

Budget Townhall

Wilmington City Council

Wilmington City Council
Community Budget Survey

Agenda



- Welcome & Introductions
- Purpose
- Presentation/Budget
- Question/Answer
- Budget Survey
- Closing Remarks

Purpose / Town Hall

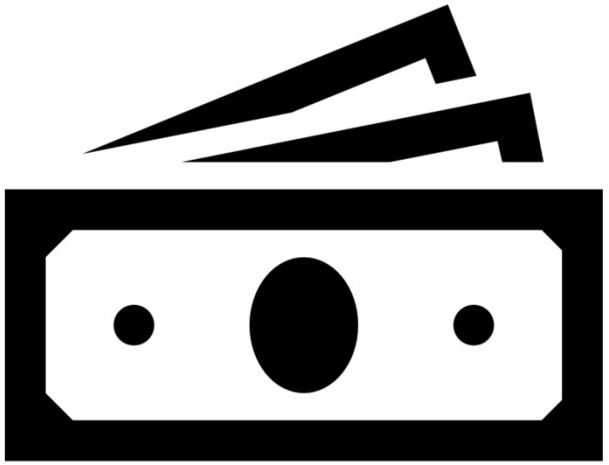


- Share with the community high-level summary of the budget process such as:
    1. City's Budget Funding Categories
    2. City Council's Role
    3. Current Budget
        1. FY27 Revenues
        2. FY27 Expenditures
    4. Fiscal Concerns – 5 Year Projections
    5. Budgetary Items Council advocated for inclusion
- Gather budget survey feedback for upcoming FY2028 proposed budget

What is a Budget?

A budget is the City's financial plan for the year.

- Estimates how much money the City will receive
- Decides how that money will be spent on different services and programs
- Aligns dollars with City's strategic plan and priorities that is based on vision of the Mayor
- Helps make sure we live within our means and properly arrange resources
- Fiscal Year is defined as July 1st to June 30th. City's current fiscal year is FY2027, which is July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027



Primary Funds: The General Fund and Water/Sewer Fund

The General Fund Budget

- This is the City's main operating fund pertaining to expenses and revenues for the City, which supports most day-to-day services
  - Police
  - Fire Protection
  - Residential Trash Collection
  - General Government Operations (Public works: road infrastructure, etc.)



The Water/Sewer Fund Budget

- This is an enterprise fund pertaining to expenses and revenues for the water sewer which supports the water and sewer operations, maintenance, and infrastructure, etc.
  - Sewage Treatment
  - Disposal Activities
  - Stormwater Control



Wilmington's Wastewater Treatment Plant

Capital Budget

- **Capital Budget** –a two-year appropriation of expenditures from the capital program
    - Funded from bond proceeds
    - Useful life of at least 5 years and a cost of at least $5,000
    - Examples: street repaving, parks improvements, fire apparatus, major sewer improvements, wastewater treatment plan upgrades





Capital Park Projects

Name of Park	District
Speakman Park	1st
Eastlake Park	2nd
Brown-Burton Winchester Park	3rd
Barbara Hicks	4th
Helen Chambers Park	5th
Canby Park	6th
Woodlawn Park	7th
Stapler Park	8th









City Council's Role

- As City Council members, our role in the budget process is to represent our constituents by reviewing different departments proposed budgets, asking questions, suggesting changes, and ultimately voting to approve a final budget that reflects our community's priorities.
- Council's primary role is budget appropriation, which the v*ote on the budget is one of the most important votes!*



Charter Budget Mandates - Council

Per City Charter:

- It ***shall be the duty of the council, at least thirty (30) days*** before the end of the fiscal year, to adopt the annual operating budget ordinance for the next fiscal year.
- The mayor's estimates of receipts for the ensuing fiscal year and of surplus or deficit, if any, for the current fiscal year ***may not be altered by the council.***
- The annual operating budget ordinance shall not become effective, and the city auditor shall not approve any order for any expenditure ***thereunder until the council has balanced the budget.***

Council does not have line-item veto for the budget. They must vote on the budget in its *entirety*.

The Budget Process: Citizen's Guide

Budgeting is a year-round process that uses public input, meetings, and surveys to set service levels and priorities.

From September to mid-October, staff review current finances and performance to see what the City can afford next year.

In October–November, the Office of Management and Budget builds a baseline "Level I" budget, using a zero-based approach where each line item must be justified.

