

VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER 2012-13 BUDGET PLANNING PROCESS

City of Rochester



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	1
Background	4
Voice of the Customer	4
Process	4
Schedule.....	5
Findings	5
Table Topic 1: Taxes, Fees, and new Revenues	6
Themes from Forum Participants	6
Online Votes on Proposed Changes.....	7
Table Topic 2: Fire, Police, and 911 Services	8
Themes from Forum Participants	8
Online Votes on Proposed Changes.....	9
Table Topic 3: Employee Benefits (Pensions and Health Care)	10
Themes from Participants.....	10
Online Votes on Proposed Changes.....	11
Table Topic 4: Infrastructure.....	11
Themes from Participants.....	11
Online Votes on Proposed Changes.....	12
Table Topic 5: Neighborhood and Business Development.....	13
Themes from Participants.....	13
Online Votes on Proposed Changes.....	14
Table Topic 6: Youth and Library Services	14
Themes from Participants.....	14
Online Votes on Proposed Changes.....	16
Table Topic 7: Federal Funding for CDBG and HOME.....	16
Themes from Participants.....	16

Online Votes on Proposed Changes 17

Table Topic 8: Organizational Efficiencies 17

Themes from Participants 17

Online Votes on Proposed Changes 19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As the City of Rochester plans its budget for fiscal year 2012-13, Mayor Thomas Richards invited the public to participate in public sessions to provide important input into the process. Attendance was moderate, with about 170 individuals attending four sessions. Participation was active and engaging, and the Mayor attended the full length of all four sessions in order to ensure he could garner the maximum input.

Three overarching themes emerged from discussions that ensued over the four evenings. These include: (1) City employees have generous salaries, and should pay for a portion of their health care costs to be more in line with private sector norms; (2) efficiency measures should be aggressively and regularly pursued; and (3) the City should fund “needs” before “wants.” Below are the eight primary topic areas the public was invited to discuss, with a brief summary of findings. The body of the report contains more detailed data collected on each topic.

On some topics, particularly those surrounding taxes, infrastructure, and neighborhood and business development, some of the same people attended more than one session and may have provided the same information multiple times. While we attempt in this report to be representative of the larger group, it is possible that some voices are overrepresented.

- 1. Taxes, Fees, and New Revenues** – While participants were not enthusiastic about raising taxes or water rates, they were generally unopposed to increases in parking ticket fines, and were supportive of parking fees at Durand and Ontario Beach. All VOC locations included discussion about the perceived subsidization of commercial development property taxes, and many were outspoken regarding Wilmorite’s (Sibley Building) outstanding tax bill. Participants online and in the sessions were opposed to the city’s proposal to reduce interest rates for late payments on taxes, water and refuse charges.
- 2. Police, Fire and 911** – Surveillance cameras are not popular among those attending VOC sessions, but Pathways to Peace is seen as a successful and valuable program (though it does not reside in a public safety department). Mounted Patrol cuts drew mixed reviews, and many participants simply opposed public safety cuts of any kind.
- 3. Employee Benefits: Pensions and Health Care** – A clear desire for health care and pension benefit parity with the private sector exists among our VOC participants. Many individuals called for substantial increases in City of Rochester employee contributions to

health care, for overall reductions or freezes in salaries, and for a change in the structure of the pension systems.

- 4. Infrastructure** – Participants at all four sessions opposed the investments in the Marina and Erie Harbor as too costly, or ripe for deferral. While deferring capital projects in many cases made sense to VOC attendees, they also indicated that required maintenance often must be done to avoid higher costs down the road, or where health and safety issues exist.
- 5. Neighborhoods and Business Development** – Capital improvements for art should be deferred based on VOC input, and subsidies to municipal facilities should be carefully reviewed and reduced. Some participants spoke out strongly against code enforcement inspections, but views on the role of Neighborhood Service Centers were mixed. Demolitions are seen as an important part of neighborhood revitalization, though some questioned whether more houses could be rehabilitated instead.
- 6. Youth and Library Services** – Most comments on libraries focused on their value and the need to maintain such services, though a couple of online comments indicated that these services could be provided on a shared basis by the community or in a recreation center. Views on Durand Beach were mixed; some felt the community was fine before we had lifeguarded beaches, and others felt charging for parking to keep the beach open is worthwhile. Some participants questioned subsidies for festivals such as Party in the Park and the Jazz Festival.
- 7. Federal Funding for HOME and CDBG** – Rather than demolishing properties participants would rather see houses rehabilitated with these funds, perhaps by youth or as part of a job training program. When demolition is needed it should be part of a comprehensive plan for the resulting lots and neighborhoods. Affordable housing projects and the Focused Investment Strategy areas were mentioned as valuable policies.
- 8. Organizational Efficiencies** – Technology improvements and management tools such as six sigma were emphasized as perpetual activities to use in finding internal efficiencies. Discussion around right-sizing service levels to account for a declining population, and right-sizing management ratios emerged from multiple VOC sessions. Participants supported outsourcing some services, or merging services such as payroll, health care benefits, and towing with other municipalities such as the County, City School District, or RGRTA.

