division is funded in both the CC/TC and Elections cost centers of the General Fund portion of the City's Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed CC/TC budget for FY2024 maintains the funding necessary for the administrative and clerical operations needed to fulfill the statutorily required responsibilities of City Clerk, Tax Collector and conduct of elections. Funding increases include the final-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan, increased funding for postage for city-wide mailings and statutory notices. Also addressed is the funding necessary for conducting two city-wide elections.

Utility Billing Division (UBD): This division's mission is "to administer the metering system for the water and sewer utility in order to accurately process invoices for the residential and industrial water and sewer customers as well as conduct timely review and process of utility abatements." Responsibilities include interfacing with the Community Services Department to coordinate meter repairs/replacements and periodic readings required for billing; produce and deliver usage and service invoices for water and sewer utility customers; and review and process utility bill abatements. This division is funded in both the Water Fund and Sewer Fund portions of the City's Annual Operating Budget.

The proposed UBD budget for FY2024 maintains the funding necessary for the proper and timely administration of the City's water and sewer utility billing, as well as backflow testing compliance. Funding increases include the final-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan, increased postage for bill mailings and backflow notices, along with funds for continuing planned meter upgrades and replacements that will continue to improve the accuracy and timeliness of meter reading as well as allow customers to access and monitor their own billing and usage information.

Planning and Community Development Department:

The Planning and Community Development Department mission is "to be a trusted provider of innovative solutions and collaborate with stakeholders to pursue the community's vision". Through the highest ethical and professional standards, demonstrating respect for customers and the public, the

Planning Department works to develop, implement and enforce land use changes. This is done in support of Master Plan goals and objectives, in coordination with long range strategic planning initiatives. This work helps to ensure our community develops responsibly. In order to pursue this workplan, responsibilities include: providing customer service to residents, business owners, and potential newcomers; supporting the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment in managing the growth and impacts of development of the community; assisting all municipal departments inclusive of the School Department with program development and long-range planning, including capital infrastructure investment; administering the City's Community Development Block Grant; asserting Dover's priorities in regional and state projects such as the State Ten Year Transportation Improvement Plan and COAST public transit services; fostering opportunities for public art installations in support of the Arts Commission; addressing climate change and resiliency in support of the Energy Commission; and promoting the preservation of open space and historical community features by supporting the efforts of the Open Lands Committee, the Conservation Commission and the Heritage Commission. This department is funded through the General Fund and CDBG Fund portions of the City's Annual Operating Budget along with an allocation provided from the Conservation Commission's Fund.

The proposed Planning and Community Development Department budget for FY2024 maintains the funding necessary for fulfilling the City's statutory obligations in establishing and administering land use regulations and all other identified department responsibilities. Funding increases include the third-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan and the additional funds to allow for neighborhood charettes, moving the Arts Commission over from Recreation, the addition of the grant-funded Housing Navigator position, the Standard Power of America payments, and other additional software and membership costs as prices have increased.

In FY2024, the department is planning to complete an update for the Open Space and Conservation chapter of the Master Plan; implementation of the Citywide Resilience Plan; and implementation of the other Master Plan action items and Council goals. Coordinating the development of the next six-year Capital Improvements Program and initiating the design work for the downtown pedestrian and vehicular access project will also be occurring. The department plans to continue advancing initiatives for affordable housing, resiliency, and for economic development within the City.

Police Department:

The Police Department mission is to "enforce laws of society, maintain order, protect life and property, deliver quality services to the community and to assist the public at large in a manner consistent with the rights and dignity of all persons as provided for by law and under the constitution of the United States and the State of New Hampshire."

The proposed FY2024 Police Department operating budget reflects the Department's continued commitment to provide high quality public safety services to the community through the use of nationally recognized best practices and in compliance with the standards of national accreditation identified by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). Additionally, it allows for the on-going implementation of key strategies of the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Law Enforcement Accountability Community and Transparency, as well as the Presidential Task Force on 21st Century Policing, the Dover Police Department's Strategic Plan, and an understanding of the challenges and needs of the greater community.

The Police Department's responsibility of ensuring public safety encompasses many tasks. Based on the most recent calendar year 2022 data, patrol officers assigned to the Field Operations Division responded to 27,553 calls for police service, conducted 6,665 motor vehicle stops, and investigated 1,416 motor vehicle collisions. Detectives assigned to the Support Services Division conducted 364 felony level criminal investigations, 51 death investigations, 9 fatal overdose death investigations, tracked 5,383 items of evidence, and registered 46 sexual offenders. Dispatchers assigned to the department's Communications Bureau received 100,117 telephone calls, 209,675 radio transmissions, and 4,718 emergency 911-calls. The Department's Outreach Bureau continued to operate the Dover Teen Center. Additionally, Dover youth were provided with drug and alcohol prevention strategies through Dover Youth to Youth, DARE, and other prevention presentations. A total of 149 individuals were referred to the department's social worker, 358 cases were referred to the Division of Children Youth and Families and officers made an additional 225 mental health related referrals to non-law enforcement services. The department's Records Unit ensured all police cases were appropriately processed, defendants were provided discovery, and records requests were met. The department's Professional Standard's Unit ensured appropriate training for all staff, as well as compliance with nationally recognized best practice standards to maintain national accreditation through CALEA.

