



Public Safety Needs

City Council

March 24, 2026



Background

- Identified core services, public safety, and fire resources as Council budget considerations in the January Budget Retreat
- Discussed public safety needs in the April Budget Retreat
- Council supported a public safety ballot measure and citizen committee in September 2025
- Public Safety Ballot Measure Citizen Committee began meeting in November 2025 and is still meeting weekly
- This presentation is highlighting several months of information
- All details are available at <https://connect.flagstaffaz.gov/safety-committee> the Connect Flagstaff Public Safety site

April Retreat – Public Safety

Staffing

- Police and Fire response staffing
- Support staff for Fire
- Professional staff for Police
- Occupational medical services

Equipment/Technology

- Heart smart fire station alerting
- Body worn technology integration
- Replacement apparatus
- Emergency medical service supplies and equipment
- Data aggregation and dissemination
- Technology/systems efficiencies

Facilities

- Wildfire management station
- Police substation
- Completion of fire training center
- Fire Station 7
- Fire Administration
- Public Safety apparatus storage

April Retreat – Public Safety

Examples of alternate funding to support public safety needs:

- Glendale – sales tax increase of 0.70% (2.20% to 2.90%)
- Mesa – sales tax increase of 0.25% (1.75% to 2.00%)
- Phoenix – sales tax increase of 0.50% (2.30% to 2.80%)
- Prescott – sales tax increase of 0.95% (2.00% to 2.95%)

Glendale, Arizona

Highlights:

- More police officers and supervisors
- Enhanced public safety operations
- Has helped to manage high population growth and strengthen its service capacity.

Glendale Question 2 was on the ballot as a [referral](#) in [Glendale](#) on [November 7, 2023](#). It was **approved**.

A "**yes**" vote supported issuing \$78,000,000 in bonds to fund public safety projects including improvements to police and fire facilities and equipment and authorizing the city to collect an additional property tax to pay for the bonds.

A "**no**" vote opposed issuing \$78,000,000 in bonds to fund public safety projects and levying an additional property tax to pay for the bonds.

Election results

Glendale Question 2		
Result	Votes	Percentage
✔ Yes	15,000	59.27%
No	10,307	40.73%

Results are officially certified.

Mesa, Arizona

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Financing the construction of multiple new fire stations; 223,224 and 222
- Expanded the Real Time Crime Center to 24-hour coverage
- Funding and expansion of ambulance transport services
- Fire Department has been able to implement two-person teams to handle lower-level 911 calls, providing services such as wound care, testing and medication administration on-site.

A **proposal to increase the city's sales tax by 0.25% beginning on March 1, 2019**, was on the ballot for [Mesa](#) voters in [Maricopa County, Arizona](#), on [November 6, 2018](#). It was **approved**.

A **yes** vote was a vote in favor of increasing the city's sales tax by 0.25%—from 1.75% to 2.00%—to fund public safety, beginning on March 1, 2019.

A **no** vote was a vote against increasing the city's sales tax by 0.25%—from 1.75% to 2.00%—to fund public safety, beginning on March 1, 2019.

Election results

Mesa Question 2		
Result	Votes	Percentage
✔ Yes	78,500	52.96%
No	69,732	47.04%

Results are officially certified.

Phoenix, Arizona

Highlights:

- Significant Crime Reductions resulted in targeted areas along 19th and 27th Avenues and Hatcher Road.
- Improved Resident Safety Perceptions – went from ‘safe’ to ‘very safe’ jumping from 25% to 68%.
- Improved Emergency Response & Technology with the implementation of two Real Time Operations Centers where they recovered 368 stolen vehicles and 194 firearms.
- The Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS) saw a 19% drop in the number of unsheltered individuals as the City has added over 1,382 new indoor shelter beds.

PHOENIX CITY COUNCIL APPROVES SALES TAX INCREASE TO PRESERVE PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES AMID BUDGET SHORTFALL

By Steve Wilson

Published on March 19, 2025



Phoenix, Arizona

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QW0NeFcRIWg>



YouTube

Search



Here's how Phoenix's sales tax increase could help first responders

Prescott, Arizona

Highlights:

- Funding for critical infrastructure including the construction of new fire stations and modernized police facilities.
- Revenues are slated to improve staffing levels for first responders, enhancing emergency response capabilities

April 14, 2025

Voter Approved Prescott Tax Rate Now In Effect As of April 1, 2025

In November 2024, Prescott voters approved Proposition 478, which increases the City's Transaction Privilege (sales) tax by 0.95% to support additional public safety infrastructure and operational costs.