The open space conferencing process used by the City for the past several years generated enthusiasm, extensive conversation and discussion around the topics, and yielded numerous excellent suggestions as well as conflicting opinions on some of the proposed cuts or services changes.

The Mayor expressed gratitude at the end of every session for the community's participation.

BACKGROUND

Voice of the Customer

The City of Rochester has used a Voice of the Customer (VOC) approach in recent years to identify customer or citizen priorities, needs, and concerns. The Mayor values feedback from the public to help the city identify areas for improvement and new opportunities.

This report and the presentation of data is not a reflection of city strategies or priorities for the budget planning process, but rather a snapshot of community participants' perceptions and opinions on the subjects.

The City of Rochester is planning now for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2012 and ends June 30, 2013, or fiscal year 2012-13. The Office of Management and Budget estimates a budget gap of \$40.2 million due to flat revenues such as state aid and sales tax, and increasing expenses such as health care and pension costs. A one-time state aid increase of \$15 million has reduced the gap to about \$25 million.

Senior managers, department heads, and the Mayor have identified a number of ideas for increasing revenues and decreasing expenses in the upcoming year to close this estimated gap. Many of those ideas, as well as some ideas from previous years, were put on the table for comment by the community.

Process

An open space conference process was utilized to gather data because of the number of issues we looked to address as well as the number of people we expected would attend. This type of conference provides opportunities for the community to share their thoughts on possible budget cuts or revenue increases, and also to propose new ideas to the administration for consideration.

Deputy Mayor Leonard Redon provided a welcome and an introduction to the public forum. A presentation on the current state of the budget was given by William Ansrow, Budget Director. The Deputy Mayor then outlined the open space process to be used. Participants were then invited to join breakout groups to further discuss the eight topics outlined, or any other topic of their choosing.

Forty-five minutes were allocated for discussion followed by sharing of major issues from each of the eight topics:

1. Taxes, Feeds, and New Revenues
2. Police, Fire, and 911
3. Employee Benefits: Pensions and Health Care
4. Infrastructure
5. Neighborhood and Business Development
6. Youth and Library Services
7. Federal Funding for HOME and CDBG
8. Organizational Efficiencies

In addition, extra tables were available for individuals who wished to define their own topic, if it was not available in the eight listed above. At the conclusion of the open conferencing, the group came back together to report out on their main themes. In addition to verbal and written comments provided at the public forums, individuals who couldn't make one of these sessions could call 311 or go on the city website to submit a comment via an online survey. An additional 150 responses were received through these media.

Schedule

The public was invited by the Mayor to participate in one or more public sessions. Four meetings were held, one in each quadrant of the city:

Quadrant	Date	Location
Northeast	March 22, 2012	Gantt Street Recreation Center
Northwest	March 26, 2012	Edgerton Recreation Center
Southwest	March 28, 2012	Adams Street Recreation Center
Southeast	April 3, 2012	Cobbs Hill Park, Lake Riley

A front page article appeared on the Democrat and Chronicle the day before the first meeting. In addition, flyers were sent to neighborhood and community groups, and television media attended several sessions which spread the word to a wider audience.

FINDINGS

In this section we identify major themes heard from forum participants and through email and the online survey submissions for each of the eight major topics. Each major theme includes

sample comments and the source of the individual comment (either a quadrant public forum, an email, or an online submission). Themes are followed by a summary of the votes provided in the online survey by 132 individuals. Participants could select multiple items, so the items add to more than 100%. The survey results are not statistically significant, and represent only those individuals who chose to visit the City's website and take the VOC survey.