The Police Department's budget is divided into five cost centers. Administration, which accounts for approximately 3% of the overall budget, Field Operations Division is 47%, Support Services is 37%, Police Facility is 2%, and Dispatch is 11%. The department's budget is funded in the General Fund, Parking Activity Fund and Special Details Fund portions of the City's Annual Operating Budget. Additionally, the department will receive \$811,360.00 in grant funding in FY24, with an additional \$159,000.00 in pending grant applications.

The increases in the proposed FY24 budget can be attributed to the following drivers;

- Increase in contractually obligated personnel costs
- Funding the City share of grants
- Part-time Traffic Coordinator Position
- Operations Supplies – fuel increase

The most significant single impact on the department's budget is not surprisingly costs related to personnel as the service delivered by the department depends upon the people that are hired, trained and retained to provide those services. Although necessary, it is not equipment or supplies that deliver police services, simply put it is police officers, dispatchers and civilian staff that respond to calls for service and meet the public safety needs of the community. The increase in personnel costs are predominantly due to contractual obligations. These costs are related to ensuring a workforce that is paid within the acceptable range for positions within the department as identified in the 2020 Wage and Classification study completed by an independent consultant and implemented beginning in FY2022.

Given the current state of employment across all sectors, and the specific recruitment and retention challenges facing law enforcement agencies nationwide, it is imperative that the City of Dover remain competitive with other municipalities to successfully recruit and retain a professional police staff. Over the course of the last year numerous strategies to attract and retain qualified candidates for vacant police department positions have been taken, to include providing financial recruitment and retention bonuses. In addition to a significant decrease in the number of overall candidates applying for police officer positions, the numbers that are actually able to meet the department's minimum acceptable

standards has also decreased. This, added to the time it takes to hire and properly train a police officer, which is on average 10 to 12 months (approximately 3 months to complete hiring process, 16 weeks to attend the police academy, and 14 weeks of on the job Field Training) has placed significant strain on existing staff. To ensure proper staffing levels so that the department can properly respond to calls for police service, patrol officers have been assigned to 12 hour shifts. Additionally, to ensure the department can meet its obligations related to the coordination of traffic for large events in the City as well as to provide public safety specific input to both the Technical Review Committee as well as the Transportation Advisory Committee, the proposed budget reflects the staffing of a part-time Traffic Coordinator position.

As identified by the Police Department's strategic plan, the volume and variety of services provided by the Dover Police Department to a growing community as well as their legal implications, requires the use of industry accepted best practices. Poor police services will lead to unsatisfied customers, an increase in crime, a decrease in quality of life for residents, and more liability (i.e. expense) for the City. The ability to maintain appropriate staffing levels has specific and direct impacts on the ability to deliver professional police services. Dover's population has been growing and, as a result, so have demands on the department without a correlating increase in staff. Increases in calls for service as well as an increase in records requests are taxing police staff. Having more work than staff to complete it leads to the inability to meet expectations of the community, slow response times to non-emergency calls for service, officer safety concerns, and the inability for patrol officers to be proactive.

In 2021, in an effort to better respond to issues facing the community, as well as an effort to limit police involvement in non-criminal matters that would be better addressed through proper referral to and involvement with social service providers, the Police Department applied for and was awarded a one year grant to fund a social worker. The Police Department Social Worker is a civilian position that works as a liaison with various social service agencies and clinical providers with the goal of providing more direct follow-up referrals for individuals and families. The goal of the position is to provide referral assistance to individuals and families when they are no longer experiencing a crisis in order to reduce the number and frequency of those crises requiring officer response. The Police Social Worker does not respond directly to police calls nor does she provide ongoing clinical services. Rather the Social Worker works closely with police officers, firefighters, community mental health agencies, recovery centers, anti-poverty agencies, the school department, other city departments, and other social service agencies to coordinate the wrap-around care individuals and families need. This is done by following up with individuals and families after police or fire department interactions to provide clear direction on how to obtain appropriate services and help them through that process. The Police Social Worker then refers individuals and families to the resource(s) most equipped to assist. The position has been incredibly successful with over 149 individuals assisted, resulting in a significant decrease in police contacts for those individuals that were helped. The proposed FY24 budget funds 100% of the costs of the existing police social worker position as well as a second social worker position, and two additional prevention programmer positions, through the use of grant funds.