- As a result, the City of Prescott's transaction privilege (sales) tax will increase from 2.00% to 2.95%, effective April 1, 2025.
- With this change, the new combined tax rate (State, County & City) will be 9.30%.

Citizen Committee

November through February City staff shared information about:

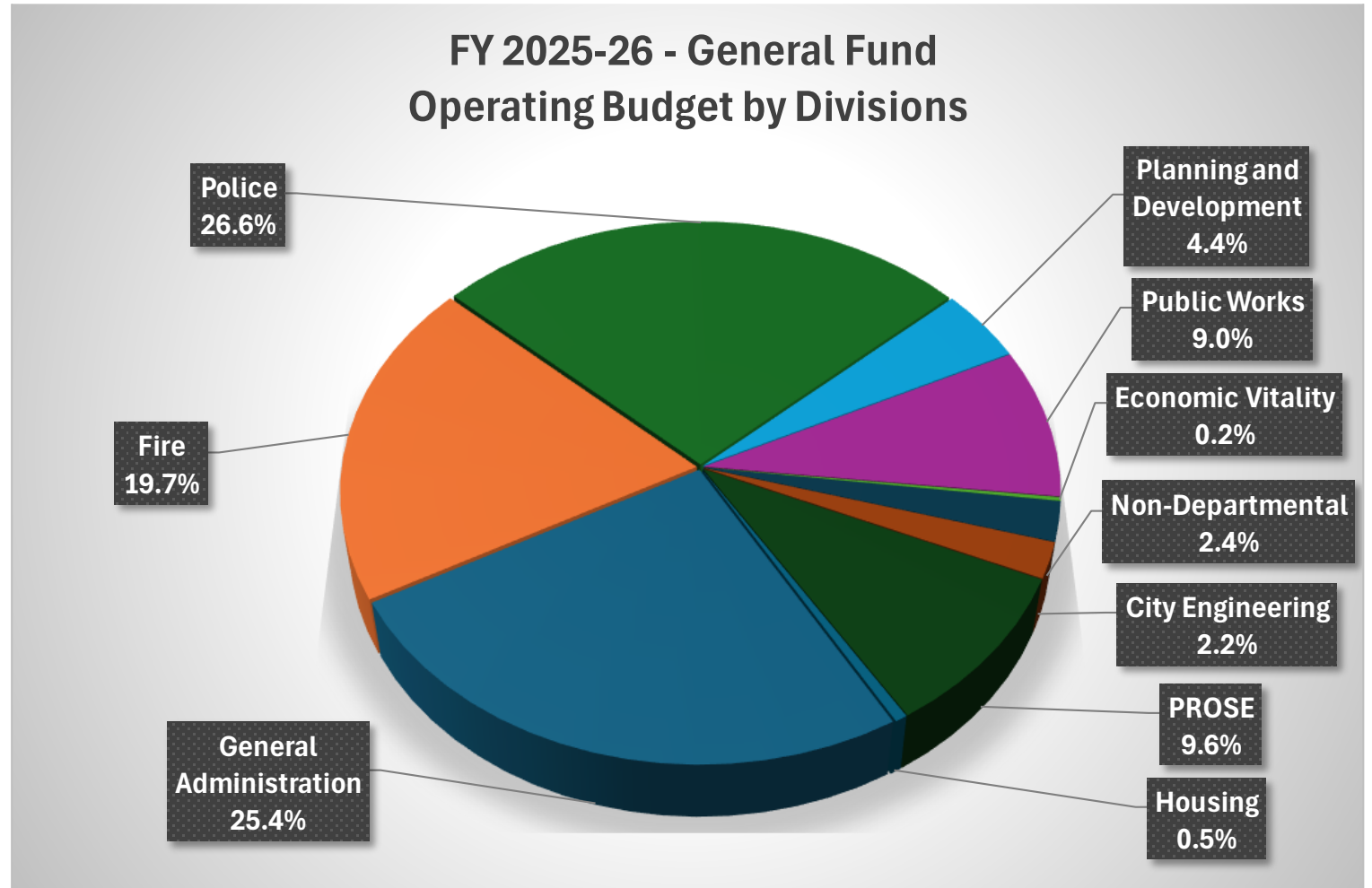
- Financial Outlook
- Fire
- Emergency Management
- Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting
- Police
- Financial Discussions