In December–January, departments use that baseline to prepare their own budget requests, which are reviewed with OMB and the Mayor's Office through several rounds of meetings.

In March, the Mayor sends a Proposed Budget to City Council, and from early April to mid-May the Council's Finance Committee holds public hearings where residents can ask questions and give feedback before the budget is adopted.

CITY OF WILMINGTON / OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

Budget Process Calendar

From community input and strategic planning to City Council adoption

12 STEPS
4 linked phases

A SINGLE ANNUAL PROCESS

Some activities run concurrently; dates below follow the supplied City calendar.

01 LISTEN & ASSESS
YEAR-ROUND / SEPT–OCT

1 — YEAR-ROUND

Public & elected input

Community meetings, surveys and presentations gather input about public services and issues.

2 — SEPT – MID OCT

Financial position analysis

OMB evaluates the City's financial position and prepares preliminary forecasts for the next fiscal year.

3 — OCTOBER

Strategic planning

The Mayor and department heads develop strategic plan goals and objectives.

02 BUILD THE BUDGET
OCT–NOV / JAN

4 — OCT – NOV

Base (Level I) budget

OMB develops the baseline from historical data, trends, the local economy and the strategic plan.

5 — LAST WEEK OF NOV

Strategic plan finalized

The City finalizes its strategic plan to guide the upcoming budget development process.

6 — 2ND WEEK OF JAN

Department budget requests

Departments submit requests to OMB based on the strategic plan and Level I amounts.

03 REVIEW & PROPOSE
JAN–MARCH

7 — 3RD WK JAN – 3RD WK MAR

OMB & Mayor's review

OMB and the Mayor's Office evaluate departmental requests and recommend funding levels.

8 — 3RD TUESDAY OF MARCH

Capital budget review

The Planning Commission (5 appointed citizens and 2 City officials) recommends the Capital Budget and Program to Council.

9 — 3RD THURSDAY OF MARCH

Budget address & ordinances

The Mayor submits proposed operating and capital budgets, revenue projections, tax rates and draft ordinances to Council.

04 HEAR & ADOPT
APRIL–MAY

10 — 3RD WK APR – 1ST WK MAY

Council public hearings

City Council's Finance Committee holds public meetings to review the Mayor's proposed departmental budgets.

11 — 4TH WEEK OF APRIL

WEFAC certification

The Wilmington Economic and Financial Advisory Council (WEFAC) reviews, analyzes and certifies the budget's revenue projections.

12 — 3RD THURSDAY OF MAY

Council budget approval

City Council must adopt a balanced budget by June 1 or 30 days before the start of the fiscal year.

OVERLAPPING WORKSTREAMS

Planning, analysis, executive review and public hearings can run in parallel.

WEFAC MEMBERSHIP

Regional business, financial and academic leaders appointed by the Mayor.

Redesigned from the supplied Wilmington Budget Process Calendar. Steps and milestone dates retained; verify dates for each budget cycle.

City of Wilmington Tax Rates

Wage Tax
Base: Individual gross earned income of City residents
Individual gross earned income of non- City residents working within the City limits.
Rate: 1.25% **(as set by Delaware General Assembly)**

Property Tax
Rate: Residential: 3.7mills ($3.7 per $1k of assessed values)
Non-Residential: 5. 82 mills ($5.8 per $1k of assessed values)

Head Tax
Base: Number of employees per month for businesses with 6 or more employees
Rate: $15.00 per employee per month on the total number of employees minus 5

Real Estate Transfer Tax
Base: Selling price of Real Estate assessed at time of settlement.
Rate: 1.50%