Additionally, through the use of a Department of Justice Office of Community Policing Oriented Services (COPS) grant the department is able to fund a Problem Oriented Police (POP) Officer through FY2026. The grant offsets the cost for this position in FY2024. As required by the COPS grant, the Problem Oriented Police Officer is focused on substance misuse issues and violent crime. The POP officer position is grant funded for a three-year period. The grant escalates the City of Dover share each year with a commitment that the City will maintain the position and all other existing sworn officer positions for a fourth year (through February of 2026). The budget request associated with this position is the City's

share of the grant. As obligated by the grant and recognized when acceptance was authorized, should the City not fund the City share of the grant or eliminate any existing sworn officer position, any expended grant funds would need to be paid back. This would also negatively impact the City's ability to receive any future DOJ grants. In addition to this COPS grant position, the cost for two other existing Police Officer positions are also continuing to be offset by COVID related grant funds that continue into FY2025.

In addition to providing the department with a specific position to address issues related to substance misuse, the grant for the POP officer also increases the sworn officer (police officers) staff from 53 to 54. Although an increase, the total number of officers remains considerably below what is required to keep pace with the public safety needs of a growing community and is at a level significantly below what is provided by any of the City of Dover's comparable communities. For purposes of perspective, in 1998 the population of Dover was approximately 26,000 residents, the Police Department had 54 officers. In 2023, the City has a population of nearly 34,000 and the police department has 54 officers.

Additionally, the Department of Justice through the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting program reports a National average of 2.42 officers per 1000 residents, a New England average of 2.2 officers per 1000 residents, and a New Hampshire average of 2.06 officers per 1000 residents. With 54 sworn officers the City of Dover's current officer per 1000 residents is 1.65 officers. To meet the Department of Justice UCR National average, Dover would need to have 79 officers (72 to meet NE average / 67 to meet NH average). The Police Department's strategic plan recommends a minimum of 57 officers to meet existing needs. For the City of Dover to provide the same police level as the City of Portsmouth, Dover would need 102 officers (nearly double what we currently have). To meet the level provided by the Cities of Somersworth or Rochester, the City of Dover would need 80 or 64 officers respectively.

The issue of police funding has been at the forefront over the last few years. What has become clear through experiences across the county as well as here within the City of Dover, is that there is a need for the police to enforce the law, protect property and maintain order. Reductions in police services, leads to an increase in crime, and negatively impacts the quality of life expected by the community. Additionally, as highlighted by the loss of police positions during the recession in the early 2000's, in which the Dover Police Department's sworn officer strength fell as low as 46 officers, it takes years if not decades and an increase in costs to add staff back. The proposed police department budget works to address the necessary focus on providing professional police services accounting for the needs of the community while increasing efficiency, transparency, legitimacy and trust.

Fire & Rescue Department:

The Fire & Rescue Department mission is "to be a quality-of-life resource for anyone in need, and to assist community members in achieving health and safety through community risk reduction." The department is an all-hazards response organization and is responsible for providing emergency services that include: advanced life support emergency medical services (EMS) response, paramedic-level ambulance transport, fire suppression, wildland firefighting, search & rescue, water mitigation, technical rescue services: vehicle extrication, confined space, high angle and low angle rescue, water and ice rescue, pet and wildlife rescue/mitigation, tactical rescue-EMS task force operations (providing emergency medical services in active threat situations i.e.: active shooter), regional bariatric ambulance transport services, hazardous materials mitigation, response to electrical and natural gas distribution system hazards, and radiological emergency response. The department is also responsible for building construction related inspections and code enforcement throughout the City.

The Fire & Rescue Department's budget is divided into four cost centers. Administration, Fire Suppression, Inspection Services and Buildings. The department's budget is funded in the General Fund and Special Detail Fund portions of the City's Annual Operating Budget.

In addition to its emergency fire and EMS responsibilities, emergency management services are also provided by the department. This involves coordinating responses to natural and human-made disasters including public health crises relating to pandemics, homelessness, opioid/drug use, and mental health. The increasing frequency and severity of weather events continues to impact service delivery demands. The department coordinates and/or provides local, regional, state, and federal engagement in prevention, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery in accordance with homeland security and national emergency management preparedness missions.

The Fire and Rescue Department also is responsible for fulfilling the City of Dover's obligations as an evacuation reception site for the state of New Hampshire Radiological Emergency Response Plan. For radiological emergencies involving the Seabrook Nuclear Power Plant. Department personnel are federally trained and equipped to conduct radiological decontamination during a mass evacuation.

In providing non-emergency public services, the Fire & Rescue Department assists persons with motor vehicle lock-outs, residential lock-outs, lift-assists (assisting citizens who are non-ambulatory or have mobility difficulties), home safety inspections, smoke detector installation/battery replacements, well-being checks. Department personnel also conduct public education that includes CPR, fire extinguishers operations, fire & life safety presentations to high-risk populations and early childhood education.