FY 2025-26 General Fund Budget Overview

Divisions	FY 2025-26	
	Budgeted Expenditures	
General Administration	\$	29,736,123
Fire		22,972,796
Police		31,126,623
Planning and Development		5,137,216
Public Works		10,509,306
Economic Vitality		255,305
Non-Departmental		2,793,535
City Engineering		2,526,781
PROSE		11,238,447
Housing		606,166
Total All Funds	\$	116,902,298

General Administration Includes:

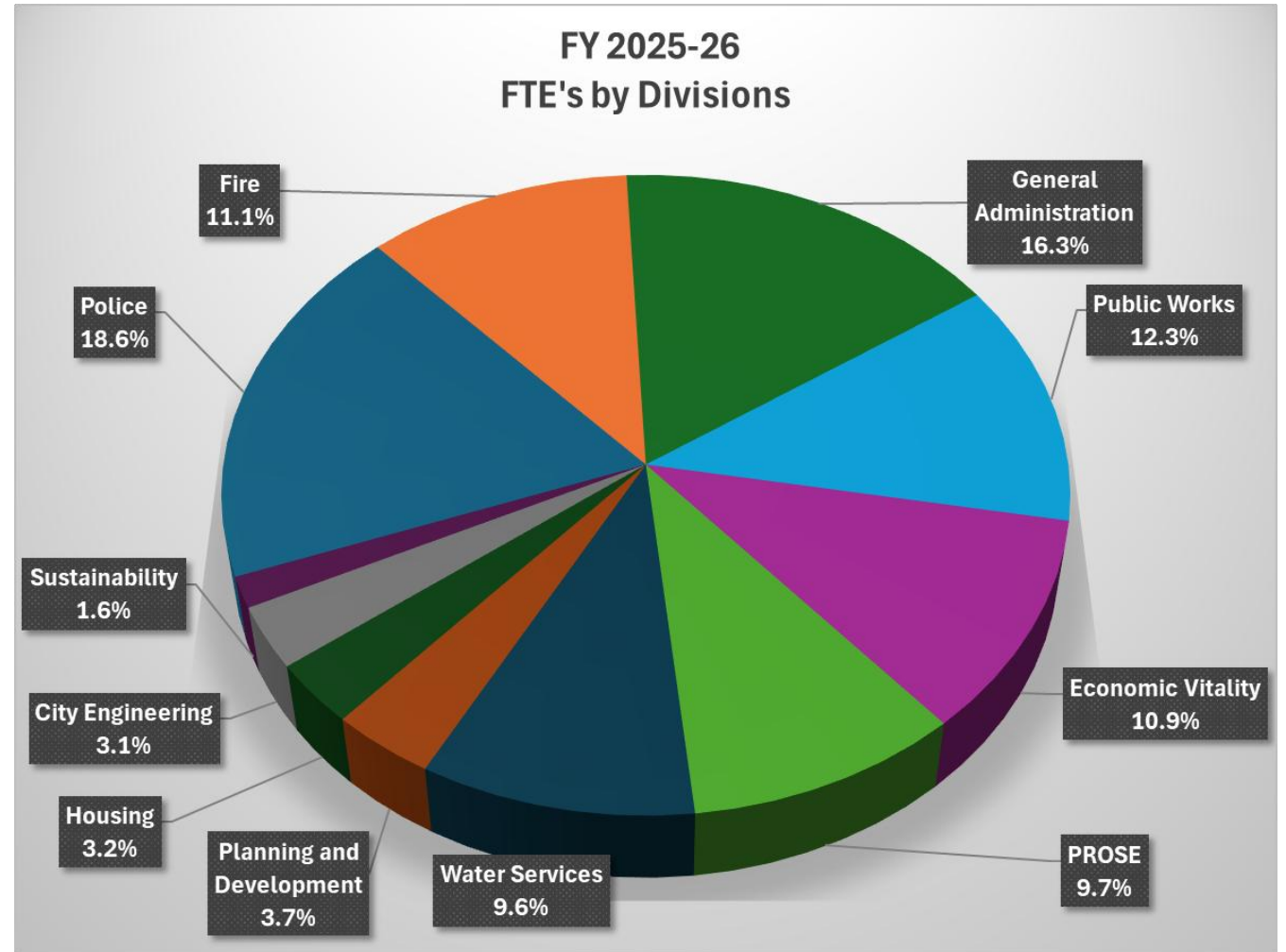
- City Manager
- Human Resources and Risk Management
- Information Technology
- City Attorney
- Municipal Court
- Communication and Civic Engagement
- Management Services