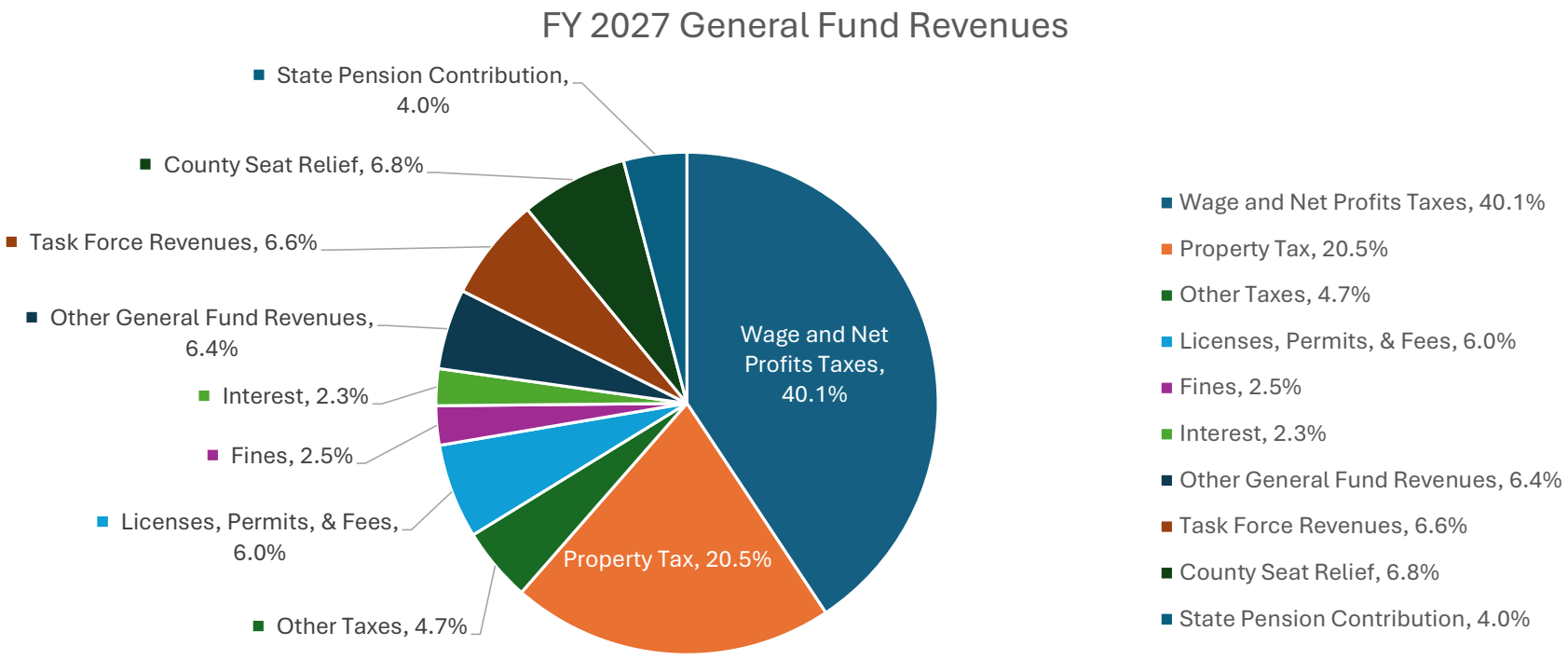
Net Profit Tax
Base: Net Profit of sole proprietors and partnerships within the City limits
Rate: 1.25% (**as set by Delaware General Assembly)**

Franchise Tax
Base: Gross receipts from sales of electricity and cable television service within the City.
Rate: 2.0% on electrical sales
5.0% on cable television service

Natural Gas Tax
Base: Gross receipts from sales of natural gas within the City
Rate: 2.0% on natural gas

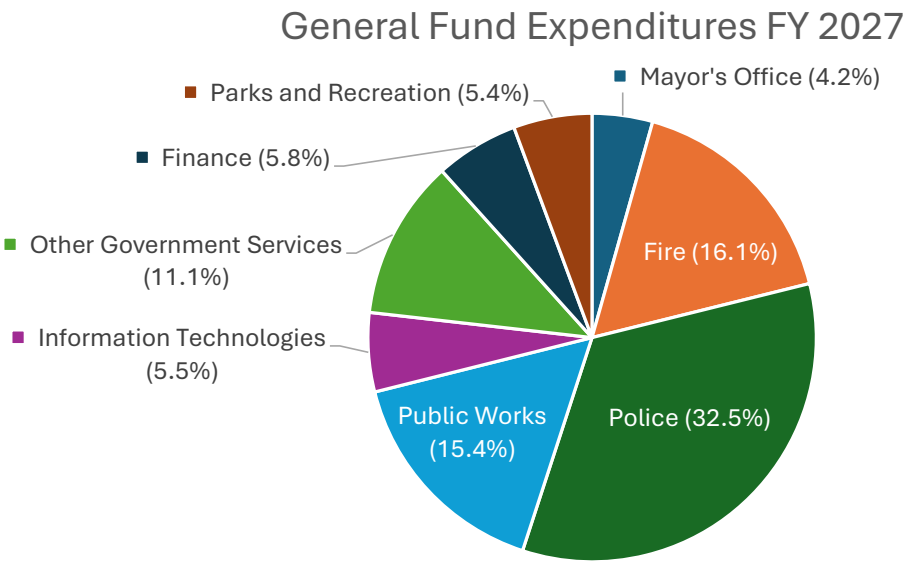
Lodging Tax
Base: Rent collected for any room or rooms in a hotel, motel, or tourist home that are within the City limits.
Rate: 2.0% of rent