The Fire and Rescue Department operates out of three fire stations with 24/7 staffing provided by 4 shifts each with 15 certified Fire/EMS personnel. Inspection Services personnel operate out of the Liberty North-end Fire Station. 100% of the fire/EMS personnel in the department are certified to a minimum of Firefighter Level II. 49% are Advanced-EMT's, and 51% are Paramedics. 100% are certified in Hazardous Materials Decontamination or Operations and 50% of personnel are certified at the higher level of Hazardous Material Technicians. 18% are on the regional hazardous materials team. 10% of the paramedics are members of the regional SWAT team serving as tactical medics, 70% of the fire/EMS personnel hold college degrees, and approximately 17% of the personnel are actively pursuing college degrees. The City's Building Official and all inspectors within the Inspection Services Division are licensed in their respective trades.

The Fire & Rescue Department was a co-founder and actively supports the Dover School Department Career Technical Center's Firefighter & EMT programs. Numerous personnel serve as instructors for these programs and mentor the high school students. Several of the students have been certified through the program and have been successfully hired by the department in recent years.

The Fire & Rescue Department command staff consists of five administrative chief officers: Fire Chief & Emergency Management Director, Deputy Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, Division Chief of Training & Safety, and Division Chief of EMS. These management and administrative level positions work a regular day-time 42 hour/week schedule Monday through Friday. However, all Chief Officers provide a 24/7 command coverage on a rotating basis above and beyond their regular administrative duties and hours of work. This coverage provides a chief officer's immediate response on the initial dispatch to incidents such as building fires, large-scale/critical incidents, technical rescues, and all mutual aid fire responses. Large-scale incidents receive multiple chief officers who fill roles in the incident command system.

Inspection Services, a division of the Fire & Rescue Department, is dedicated to safeguard the public's, health and general welfare through structural strength, means of egress components, sanitation, light and ventilation, energy conservation, and safety for life and property from fire and other hazards attributed to the built environment, and to provide safety to first responders during emergency operations.

Inspection Services consists of the City's Building Official, health & fire inspector, electrical inspector, plumbing inspector, building inspector, and fire & life safety inspector, and an office manager. All positions within the Inspection Services are civilian positions and do not provide fire suppression or EMS response. Six Inspection Services personnel work 40 hours per week, 1 personnel works 30 hours per week, all Monday through Friday.

Inspection Services is responsible for issuing building construction related permits in accordance with City Ordinances and adopted NH Building and Fire Codes. Building codes apply to the construction, design, structure, maintenance, and use of all buildings or structures to be erected and the alteration, renovation, rehabilitation, repair, removal or demolition of all buildings and structures previously erected shall be governed by the provisions of the state building code. (RSA 155-A:2)

Permits that are issued and related inspections include -building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, fire alarm, sprinkler systems, and kitchen hood suppression systems. Building permits are required for all residential new building, addition, renovation, rehabilitation, alteration, to include decks, pergolas and porches or addition of Accessory Dwelling Unit or repairs. The Inspection Services Division also issues demolition permits for any type of structure. All building permits receive a plan review prior to issuance. Issuance of annual Place of Assembly permits as required by state statute and the adopted State of NH Fire Code. Annual Health Licenses and inspection of food service establishments are completed in accordance with State of NH rules and City Ordinance for safe food handling for the protection of the public. Inspection of Family day care homes, day care group homes, day care centers and/or nurseries, and inspection of Foster Care homes are also completed. The division also administers and investigates Housing Standard complaints and works with tenants and landlords for resolution. Administer and investigate Fire Code and Life Safety concerns. Reviews plans for new residential, nonresidential and mixed-use projects for Technical Review Committee (TRC) meeting prior to being presented at Planning Board.

The Building Official is responsible for maintaining the official street listing throughout the city and also serves as the primary 911 coordinator for the city – assigning numbers and streets as well as any number and/or street changes in accordance with RSA 231:133-a, and 231:133. This position is also responsible for inspections of public and private schools biannually and provides reports to the NH Fire Marshal's Office. Inspection staff perform four fire drills annually for all public and private schools annually within the city.

Inspection Services strives to be a leader in public safety, health, and general welfare to enhance the quality of life within the community and to be pro-active ensuring compliance with all applicable codes, State regulations and Municipal Ordinances as adopted through NH statutes and mandated by Building regulations. Additionally, Inspection Services strives to be a resource for the business community and to assist them with their code compliance efforts. Inspection Services is in the process of implementing an electronic permitting software in conjunction with other City departments and is moving towards a paperless process for all permits. The goal of this initiative is to improve customer service and increase organizational efficiency.

The Fire & Rescue Departments FY2024 budget proposal requests funding to support the organization's strategies to fulfill its mission, "...to be a quality-of-life resource for anyone in need, and to assist community members in achieving health and safety through community risk reduction." Strategic objectives have been developed to improve Dover Fire & Rescue's delivery of community risk reduction initiatives. These objectives are in support of Dover Fire & Rescue's vision, "...to remain one step ahead of our community's needs through technology and community engagement." The methodology used to strategize a reduction in the community's risk hazards and threats is to take a multi-angle approach of enhancing prevention & preparedness initiatives, and assuring emergency response resources efficiently align with the community's emergency response needs.