On some topics, particularly those surrounding taxes, infrastructure, and neighborhood and business development, some of the same people attended more than one session and may have provided the same information multiple times. While we attempt in this report to be representative of the larger group, it is possible that some voices are overrepresented.

Table Topic 1: Taxes, Fees, and new Revenues

Themes from Forum Participants

1. Address the Sibley's/Wilmorite tax delinquency.

- "Collect property taxes owed to the City (Sibley's)." (Edgerton)
- "Wilmorite should not be able to walk away from paying taxes (\$22m) – not being held accountable." (Edgerton)
- "Foreclose on Sibley's." (Adams)
- "Collect unpaid City taxes from owners such as Wilmorite, Sibley's etc." (Cobbs Hill)

2. Stop subsidizing commercial development taxes

- "Do not allow tax abatements of more than 50% for any start-up projects." (Gantt)
- "Assessments should be at market value. This would raise \$30-40 million; Housing projects, business projects." (Edgerton)
- "Stop taxing residents when compensation rates are not the same. Everyone getting tax breaks except homeowners." (Edgerton)
- "Fair Assessment—commercial property is not assessed at full value. (At least increase property value)." (Adams)

3. Charge for parking at the beach

- "City should charge for parking at Ontario Beach. Could be \$11/day." (Edgerton)
- "Charge for parking on City-owned property at Ontario Beach Park. Even just \$1/day." (online)
- "Parking fees at Monroe County Charlotte Beach and split with county Durand." "Eastman Park Parking fees- maybe summer pass." (online)

4. Do not reduce interest rates for late tax and fee payments

- "Do not reduce interest rates from 15% to 12% as this would be a loss of revenue to the City." (Adams)
- "Why would you reduce interest rates for late payments?" (online)

- “Why are you REDUCING fees for late taxes, water and refuse-shouldn't they be higher so people might be more inclined to pay them on time?” (online)

5. Don't raise taxes or fees

- “High property taxes, among other factors, discourage some from moving into the city.” (online)
- “Increasing property taxes, water rates, and parking garage fees will only make it less attractive to live in the city.” (online)
- “Given this economy and the struggle that people are having, I think it is unfair to incur more taxes and raise rates at this time.” (online)
- “Reduce Taxes.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “Stop using water rate for “piggy banks”.” (Edgerton)
- “Yes, Increase property tax 2%.” (Gantt)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

Taxes, Fees and New Revenues (n=132)	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Increase cost of ticket for parking meter non-payment by \$10 to \$35, illegal parking by \$10 to \$45 and handicapped spaces by \$30 to \$130 (raise \$492,300)	86	65%
New revenue from West Brighton for Fire Protection Services (raise \$750,000)	67	51%
New revenue from Rural Metro to reimburse RFD for EMS support (raise \$300,000)	75	57%
Increase parking fees by \$9 per month at 5 garages (raise \$374,800)	56	42%
Increase daily parking maximum to \$8 per day at all parking garages (raise \$37,500)	46	35%
Increase water rate by 3.5% (raise \$970,000)	37	28%
Increase property tax levy by 2% (raise \$3,200,000)	35	27%
Increase local works rate by 3% (raise \$525,000)	30	23%
Reduce interest rate for late payments on taxes (from 18% to 12%) (reduce revenues \$810,000)	14	11%
Reduce interest rate for late payments on water charges (from 20% to 12%) (reduce revenues \$548,000)	13	10%
Reduce interest rate for late payments on commercial refuse charges (20% to 12%) (reduce revenues \$30,700)	11	8%

Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details may add to more than 100%.

Table Topic 2: Fire, Police, and 911 Services

Themes from Forum Participants

1. Defer purchase of surveillance cameras, or get rid of them altogether.

- “Eliminate police surveillance cameras altogether—they don’t reduce crime.” (Edgerton)
- “Try to get volunteers to help watch cameras.” (Corn Hill)
- “The surveillance cameras are costly and ineffective. They provide people with a false sense of security and it is too much big brother.” (online)

2. Maintain or increase Pathways to Peace program.

- “Don’t cut Pathways to Peace – it decreases crime at a lower cost than police.” (Edgerton)
- “Do not eliminate Pathways to Peace (positive interactions with youth) (Cobbs Hill).”
- “Pathways to Peace workers provide desperately needed positive interaction with city youth to counteract their negative interaction with RPD.” (online)
- “Pathways is a waste of money. Has anyone ever done an evaluation to determine the effects of the program?” (online)