FY 27 General Fund Revenues = $213,532,018



FY27 General Fund Expenditures = $213,532,018



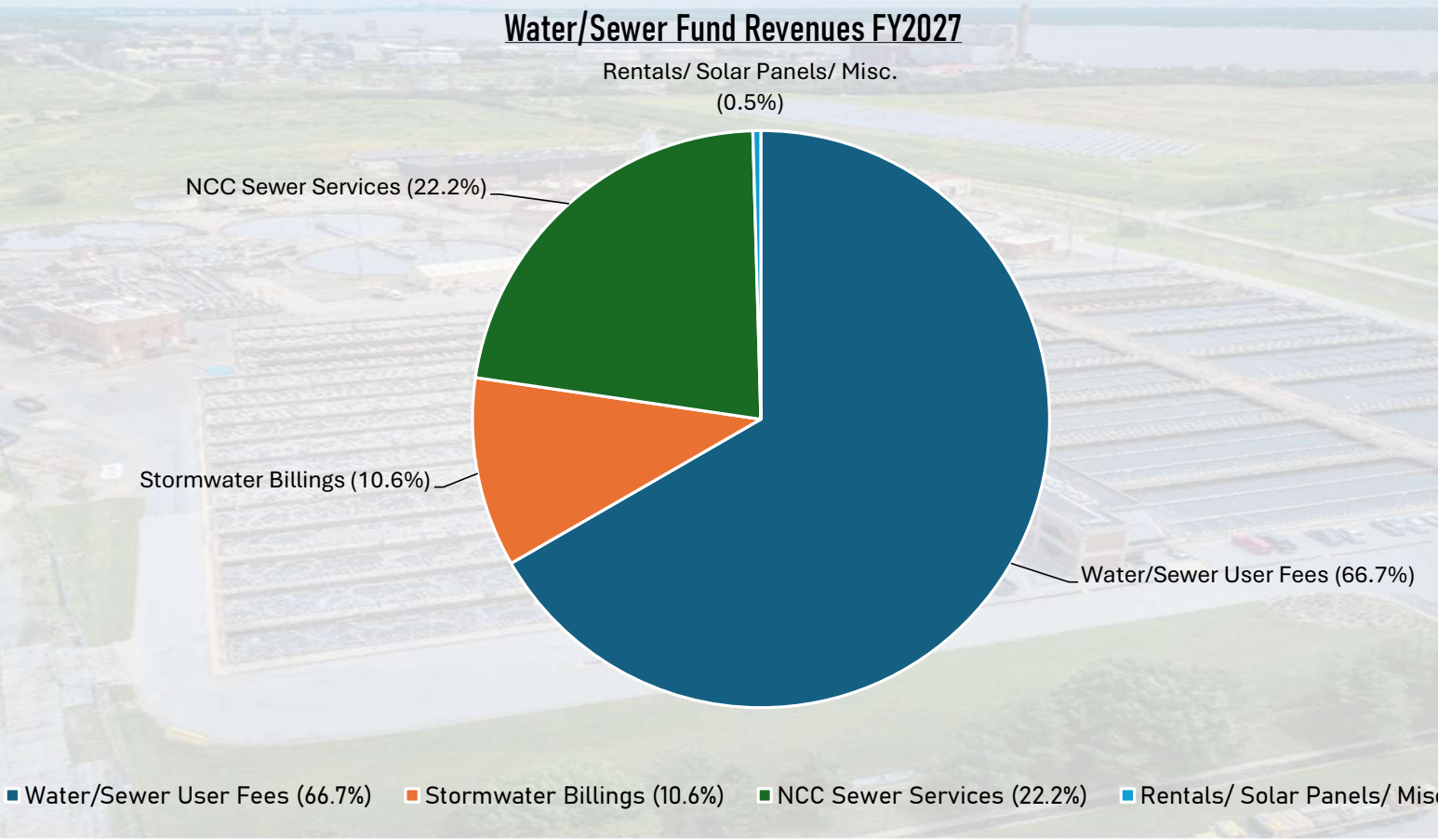




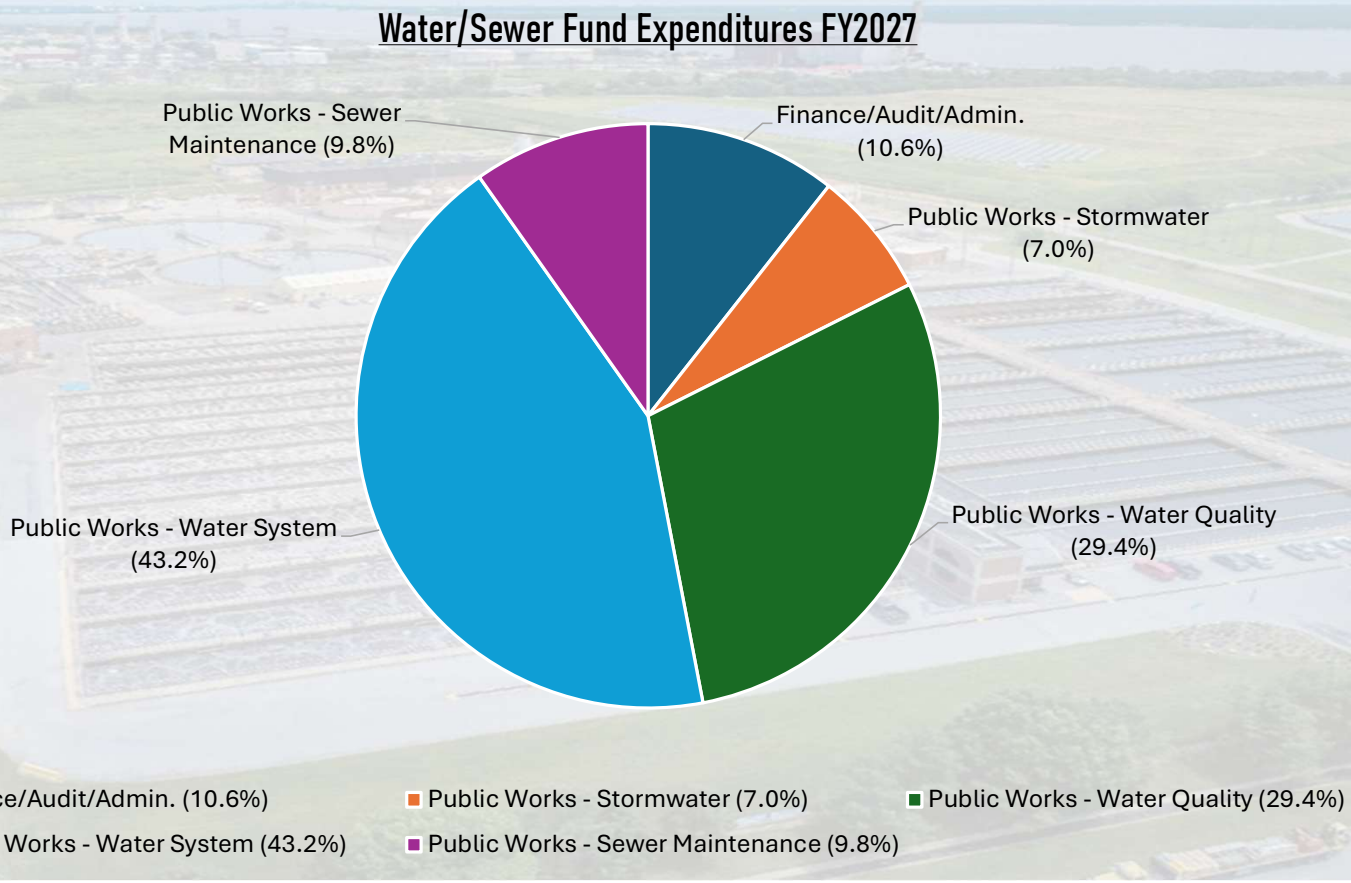


- Mayor's Office (4.2%)
- Fire (16.1%)
- Police (32.5%)
- Public Works (15.4%)
- Information Technologies (5.5%)
- Other Government Services (11.1%)
- Finance (5.8%)
- Parks and Recreation (5.4%)

FY27 Water/Sewer Fund Revenues = $103,668,230



FY27 Water/Sewer Fund Expenditures = $98,987,989



Staffing Level Differences (FY25—FY27)

Total Number of Employees – All Funds

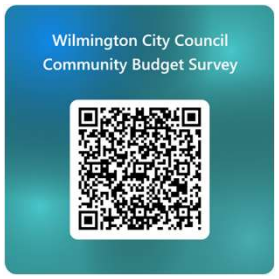
In FY26, 31 new positions added in Fire Dept. for EMS additions/ambulance service.