The proposed budget for FY2024 includes the funding necessary to address the continued increase for fire and EMS emergency response needs along with maintaining existing building code enforcement and inspection services. Notable funding increases include the third-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan, the addition of a second building inspector positions needed to address the growing backlog of inspections and timeliness of building permit issuance. There is also increased funding proposed to provide for additional firefighter/paramedic level training and certification needed to provide 24/7 pre-hospital advanced life support care.

Community Services Department:

The Community Services Department mission is "to provide continuous, reliable, cost-effective and high-quality public works service to the community. We strive to protect and enhance the community's public health, infrastructure, public assets and environment." The department is responsible for the essential services that residents and businesses rely on day-by-day. We impact people's lives on a daily basis whether it's through the provision of safe, reliable potable water; collection and treatment of sanitary sewer waste; management of stormwater and flood controls; or maintaining a network of safe roads, bridges, sidewalks, along with their corresponding signs, street lights and traffic signals. We serve as stewards of the environment, and are responsible for public sanitation, snow removal, solid waste and recycling collection. Engineering and Administration staff manage capital improvement projects to ensure we are properly maintaining, operating, and sustaining critical public infrastructure. The department is also responsible monitoring and caring for all City buildings, parks, grounds, cemeteries, and vehicles.

The proposed FY2024 Budget reflects the Department's needs to continue provision of critical services and utility functions, while also assuring public infrastructure is being appropriately monitored and managed to help guide cost-effective and sustainable reinvestment. The operational nature of Community Services means we rely extensively on vehicles and equipment, and also on purchased services such as electricity, chemicals, road salt, and fuel. The current replacement value of all Community Services vehicles and equipment is over \$9 million. To illustrate the reliance on equipment, during a winter storm event Community Services will deploy more than 30 vehicles, loaders or tractors.

The Community Services Department makes up the largest portion of the City's annual operating budget. The department's budget is funded in the General Fund, Water Fund, Sewer Fund, Solid Waste Fund and the Fleet Services Fund portions of the City's Annual Operating Budget. Across these funds, Community Services is divided into 7 distinct divisions that operate over 15 budget costs centers. The divisions are:

- Facilities, Grounds & Cemeteries - 3
- Engineering - 1
- Highways & Drainage - 4

- Solid Waste & Recycling - 2
- Utilities (Water & Sewer) - 3
- Administration - 1
- Fleet Services – 1

A prime budget driver across all divisions and budget cost centers is collectively-bargained personnel costs and benefits including funding the third-year implementation of the city-wide classification and wage plan. However, in comparing our operations to other municipalities across the State, we have a very lean operation in regards to staffing and embrace the concept of doing more with less.

With such a wide range of operational responsibilities and related infrastructure needs, a more detailed discussion of each operations division and budget cost centers follows.

Facilities, Grounds & Cemeteries Division (FG&C): The FG&C operates over three budget cost centers which includes General Government Buildings; Cemeteries; and Facilities & Grounds. They are responsible for 30 parks, 20 buildings, 12 sports fields, and 100's of acres of public space. Collectively, there are budget increases for supply items such as electricity and natural gas for occupied buildings. Additional increases are included for grounds maintenance including organic turf treatment and additional maintenance mowing, as the success of organic treatments requires longer grass height. This division is tasked with maintenance and upkeep responsibilities.

Engineering Division: Engineering operates within a single budget cost center. Their prime responsibility is the review and oversight of all infrastructure capital improvements projects, but they also provide technical guidance and inspection for development projects, and oversee and administer permitting related to the City's rights-of-way and public properties. The division's largest non-personnel budget expense is funding for technical services related to the City's obligation at the former Tolend Road Landfill site. The former landfill is an EPA-regulated Superfund Site and work is ongoing to help control spread of groundwater contaminants via an expansion of a network of groundwater collection wells.

Highways & Drainage Division: The Highways & Drainage Division operates over four budget cost centers which includes Streets; Snow Removal; Storm Water; and Street Lighting. Streets has a significant increase related to capital outlay items to support a sustainable street paving program, sidewalk replacements, and bridge maintenance. Dover roads have been considered "poor" and require additional investment to help restore, and sustain the roads at an acceptable level. There is a standardized rating system for roads that assigns a numerical value of 1 (poorest condition) to 100 (best condition) based on metrics acquired via specialized van equipped with sensors. Dover recently completed a City-wide rating as has shown improvement in overall pavement conditions given the steady, yet relatively minor increases, over recent years. Additional capital funding is proposed based upon the recent analysis to effectively maintain and prevent further deterioration in the City's overall pavement condition.

There are also budget increases for a non-toxic curbside weed treatment program along with Snow Removal increases for consumable supplies such as road sand, winter salt, and diesel fuel. Budget estimates for Snow Removal look at 3 to 5 year prior average and makes projections based on anticipated supply costs.