Citywide Staffing

Divisions	FY 2025-26 FTE's
Police	183.00
Fire	109.00
General Administration	159.75
Public Works	120.77
Economic Vitality	106.57
PROSE	94.83
Water Services	94.48
Planning and Development	36.00
Housing	31.00
City Engineering	30.48
Sustainability	15.38
Total All Funds	981.26

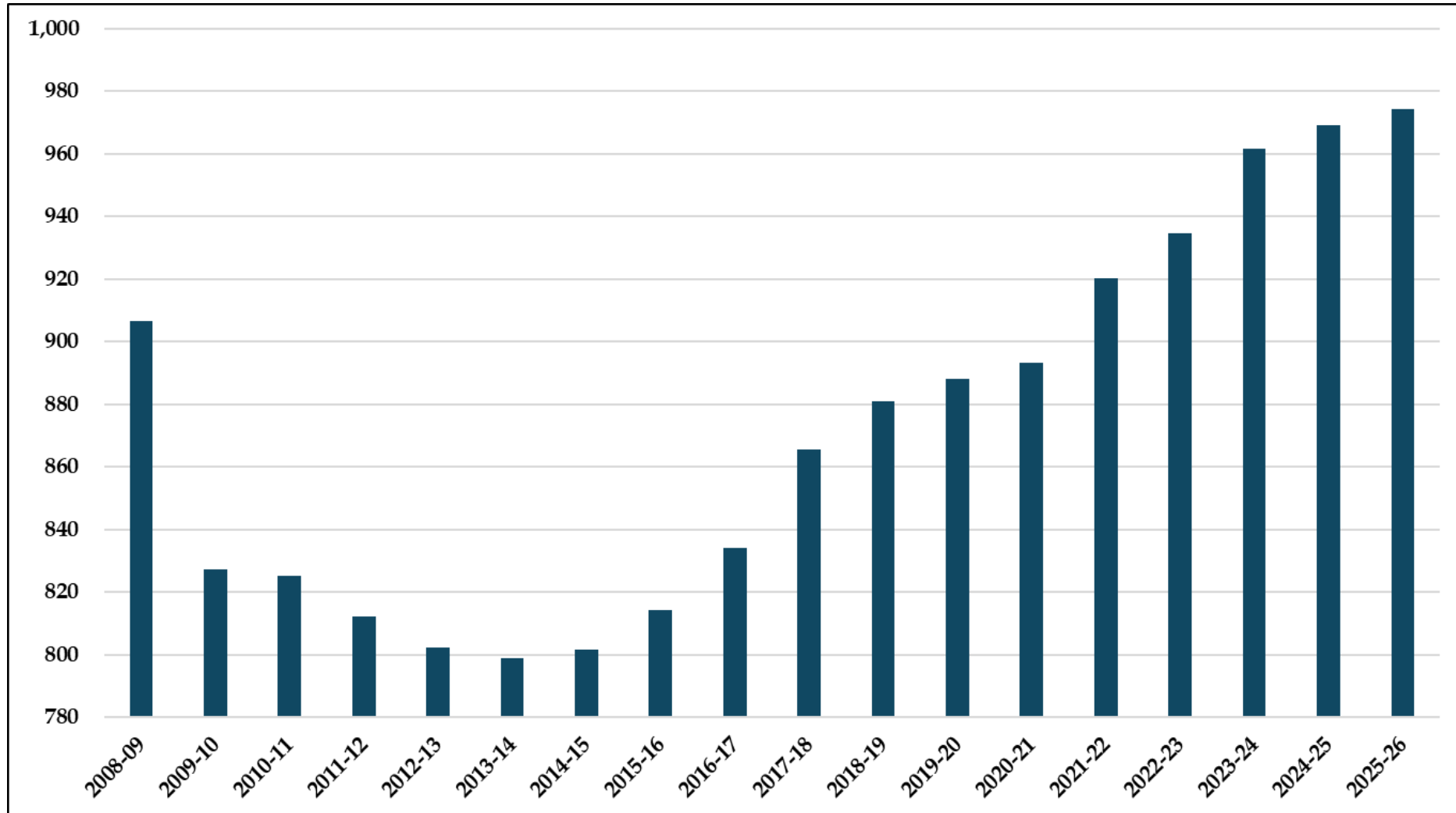
<u>General Administration Includes:</u>	
City Council	7.00
City Manager	3.00
City Attorney	18.00
Human Resources and Risk Management	15.00
Information Technology	22.00
Municipal Court	29.75
Communication and Civic Engagement	11.00
Management Services	54.00
	159.75