33 New Positions Added*

Department	Budget FY25	Budget FY26	Budget FY27
Mayor's Office	30	31	32
City Council	27	29	29
Treasurer	7	7	8
Land Use and Planning	26	28	29
Audit	5	6	6
Law	17	16	16
Finance	83	84	83
Human Resources	27	28	28
Licenses and Inspections	26	26	27
Parks and Recreation	41	40	44
Fire	160	191	203
Police	366	367	367
Public Works	222	219	220
Real Estate and Housing	10	8	8
Information Technologies	21	21	21
Total	1068	1101	1121

Fiscal Concern – Projected 5-Year General Fund Expenditures Exceeding Revenues

	APPROVED BUDGET FY2026	PROJECTED FY2027	PROJECTED FY2028	PROJECTED FY2029	PROJECTED FY2030
REVENUES	$204,212,376	$208,941,309	$212,318,368	$214,663,881	$217,144,532
BUDGET	$201,787,303	$211,060,359	$217,091,553	$225,860,761	$232,255,684
Transfer/In/(Out)	$2,575,000	$275,000	$275,000	$275,000	$275,000
Surplus(Deficit)	$(149,927)	$(1,844,050)	$(4,498,186)	$(10,921,880)	$(14,836,152)



Fiscal Adjustment is required for FY27 – FY30, TBD by Mayor and Council to balance budget due to projected shortfall

Council Initiated Budget Adds:



FY2027 Budget

Funding for Utility Assistance Program	Continued Funding: **$350,000**
Reduced Water /Sewer Rate	**9.95%** down to **7.0%**
Small Minority Business Development Program	$1,000,000
Community Public Safety Initiative (CPSI)	Added: **$450,000**
New Home Repair Program replacing the former Home Repair Lottery Program	Added:**$500,000**
Affordable Housing	**$8,400,000** *(with additional funding opportunities to be considered through future budget amendments)*
HBCU Funding	**Continued Funding: $200,000**
Traffic Calming Devices	**Continued Funding: $100,000**
Partners in Care	**Continued Funding: $125,000**
Housing Support Block Grant focused on eviction prevention and rental assistance	**Added: $1,500,000**

FY2026 Budget

Increase Utility Assistance Program Funding	Added: $100,000 for new total **$350,000**
Reduced Water /Sewer Rate	6.5% down to **5.5%**
Minority Business Development Program	Added: **$350,000**
Beautification Funds/Council	Added: **$75,000**
Home Repairs/Lottery, Alleyway Assistance (Pilot), Tree Removal	Added:**$2,000,000**
Affordable Housing (Capital Budget)	Added: **$2,000,000**
HBCU/Scholarships-City residents	**$200,000**
Traffic Calming Devices	**$100,000**
Partners in Care	**$125,000**

State vs City Services

City

- Trash duties
- Public safety
- 311 services
- Street pavement
- Constituent services
- Fire and Emergency medical response
- Water distribution and sewer services
- Traffic Signs
- Nuisance Properties
- Clean Parks
- Vacant/blighted homes
- Code enforcement

VS.

State

- Education
- Prison, Plummer Center
- Criminal Justice
- Health & Social Services
  - Purchase of care, Housing Vouchers, Temporary Housing, EBT
- Constituent services
- Transportation
  - DELDOT, DART
- Airport (DE River Bay Authority)

Council Member Duties

- As Council Members we serve as the voices of our community.
- Some ways we serve:
  - Assisting with housing, code enforcement, and quality-of-life concerns
  - College Scholarships or trade school funding for city residents
  - Support local businesses, nonprofits, youth & senior programs
  - Shape laws that directly affect our citizens: Public safety, Taxes & Fees, Housing & Redevelopment, etc.
  - Connect residents to City departments & services