Solid Waste & Recycling Division: This Division oversees and manages two budget cost centers as the names imply, Solid Waste and Recycling. Solid Waste expenditures are increasing due primarily to contracted expenses supporting for curbside trash collection and disposal. Recycling is experiencing cost increases for contracted collection services, as well as certain specialized waste disposal costs for food composting, yard waste, and services for brush grinding. Funds are included to continue the composting program initiated last year to help residents reduce solid waste disposal costs by diverting compostable material from the waste disposal stream.

Utilities (Water & Sewer) Division: The Utilities Division operates over three budget cost centers which include Water, Sewer and the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Water is facing a budget increase due to a few drivers. Increases are included to continue a City-wide water quality monitoring and sampling program, which also includes testing for the EPA-mandated Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule 5. There is also an increase in consumable items such as electricity, propane and general maintenance supplies for the nearly 140 miles of distribution system piping. A portion of both water and sewer utility related cybersecurity costs are being offset by grant funding for cybersecurity related improvements.

The Sewer budget has increases for consumable supplies and technical services, and similar to the water budget also has an increase for general maintenance items.

The cost for an existing Assistant City Engineer position that is funded across both the Water and Sewer budget is continuing to be offset by grant funds through FY2025 for utility infrastructure improvements.

The wastewater treatment plant proposed funding provides for a continuing good-faith effort to meet the adaptive management objectives set forth in the General Permit, and also allows for contributions to water quality monitoring and sampling of Great Bay via efforts coordinated through the Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership (PREP).

There is also a \$400,000 capital outlay allocated to General Permit Compliance. This is intended for ongoing infrastructure investments to enhance nitrogen removal at the wastewater treatment plant, to allow for the installation of various structural storm-water treatment measures, and/or implementation of non-structural nutrient removal initiatives. These so-called BMP's (best management practices) are projects of opportunity that City staff are working to identify and implement across the City in the coming years.

Administration: Administration operates within a single budget cost center, and is tasked with providing oversight and support for all Community Service functions. In addition to personal service costs, this division is experiencing notable increases in the areas of purchased services for electricity and fuel, which is related to the shared public works facility at Mast Road.

Fleet Services Division: Fleet Services operates within a single budget cost center to provide preventative maintenance services to approximately 130 City vehicles, along with another 170+ external vehicles related to the Dover School Department and other municipal or non-profit entities such as the Dover Housing Authority, Town of Rollinsford, and Strafford County. While the majority of expenditures are relatively stable, there is an increase in purchased materials

and supplies, which are projected to increase in FY2024. With the lingering impacts of the pandemic, parts remain harder to obtain in a timely fashion, and the difficulty obtaining parts has resulted in a cost increase.

A key strategic initiative for the Community Services Department is to strive for excellent customer service. A critical aspect of that initiative is to fully utilize available technology to ensure we are not missing any opportunities to engage with residents, businesses or property owners. There is an Asset Management software package called VUEworks that staff utilizes to track all incoming service requests or inquiries. This includes provision of an online portal to allow businesses or residents to submit a request, or report an issue via computer. To help optimize the VUEworks software to its fullest potential, and to also optimize supporting software packages, Community Services maintains a full-time Information Technology Technician to help support the City's largest department. This position is included in the Office of Information Technology budget.

Community Services has lost several senior staff members to retirements, and with their departure there is also a loss of invaluable institutional knowledge. Fully embracing available technology can help offset the loss, and pending departure of any institutional knowledge. This includes maintaining super-accurate infrastructure maps within our GIS for all public works components such as water mains, sewer lines, and storm drainage pipes. And concurrent with accurate locational data, a critical corresponding component is the actual management of the asset, which can include a condition assessment, risk analysis of failure, life-expectancy information, and budget impact projections. This also hits another strategic initiative of ensuring and enhancing quality of life through proactive management of core services and infrastructure. The infrastructure systems have to be properly maintained to ensure their functionality and reliability. A key request is the addition of a part-time project manager position that is intended to retain some of the institutional knowledge that would otherwise be lost with recent retirements.

Capital outlay budget items are included for continued investments in public roads, sidewalks, traffic signals, water, sewer and storm drainage. The Streets budget has been moderately increasing each year to reach a sustainable level of street-paving that would help ensure the overall condition of the collective network of roads actually starts to improve, as opposed to a slow continual decrease. Continued and sustained investments are required to adequately sustain the infrastructure, and bring City roads to an "acceptable" level.

Environmental factors are also having a significant impact on the department's budgets across the board. This includes compliance with the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit, the EPA-issued Great Bay Total Nitrogen General Permit, and stricter PFAS limits in drinking water and wastewater bio-solids. Commitments to fully fund non-toxic turf management and weed control help protect and sustain the environment, but have a corresponding budget impact. These environmental initiatives or opportunities put Dover in a leadership role, helping guide regional responses and developing initiatives to find creative means of compliance and funding in these areas remains critical. The City has been proactive and recognized with awards for environmental leadership, asset management proficiency, and stormwater creativity. Other New Hampshire municipalities typically reach out to Dover for advice and guidance. This supports another strategic initiative to be seen as industry leaders, which embraces the "Dover-First" mentality.