3. Mixed feelings on Mounted Patrol

- “Support eliminating Mounted Patrol – doesn’t benefit neighborhoods, only downtown.” (Edgerton)
- “Do not eliminate RPD Mounted Unit, they are visible and excellent at crowd control.” (Edgerton)
- “We all know that mounted police are a luxury for the city.” (online)

4. Don’t cut Public Safety

- “No changes should be made to RPD staffing.” (Gantt)
- “Absolutely do not reduce public safety spending.” (online)
- “Please don’t cut numbers of fire fighters and police -- we need them!” (online)
- “Keep fire department (don’t make cuts).” (Gantt)
- “Do not cut any Fire or Police budget, especially Fire Engine #5.” (Edgerton)

- “The RFD has faced significant cuts in recent years, we can't cut them anymore!” (online)
- “For a long time now we all have known that downsizing the fire department by one fire company is long overdue.” (online)
- “Trim RPD’s budget proportional to the RFD.” (Cobbs Hill)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Police, Fire, 911 (n=132)		
Eliminate vacant RPD Public Relations Manager position (\$100,700)	94	71%
Restructure towing contracts to reduce towing expenses (\$100,000)	79	60%
Create efficiencies in 311 One Call to City Hall (\$44,900)	74	56%
Fully charge the RCSD for the cost of RPD School Resource Officers (\$300,000)	65	49%
Discontinue Mounted Unit resulting in the reduction of 7 Police Officers and related expenses including benefits (\$826,600)	54	41%
Reduce Pathways to Peace activities due to cut of federal SNUG program (\$171,300)	52	39%
Reduce 911 overtime due to changing project needs (\$184,300)	49	37%
Defer Chestnut Street firehouse plumbing work (\$680,000)	45	34%
Net savings from RPD reorganization: net reduction of 3 Police Officers / reduce recruit class / create downtown detail / transfer 10 Officers from narcotics and investigations to patrol (\$503,800)	39	30%
Eliminate capital funding for police video surveillance for one year (\$435,000)	39	30%
Reduce RFD force by 16 Firefighters and reduce recruit class (close one Fire Co.) (\$1,918,000)	29	22%
<i>Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details add to more than 100%.</i>		

Table Topic 3: Employee Benefits (Pensions and Health Care)

Themes from Participants

1. Increase staff contribution to health care costs

- “Split contributions for health insurance 75% City and 25% employee.” (Edgerton)
- “Employees should pay at least 50% of health insurance (and all benefits) because of the high City salaries.” (Cobbs)
- “The amount we pay as employees for healthcare benefits and pension costs is completely out of step with reality. I obviously enjoy having a fantastic healthcare plan that I pay next to nothing for, but I do recognize that it's bankrupting the city.” (submitted online by an employee)

2. Reduce salaries/total compensation

- “City salaries should compare to the average City resident's salary.” (Cobbs)
- “We do need to respect bargaining decisions made with employees but recognize that it was made with certain expectations in mind. Where reality drastically differs from expectations, reasonable renegotiation should be on the table with some reasonable relationship to parity with private sector.” (online)
- “Leave employee benefits/pensions/healthcare alone, etc. After all, government employees don't get bonuses like private companies; cannot accept gifts, etc.” (online)
- “Look at self-insurance for medical and dental.” (Edgerton)

3. Pensions

- “Amortization sets up larger deficits in the future. Reality dictates the end of public sector pensions.” (online)
- “Need to advocate at state level for police and fire personnel to pay as much into their retirement as others.” (online)
- “Tier VI pension reform must also apply to police and firefighters.” (online)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Employee Benefits: Pensions and Health Care (n=132)		
Seek increase in employee contributions to their health care benefits	56	42%
Evaluate health care plan design such as benefit level and co-pay	56	42%
N.Y. State has passed a Tier VI pension system to reduce pension costs \$8.4M over 10 years	46	35%
Explore self-insurance and other funding arrangements for City employee health care	46	35%
Amortize these costs with the state at an interest rate of an estimated 3.75%	24	18%
Defer the partial payment of Police and Fire pensions (\$6,969,700) and amortize over 10 years (total 2012-13 pension bill: \$54.8 million) (total to pay back: \$8,409,200)	17	13%
Defer the partial payment of civilian pensions (\$5,358,700) and amortize over 10 years (total 2012-13 pension bill: \$54.8 million) (total to pay back: \$6,463,900)	17	13%

Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details add to more than 100%.