Join the Process

Wilmington City Council
Community Budget Survey

FY2028 CITY COUNCIL BUDGET HEARING SCHEDULE

MONDAY APRIL 5, 2027	4:30PM
Wilmington Youth Advisory Council	
Mayor's Office	
Wilmington City Council	
WEDNESDAY APRIL 7, 2027	4:30PM
Revenue Projections	
Finance Department	
City Treasurer's Office	
MONDAY APRIL 12, 2027	4:30PM
City Auditor's Office	
Public Works Department (GF, MVF, WSF)	
WEDNESDAY APRIL 14, 2027	4:30PM
Land Use & Planning Department	
Licenses & Inspections Department	
MONDAY APRIL 19, 2027	4:30PM
Parks & Recreation Department	
Mayor's Office of Economic Development	
Office of Information Technology	
WEDNESDAY APRIL 21, 2027	4:30PM
Police Department	
Fire Department	
MONDAY APRIL 26, 2027	4:30PM
Real Estate & Housing Department	
Human Resources Department	
Law Department	
WEDNESDAY APRIL 28, 2027	4:30PM
Presentation Water Sewer Fund 6 - Year Financial Plan/ Public Works (WSF)	



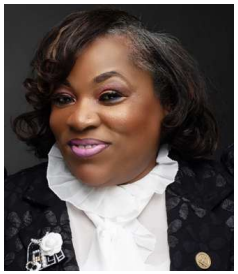
Coby Owens
1st District



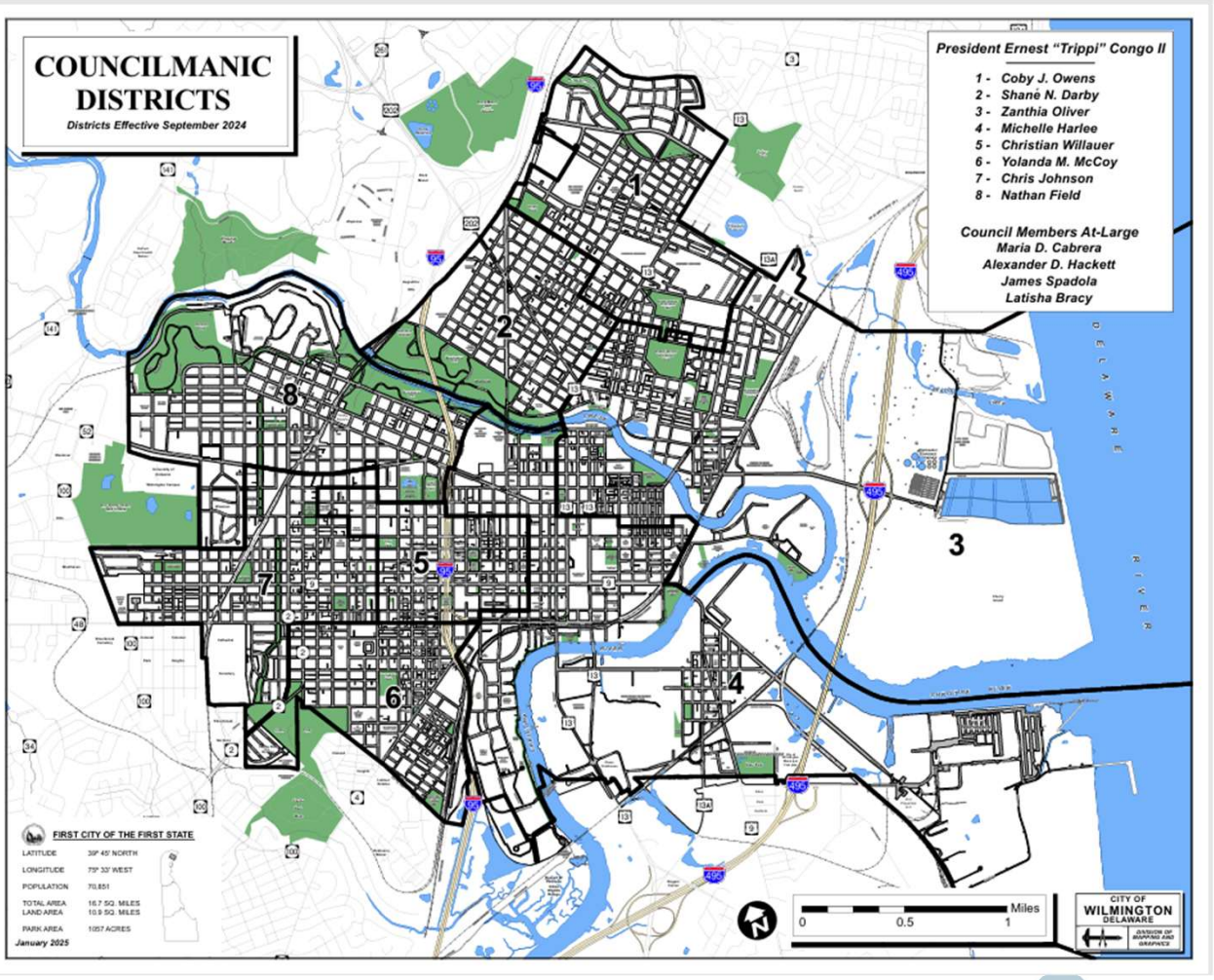
Shané N. Darby
2nd District



Zanthia Oliver
3rd District



Michelle Harlee
4th District
*Finance & Economic Development Committee Chair**



Christian Willauer
5th District



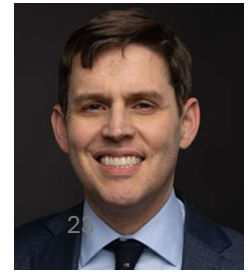
Yolanda M. McCoy
President Pro Tempore
6th District



Chris Johnson
7th District



Nathan Field
8th District





James Spadola
Council Member At-Large



Ernest “Trippi” Congo II
Council President



Maria D. Cabrera
Council Member At-Large



Latisha Bracy
Council Member At-Large



Alexander D. Hackett
Council Member At-Large

Wilmington City Council Community Budget Survey

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

* Required

1. Are you a City of Wilmington resident? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

2. Please enter your name. *

Enter your answer

3. Street Address *

Enter your answer

4. Zip Code *

Enter your answer

5. Email Address *

Enter your answer

6. City Council District *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- Not sure

7. Rank what you feel should be Wilmington's MOST IMPORTANT budgetary priorities for PUBLIC SAFETY below. (Place the items you believe should be MOST IMPORTANT at the TOP of the list and the item you believe should be the LEAST IMPORTANT at the BOTTOM of the list.) *

- Improving Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Response Times
- Reducing Crime
- Enhancing Public Trust/ Community Engagement