Recreation Department:

The Recreation Department mission is “to provide affordable, high quality recreation facilities and programs in collaboration with other City departments and local organizations, ensuring participants have access to a variety of recreational opportunities, thereby enhancing their quality of life”. The department is responsible for the operations of several major public recreation facilities and provides/facilitates a comprehensive list of programs for all ages and abilities. The department is also responsible for the operations and maintenance of the McConnell Center facility supporting a variety of municipal and social service related agencies. The Recreation Department’s budget is funded in the General Fund, McConnell Center Fund, and Recreation Programs Fund portions of the City’s Annual Operating Budget.

The Dover community is very fortunate to have a legacy of investment in what it takes to provide high quality recreational experiences for area residents. The basis of this investment, both in infrastructure and human capital, is the view that one of the measures of the quality of a person’s life is what they share with others around them. Recreation by design brings people together in various settings to develop community, build relationships and give back to others through volunteerism and sponsorship opportunities.

The mechanisms in place in Dover to build the enjoyable lifestyles recreational activities can bring include: Sports Leagues for all ages and competitive and instructional levels, Special Events, Lessons for all sports, Cultural and Arts Events, Parks and gathering places for individual and group activities, Community Recreation and Fitness Center, Indoor and Outdoor Pools, Twin Sheet Ice Arena, Disc Golf Course, Skatepark, Sledding and Snowboard Hills, Dog Park, Walking Trails, Paddle sports Dock, Playgrounds, Tennis and Pickleball Courts, Basketball Courts, Performing Arts Venues and ,Trails, Natural and Conservation Areas for Passive Recreation.

The Recreation Department is involved with the operation and provision of most of the community recreational activities to varying degrees. The facilities operated by the department host many of the programming available to the community. Our staff either run those programs or coordinate the reservations and/or rentals of those community venues with private leagues/ groups or individuals.

The public parks and athletic facilities are managed by the Recreation Department in cooperation with the Community Services Department and the Dover School Department. The integral role that the Dover Recreation Department plays creates and enables athletic and recreational opportunities for tens of thousands of people every year whether a participant or spectator. The ~~FY2023~~ FY2024 budget provides the resources for the department to operate the recreation facilities and support the programming that serves the community every day. The changes in these sections year to year can impact that ability as they are supported and consistently funded.

The Recreation Department also manages and operates the McConnell Center. This major facility serves as a Recreation Center, Senior Center, Teen Center, Community Center, Multi-Tenant Nonprofit Center and also is the city’s primary Emergency Shelter. The Recreation budget supports the consistent, safe and efficient operation of the McConnell Center and provides the community with many uses and resources to take advantage of over the course of their lives in Dover.

The Strategic Plan of the Recreation Department focuses significantly on the delivery of quality services to our community and customers. That is articulated in the areas of marketing and customer communications specifically. The needs in those areas are addressed in many ways through the hiring and training of qualified staff who can best represent those intangible traits that demonstrate public service. The number of front-line positions in the Recreation Department that need to be hired and trained on an annual basis is significant. This has been a challenge in the current economy however due in large part to talented and dedicated full time staff the department has been able to navigate this issue especially important over the last few years. The solidifying of our full-time staff positions at all facilities has really given the department a firm foundation from which to recruit and train the people that deliver services day by day. The FY2024 budget funds the continuance of this very important aspect that is clearly connected to the level and quality of service we deliver to our community.

In order to account for the many services that the Recreation Department provides, the department's budget is broken into several cost centers including: Administration, Recreation Programs, Indoor Pool, Jenny Thompson Pool, Ice Arena, McConnell Center and several other Recreation Special Revenue Fund programs. There are consistent areas of impact across all these cost centers in the FY2024 budget.

The proposed Recreation Department budget for FY2024 maintains funding for the personnel, services, and supplies required to support the comprehensive recreation program and facilities enjoyed by the Dover community. Funding increases across all cost centers are primarily attributable to the third year of the wage and classification plan implementation and utility costs. Helping to offset these increases are the revenues generated by the various recreation facilities and programs.

The Recreation Department's General Fund operating revenues traditionally cover 60 to 70% of the General Fund expenses and the McConnell Center and other Special Revenue accounts revenue as an aggregate cover 100% of their respective expenses. The result of this is that the net cost of the Recreation Department to the Dover taxpayer is typically 1% of the total City General Fund accounts translating into an annual cost to the individual residential taxpayer of approximately \$80. The inherent value to the residents of the investment that the City of Dover has made in public recreation services over the years and is currently supporting through the budget process has consistently exceeded the level of recreation services provided by any community in northern New England.

Public Library:

The Dover Public Library's mission is to support lifelong engagement in reading, discovering, learning, and creating. The Library prides itself on being responsive to the needs and desires of the population it serves. It serves as both a physical space and virtual portal for the curation and discovery of ideas, the convening of community, and the power of information.