How did we get here

- Operating costs are outpacing revenue growth
- Ongoing increases in personnel costs
- Implementation of compensation and benefits to retain staff
- Aging infrastructure costs more to maintain
- Investment in technology to monitor and report
- Capital costs have grown significantly following the pandemic
- Changes at the state and federal level

Citywide Staffing

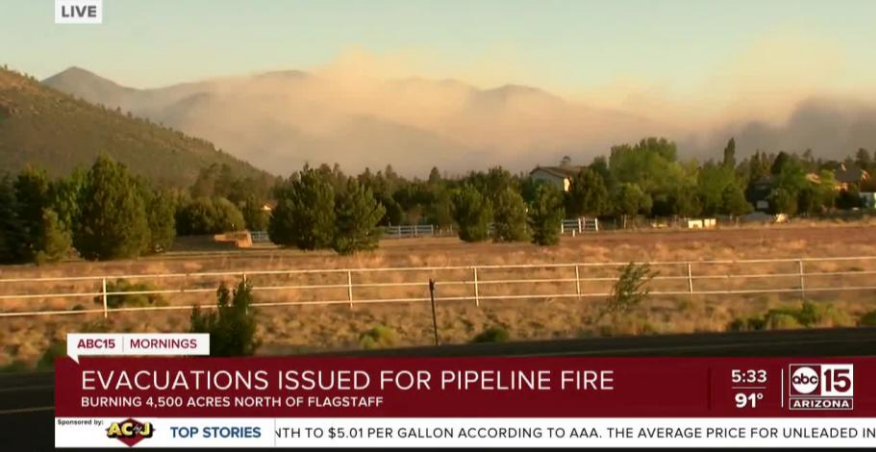


Growth

Metric	2008	2024-2025
Population	59,260	77,539
Visitation	3.1 million	5 million
NAU On-Campus Students	14,766	Over 21,000
General Fund Revenue	\$49 million	\$88 million
General Fund Expenditures	\$50 million	\$85 million

What are the needs?

- Shared some high-level needs during the Council April Budget Retreat
- Worked to build out needs and associated costs
 - Initial cost was \$511 million for a 10-year period
 - Refined cost is \$407 million for a 10-year period
- Prioritized the identified needs into five tiers
- The following slides will share what has changed in these areas to create the identified needs



Emergency Management & Flagstaff's risk

- Wildfire and post-wildfire flooding
- Severe winter storms and extreme weather
- Critical transportation corridors (rail, highway, airport)
- Large-scale special events and seasonal tourism surges
- Growing population and urban wildland interface
- Public health and supply chain disruptions
- Increasing reliance on technology and cyber systems