Table Topic 4: Infrastructure

Themes from Participants

1. Do not invest in the Marina/Erie Harbor at this time

- “Don't go through with marina project-too costly.” (Gantt)
- “Defer or eliminate for now the Marina project.” (Edgerton)
- “Delay Erie Harbor project.” (Adams)
- “Eliminate Marina project -- consider whether we can afford it.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “Don't pay for any more Erie Harbor enhancements.” (Cobbs Hill)

2. Don't fill in the Inner Loop

- “Why fill in the inner loop? What is best long term in terms of benefit vs cost?” (Edgerton)
- “Don't fill in inner loop-too costly.” (Gantt)

3. Don't delay on required maintenance

- “Deferring required maintenance doesn't make sense as future revenues are not likely to be significantly better than current. Foregoing or eliminating some large new projects is the only sensible course.” (online)
- “Take care of environmental problems that could pose health hazards and defer rehab projects that could wait a bit, as long as they don't pose safety hazards.” (online)
- “Make capital investments now to avoid higher costs later on.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “If you delay maintenance on garages, costs will be higher in the future.” (Edgerton)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Infrastructure: Roads and Buildings (n=132)		
Forego Genesee Valley Park Ice Rink slab and Arena renovations (\$1,600,000)	75	57%
Defer Public Market Winter Shed improvements (\$1,000,000)	63	48%
Forego repair of Parks Maintenance building (\$2,200,000)	55	42%
Defer Lake Avenue Reconstruction (City share of federal project) (\$1,152,000)	53	40%
Forego asbestos removal to enable private sector development at former Pulaski library building (\$150,000)	39	30%
Forego parking garage maintenance program (\$1,500,000)	32	24%
Reduce residential street rehabilitation projects by 36% (\$866,000)	28	21%
Defer roof replacement at central maintenance facilities (\$200,000)	26	20%
Reduce investigation and remediation of properties with environmental concerns by 75% (\$450,000)	25	19%
<i>Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details add to more than 100%.</i>		

Table Topic 5: Neighborhood and Business Development

Themes from Participants

1. Reconsider Municipal facility subsidies

- “Soccer Stadium: Eliminate the City’s role. Issue an RFP to select a private operator; use the War Memorial operator, they do a good job” (Edgerton)
- “Don’t bail out groups like the soccer team and Pier 45 – Review projects carefully.” (Edgerton)
- “Soccer Stadium: Eliminate the City’s role, find a private operator.”(Cobbs Hill)
- “Sahlen's Stadium could be given to the Greater Rochester Sports Authority that the county created to run Frontier Field to get that off county taxpayers' backs.” (email)
- “Stop subsidizing commercial ventures that can't make it by themselves.” (online)

2. Dismay over Code Enforcement Inspections and mixed feelings on Neighborhood Service Centers

- “Current policies drive investors out; eliminate the lead ordinance, problem solved.” (Gantt)
- “No tenant accountability, city policy favors tenants.” (Gantt)
- “Eliminate 75% of inspections by limiting to new builds and complaint driven inspections.” (Edgerton)
- “NSC – eliminate the entire program, they harass businesses and home owners” (Cobbs Hill)
- “The Neighborhood Service Centers are already short-staffed and unable to serve the needs of neighborhoods. I am VERY OPPOSED to eliminating one of the four NSC quadrant offices.” (online)
- “Has the City of Rochester considered having Neighborhood Service Center personnel "loaned" to a church or social service agency already in existence (and well known to each neighborhood)to eliminate some of the overhead expenses.” (online)

3. Demolitions are important, but also consider rehabilitation

- “The demolition program is important to the health of people and the neighborhoods.” (Edgerton)