The Dover Public Library responsibilities include: promoting reading, learning, and creative activities for youth and teens through story times, summer reading programs, homework help, and enriching and entertaining STEM, Family Place, and Makerspace experiences; providing research assistance, readers' advisory services, technology and maker classes, and tutoring in the use of electronic, online, and e-reader resources; allowing access to digital, electronic, and streamed content via website and through outreach on popular, customer-focused social software platforms; filling patron requests for books and materials through inter- and intra-library loan; and serving as a community repository, preserving, making accessible, an extensive collection of historical materials about Dover, the seacoast region, and

NH; and supporting libraries in the five Dover public schools by providing system administration and collaborative services within a shared library automation system.

The Public Library is funded in the General Fund and Library Fines Fund portion of the City's Annual Operating Budget.

Dover is a city rich in history, and the historical collection at the library documents and preserves that unique story. The library has spent the last several years digitizing the Dover Directories, and last year digitized 31 years of the Foster's Daily Democrat. This information is now available from our website in a fully searchable format. In FY2024 funding is included to continue digitizing the Foster's Daily Democrat which dates back to the 1800s. This would be a boon to historians and genealogists.

The demand for programming and community events at the library is growing. The budget for FY2024 proposes an increase in Staff Development funds so that librarians can keep pace with new information. Attending conferences and participating in webinars and courses allow staff members to continue their education and learn about new and relevant services for the community. Providing educational opportunities for staff align with our Workforce-Focus Goals.

In order to provide a better experience for groups that meet at the library, a meeting OWL and other related technology is part of the proposed FY2024 budget. The Mental Health survey conducted by the Dover Police Department has indicated a need for more functional meeting space in the city. By improving the technology at the library, this objective could be accomplished.

Many members of the community take advantage of all the materials, services, and programs that the library has to offer, but a recent marketing survey revealed that there are many more who could benefit. By increasing the advertising budget, these non-users could be reached through more robust and targeted marketing strategies allowing them to realize how library services could impact their lives. This would move the Library forward in its Leadership & Governance Strategic Goal of reaching out to non-users.

Public Welfare Department:

The Public Welfare Department mission is "to provide a general assistance program to meet the genuine needs of all eligible residents in compliance with NH State Law (NH RSA 165) and the City guidelines, in a respectful and fiscally responsible way which fosters dignity and self-sufficiency." The department is accessible to and serves Dover residents in their times of need. Responsibilities include: providing General Assistance program for Dover residents as required by State law; maintain accurate case plans/records; investigate/verify eligibility for all applications for public assistance; coordinate opportunities for workfare program; and, make referrals and work with State and local agencies to coordinate services. This department is funded in the General Fund portion of the City's Annual Operating Budget.

Welfare is mandated in New Hampshire by the state government yet it is paid for by local tax revenue. It is intended to be temporary, emergency assistance that will stabilize or minimize a crisis situation allowing people to regain independence. Dover Welfare addresses "Basic Needs" such as housing, food, heat, utilities and medical issues. Staff are dedicated to providing the most assistance allowed for their clients yet remain constantly aware of the fiscal responsibilities to the Dover taxpayer whose money is

being expended. All laws that govern Local Welfare as dictated by state statutes are adhered to including following the adopted "Guidelines" that define the who, what, where, when and how of what may be provided.

Each person who contacts the Public Welfare Department is offered polite, respectful and professional service. This is not always an easy task to accomplish as many of those seeking "Assistance" are angry, anxious, frightened and confused. Some arrive having substance use disorders or mental health issues. If they cannot be helped directly, efforts are made to refer to other programs and agencies that can. Department staff are regularly researching the available services in our area and throughout the state, keeping current with regular trainings and remaining active in all groups that are relevant to concerns addressed by this department.

While personal identifiable information is protected by law the data about how many we serve, in what way and how much it costs is available on the City of Dover Website. Due to various reasons like the moratoriums on evictions and utility shut offs and an influx of Federal monies to assist individuals and communities during the pandemic, the amount of people being served has been significantly less than in other years. This has been true in other comparative Welfare Offices throughout the state.

Due to the Emergency Rental Assistance and Homeowner Assistance programs funded by the American Rescue Plan the amount of expenditures by Dover Welfare has been significantly less for part of fiscal year 2023. With the end of the Emergency Rental Assistance funding on October 11, 2022 there has been a steep increase in the need for welfare assistance especially in the area of rent. As of January 2023, the average amount being spent by Dover Public welfare monthly has returned to slightly above the average that was being spent in past years. Even with this recent increase in expenditures for Assistance the 2024 Budget should not need extra funding this fiscal year.

The proposed Public Welfare Department budget for FY2024 will allow for continuing quality service in providing the general assistance that addresses the needs of Dover residents in the coming year regardless of what unpredictable situations and needs arise.