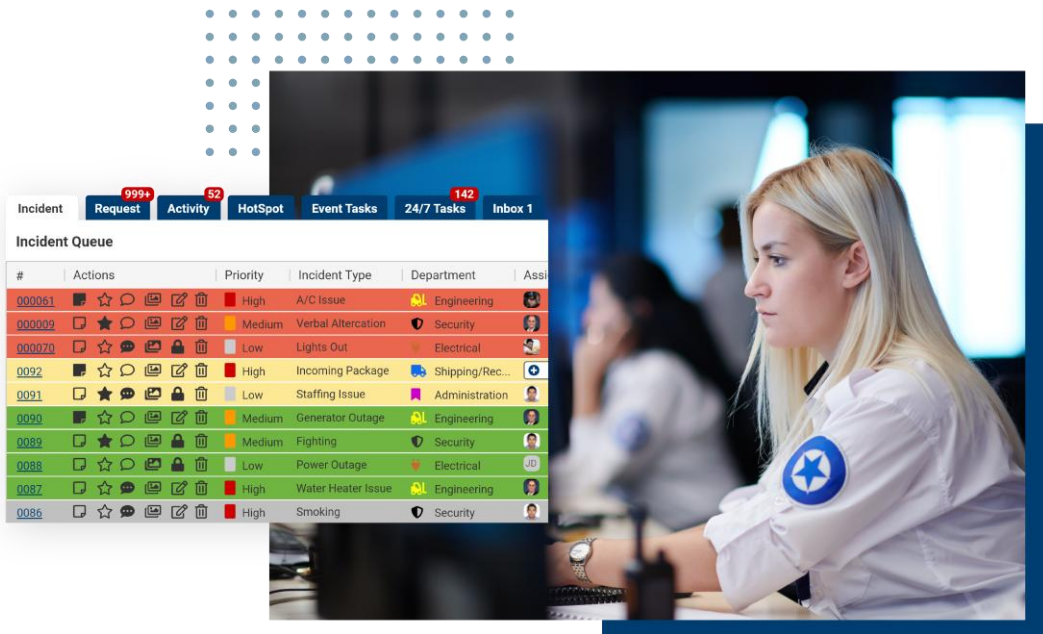


Emergency Management Needs

- 3 Personnel
- Equipment and Infrastructure
- Technology and systems for forecasting and notifications
- Emergency Plans
- Citywide training and exercises for the region with partners
- Community education on preparedness and available resources

How funding these needs impacts the community

- Faster, more coordinated emergency response
- Clearer, more reliable public information and alerts
- Better preparedness across city departments and partner agencies
- Reduced long-term recovery costs after disasters
- Stronger support for residents and businesses during recovery
- A safer, more resilient Flagstaff as risks continue to evolve



What's Changed with the Fire Department

- Growing community and visitor demands
- Increase in community size and station positioning to cover it
- Inability of line staff to manage programs and logistical oversight due to call volume and workloads
- Frequency and intensity of wildland fires and all-risk firefighters are frontline response
- National standards for staffing and response times
- Increase in mid-rise facilities over two stories from 316 to 665
- Call volume increased from 9,984 in 2008 to 18,051 in 2024
- Staff increased from 28 firefighters per shift in 2008 to 30 in 2026
- Decrease in the number of applicants applying for the Fire service
- CARE Unit
- Water Resource Infrastructure Protection Fee (WRIP)
- Increase in home assessments
- Decline in public education and community presence
- Decline in business inspections



Fire Department Needs

- 75 Operational/Wildland Staff
- 1 Wildland Staff (currently grant funded)
- 11 Support Staff
- 4 Community Risk Reduction Staff
- Station 7
- Administrative Facility
- Training Tower
- Wildland Fire Management Facility
- Station Maintenance
- Station Equipment and Supplies
- Cardiac Monitor Replacement
- Home Hardening Funding
- Hazardous Fuel Reduction
- Academy Classroom and Facilities
- Professional Development
- New Staff Vehicles & Equipment
- Cancer Screening
- Turnout Replacement
- Radio Replacement
- Digital Dispatching
- Heart Saver Tones

How funding these needs impacts the community

- Assist in addressing insurance premium
- Less severe wildfire in treated (engineered) areas
- Staffing to address Flagstaff's evolving risk and demands for firefighter safety
- Reduce the number of units needed for response by increasing the number of firefighters per unit
- Sustain and improve response times
- Adequate resources to respond large-scale or multiple incidents
- Ability to maintain trained personnel
- Facilities for personnel and apparatus
- Support for Fire Station operations



What's Changed with the Airport

- Increasingly larger aircraft and higher level of risk
- Required to meet index B Federal Aviation Administration ARFF Index
- 22% increase in annual enplanements (i.e., passengers boarding flights) since 2018
- Investment in securing a second airline
- Challenged to become self sustaining
- Increased number and complexity of federally mandated programs
- Reduced grant funding support
- Expanded parking and developed paid parking
- Altered terminal concessions
- Limited security coverage after last daily departure
- Moved to 24-hour a day Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting
- 120% attrition rate, constant hiring, and limited qualified applicants

Airport Needs



- 3 ARFF personnel
- 2 Security personnel
- Equipment & Supplies
- Combine with Flagstaff Fire

How funding these needs impacts the community

- Retain air service
 - \$128.5 million economic impact
 - Creates 971 jobs
 - Generates \$7.6 million in local and state tax revenue
- Dedicated focus on public safety at Airport
- Maintain and improve emergency response
- Increase employee retention
- Provides security presence at terminal when open to public