- “Do not cut back on vacant home board ups and demolitions. They are a blight physically and mentally.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “Get rid of the demo program and use a lottery to get rid of homes (even give them away).” (Cobbs Hill)
- “Reduce vacant building demolition by selling the buildings to the private sector for rehabilitation.” (online)
- “Regarding vacant building demolitions, instead of tearing them all down and spending huge sums of taxpayer monies in the process, why not spend the money to rehabilitate at least the more salvageable ones?” (online)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Neighborhood and Business Development (n=132)		
Defer planned Cash Capital for public art (\$300,000)	68	52%
Close soccer stadium (\$415,700)	53	40%
Reorganize Neighborhood Service Center personnel (\$51,100)	52	39%
Reduce vacant building demolition program by 50% (\$1,500,000)	39	30%
Reduce capital funding for Focused Investment Strategy (FIS) (\$100,000)	39	30%
Reduce seasonal graffiti removal crew from two to one (\$57,600)	34	26%
Eliminate one Neighborhood Service Center (\$435,000)	34	26%
Fund an additional 500 vacant home board-ups (-\$159,000)	25	19%

Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details add to more than 100%.

Table Topic 6: Youth and Library Services

Themes from Participants

1. **Libraries are a valuable part of our community**
 - “Keep Libraries Open.” (Edgerton)

- “Libraries curb youth crime - keep kids off the street.” (Edgerton)
- “More Ryan Center models (library/rec/school).” (Edgerton)
- “Libraries provide social services - computer literacy, job searching, ESL & GED classes, tutoring, etc.” (Edgerton)

2. Libraries should experience reductions as well

- “Libraries, like for profit institutions, should - unfortunately- have to demonstrate usage, personnel efficiencies, costs vs. value to the community. Close one library with the least patronage making sure there is an available recreation center in that area to compensate.” (online)
- “Rely on the community to provide for youth and library services. We are a giving community that will need to unite for its youth and literacy programs.” (online)

3. Charge for parking at the beach

- “Don’t charge fee for parking at Durand or Ontario beaches.” (Edgerton)
- “Charge for parking at Ontario Beach. If city doesn’t own/control lots, then city and county should create an agreement to share proceeds.” (Edgerton)
- “Close Durand Eastman Beach or Raise parking fees to cover the cost.” (Adams)
- “Keep the beach open since the majority of the cost comes from the parking.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “What about charging for parking/or access to Charlotte Beach?” (online)
- “The beach was never opened in good times, why open it now? It’s nice to look at, but we don’t need to staff it in any way.” (online)
- “Durand Eastman Beach is supposed to be a no-swim area. Why are we funding this? Close it and charge to park there. Go to Newport, RI and see how much they charge for parking all over town.” (online)
- “I hate the idea of paying to park at Durand Beach because it makes it less appealing to go there. However, do not close it!” (online)

4. Reduce subsidies for festivals

- “Eliminate/reduce entertainment for this year that primarily benefits adults (e.g., Party in the Park, Jazz Festival –paid entertainers stages in the East Ave. area)” (Adams)
- “\$250,000 for the Jazz Fest. I think they bring in enough revenue, so additional corporate welfare is not necessary.” (email)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Youth and Library Services (n=132)		
Continue charging for parking (\$3) at Durand Eastman Beach (\$150,000)	76	58%
Eliminate partial funding for special events (\$14,500)	48	36%
Close Durand Eastman Beach (\$200,000)	38	29%
Eliminate funding for Hillside Work Scholarship Program (\$100,000)	31	23%
Close one recreation/community center (\$200,000)	28	21%
Close one library (\$325,000)	25	19%

Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details add to more than 100%.

Table Topic 7: Federal Funding for CDBG and HOME

Themes from Participants

1. Maintain affordable housing development.

- “Provide programs to facilitate the development of quality housing that is affordable (low- income not paying more that 30% of income).” (Corn Hill)
- “Continue focus on specific geographic areas such as through the Focused Investment Strategy to maximize impacts.” (Cobbs Hill)

2. Rehabilitate vacant properties instead of demolishing

- “Spend less money on demolition, spend more money on rehab of existing homes.” (Cobbs Hill)

- “Link demolition projects to post demolition planning and construction or rehab projects. Don’t take down large numbers of houses without having a plan and financial commitment for what comes next.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “Instead of taking down a home, rehab it and give them away for free.” (online)
- “Vacant homes should be rehabilitated using private money. The City should not use its funding for demolition.” (Corn Hill)

3. Be creative in use of renovation dollars

- “Look to churches, Habitat for Humanity and Training programs where skills can be taught while rehabbing houses and give our youth a chance to develop and learn a trade.” (Online)
- “Use rehab houses as "teaching houses" for apprenticeship programs rehab and maintain our current housing stock instead of building more.” (online)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Federally funded programs (n=132)		
To offset the 40% HOME Grant reduction of \$1,224,000 we will eliminate or reduce housing development, affordable housing and buyer assistance funding.	63	48%
To offset the 11% CDBG grant reduction of \$878,500 we will eliminate or reduce the Emergency Assistance Repair Program, HOME Rochester (home rehab and resale program for low-income families), Demolition funding, lead rehab funding, youth programs, neighborhood planning activities.	38	29%

Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details may add to more than 100%.