- Enhancing Police Presence in Communities
- Decreasing Gun Violence
- Improving Recruitment and Retention Incentives for First Responders
- Other

8. Rank what you feel should be Wilmington's MOST IMPORTANT budgetary priorities for PARKS AND RECREATION below. (Place the items you believe should be MOST IMPORTANT at the TOP of the list and the item you believe should be the LEAST IMPORTANT at the BOTTOM of the list.) *

- Collaborating with Community Centers
- Improving Park Maintenance (Playgrounds, Park Benches, Etc.)
- Expanding Youth Employment Opportunities/ Workforce Development
- Enhancing Recreational Activities and Programming
- Adequately Funding and Maintaining Swimming Pools and Spray Parks
- Offering Educational Programming (Reading Assist, Tutoring, Etc.)
- Other

9. Rank what you feel should be Wilmington's MOST IMPORTANT priorities for HOUSING below. (Place the items you believe should be MOST IMPORTANT at the TOP of the list and the item you believe should be the LEAST IMPORTANT at the BOTTOM of the list.) *

- City-Sponsored Initiatives to Increase Homeownership
- Settlement Assistance Program
- Rehabilitation Grant Program (Vacant Houses)
- Home Repair Lotto
- Senior Home Repair Lotto
- Emergency Rental Assistance
- Eviction Prevention
- Other

10. Considering the City's primary sources of revenue, in the event of a budget shortfall, what strategies would you suggest to fill the gap? *

Enter your answer

11. Now that you have seen the City's financial position, are there any services, programs, revenue enhancements, or initiatives that you believe should be considered in the upcoming budget? *

Enter your answer

12. Do you know the name of the Wilmington City Council Member who represents your district?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

13. What question would you want your Council Member to ask during the City of Wilmington Budget Hearings? (You may include or reference the specific department(s).)

Enter your answer

14. What types of attractions or events would you like to see MORE of in Wilmington?

- [ ] Sporting Events
- [ ] Live Music Events
- [ ] Art Events
- [ ] Dance or Other Performance Arts Events
- [ ] Fashion Events
- [ ] Food-Related Events
- [ ] Kid and Family-Friendly Events

Thank You!
Questions?

WILMINGTON City Council

Contact Us

www.wilmingtoncitycouncil.com

www.wilmdebudget.org

Call Us:
(302) 576-2140

Wilmington City Council Community Budget Survey