What's Changed with the Police Department

- Expansion of evidence with increased technology
- Advanced software and specialized training needed to extract data
- Aging systems and integration challenges
- Growing community demand
- Limited space for growth and training
- Increasing transparency expectations
- High volume of animal related calls
- Increase in size of community and number of visitors
- Growing need for scenario-based training to maintain safety
- Police Officers increased from 107 in 2006 to 119 in 2026
- Dispatchers increased from 29 in 2006 to 30 in 2026

Police Department Needs



- 18 Patrol Staff
- 11 Criminal Investigation Staff
- 38 Professional Staff
- Police Vehicles
- Incident Command Vehicle
- LEAF Expansion
- Evidence Warehouse Expansion
- Large Vehicle Storage
- JWP Substation
- Integrated Regional Operations Center
- Patrol and Investigative Equipment
- Software
- Radio Replacement

Financially Addressing Needs

- Providing one-time funding to meet growing costs and needs
- Pension financing
- Securing grant funding
- Lobbying for needed funding
- Considering the sources available in the upcoming recommended budget

Maintaining Affordability in Flagstaff

- Expressed concern about additional costs
 - 2022 Bond to fund flood mitigation, wastewater facility upgrades, wildland fire water tenders and engines, and affordable housing
 - Stormwater fee to support flood mitigation projects
 - Water Rate Study for operations, maintenance, and capital
- Discussing how additional funding can be gained with minimizing impact on community members

Public Safety Funding Considerations

One-time resources

- General Fund
- Development Impact Fees
- General Obligation Bond/Secondary Property Tax
- Grant Revenue

One-time uses

- Capital
- Non-recurring expenses
- Maintenance catch up

Ongoing resources

- General Fund
- Primary Property Tax
- Rates and Fees
- Water Resource Infrastructure Protection (WRIP) Fund
- Airport Rates and Fees
- Transaction Privilege Tax

Ongoing uses

- Personnel
- Operations
- Debt financing

Tier Tool

Tier 1 (\$144,630,531/\$14,463,051)

Emergency Management Current Operations (\$3,262,610/\$326,261) (P-\$1,299,030, CC-\$413,300)

Emergency Management New Positions (\$1,550,280/\$155,028) (P-\$1,392,760, CC-\$77,520, CA-\$80,000)

Fire Current Operations (\$25,380,840/\$2,538,084) (P-\$5,712,490, CC-\$14,203,960, CA-\$5,464,390)

Fire New Positions (\$6,174,360/\$617,436) (P-\$5,426,700, CC-\$447,660, CA-\$300,000)

Wildland Fire Current Operations (\$5,693,100/\$569,310) (P-\$3,723,600, CC-\$1,719,500, CA-\$250,000)

Wildland Fire Facility (\$3,599,100/\$359,910) (CC-\$1,434,100, CA-\$2,165,000)

Airport Current Operations (\$11,119,200/\$1,111,920) (P-\$10,454,300, CC-\$664,900)

Airport Police Aides (\$2,402,890/\$240,289) (P-\$1,973,180, CC-\$320,310, CA-\$109,400)

ARFF Minimum Staffing (\$5,578,060/\$557,806) (P-\$5,337,330, CC-\$240,730)

Police Current Operations (\$23,996,150/\$2,399,615) (P-\$3,037,090, CC-\$20,959,060)

Police Professional Staff (\$23,573,715/\$2,357,371) (P-\$17,561,945, CC-\$1,254,660, CA-\$4,757,110)

Police Criminal Investigation (\$16,130,998/\$1,613,099) (P-\$12,354,408, CC-\$1,664,220, CA-\$2,112,370)

Police Patrol Overlap Squad (\$13,805,573/\$1,380,557) (P-\$9,877,863, CC-\$1,860,650, CA-\$2,067,060)

Police Operations Center (\$1,238,095/\$123,809) (P-\$1,205,015, CC-\$33,080)

Police Training Unit (\$1,125,560/\$112,556) (P-\$689,610, CC-\$125,080, CA-\$310,870)

Next Steps

- Collect community input through survey
- Discuss survey outcomes
- Invite public comment to Citizen Committee discussions
- Prepare a recommendation for Council further consideration
- Council decision on November 2026 ballot measure



Questions