Table Topic 8: Organizational Efficiencies

Themes from Participants

1. Use technology to find efficiencies.

- “Integrate data/info via an IT solution.” (Gantt)

- “Move away from Microsoft products to open source software.” (Gantt)
- “Pursue the use of six sigma tools; develop these capabilities in house.” (Adams)
- “Outsource email from Outlook to Google.” (Adams)
- “Develop a content management system beyond the City Council office.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “Allow more online payments such as licensing animals.” (online)

2. Evaluate service levels

- “Reduce the number of fire stations to reflect the decline in population” (Edgerton)
- “Review and improve workflows associated with all processes” (Cobbs Hill)
- “Change garbage pickup to ever 2 weeks” (Gantt)
- “4 day work week – Close City Hall 1 day per week” (Edgerton)

3. Evaluate management structure

- “Cut overtime in all departments. It’s a result of poor management” (Adams)
- “Review management ratios in all departments” (Edgerton)
- “Managers/Department Heads must actively manage their own budgets” (Edgerton)

4. Merge/outsource services

- “Outsource services such as the 311 center and clerical work, also lawn mowing, garbage, recycling.” (online)
- “RGRTA maintains tow trucks to tow their busses, look to combine with them” (online)
- “Merge payroll and human services functions with the county.” (online)
- “Explore more shared services with the RCSD.” (Cobbs Hill)
- “RCSD schools have duplicated facilities with the city’s in some cases.” (Adams)
- “Keep the schools open for more public access to gyms, weight rooms, etc, can provide limited access to keep safety in check.” (Adams)
- “Improve the bid process on road snowplowing and all public works. Make it more transparent, give incentives to lower the bids.” (Adams)

- “Combine Health Care with the City School District and/or the County – especially when looking to self-insure – there may be less money up-front.”
(Gantt)

Online Votes on Proposed Changes

	Votes	% of respondents selecting this proposal
Organizational Efficiencies (n=132)		
Create personnel efficiencies in the Department of Information Technology (\$99,900)	73	55%
Create personnel efficiencies in the Law Department (\$81,600)	70	53%
Defer computer process upgrade (cash capital) (\$2,108,000)	68	52%
Energy savings as a result of lower contract costs and reduced consumption (\$310,000)	68	52%
Eliminate purchase of a second tow truck (\$139,000)	68	52%
Create personnel efficiencies in the Bureau of Human Resource Management (\$42,700)	67	51%
Reorganize Bureau of Business and Housing Development staffing (\$150,900)	62	47%
Utilize technology to reorganize HVAC activity (\$78,600)	60	45%
Contract City sign shop services (\$47,500)	58	44%
Contract City welding activity (\$39,400)	55	42%
Reduce water treatment chemicals due to covering the reservoir (\$100,000)	46	35%
Contract for internal City services such as payroll, human resources at a savings to be determined	44	33%
<i>Note: Online survey participants could select multiple items, so details may add to more than 100%.</i>		

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Maria Oliver

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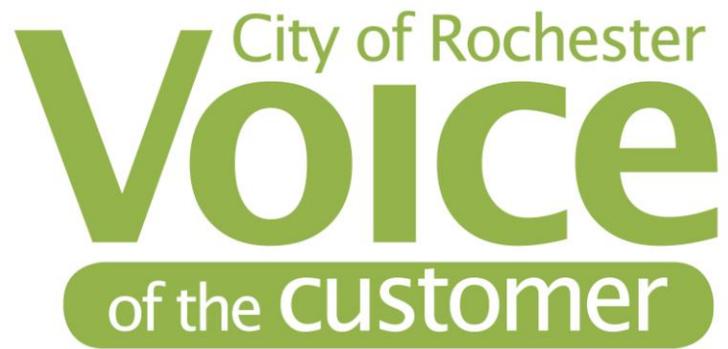
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