

Middleton Review

Middleton's free community newspaper

News: Park zoning; city staff woes; GNF parade

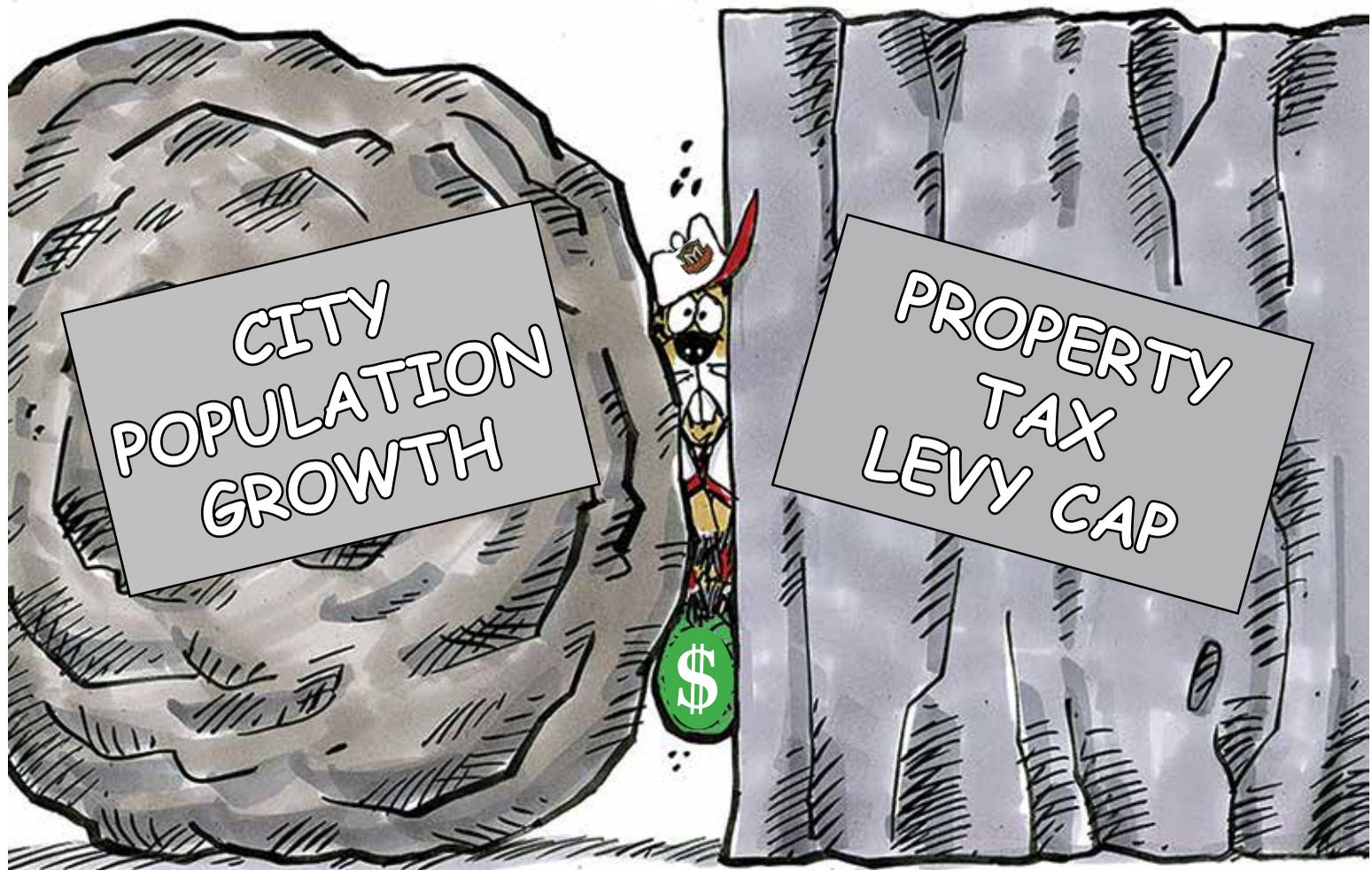
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Issue 126/August 2022

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Middleton Review

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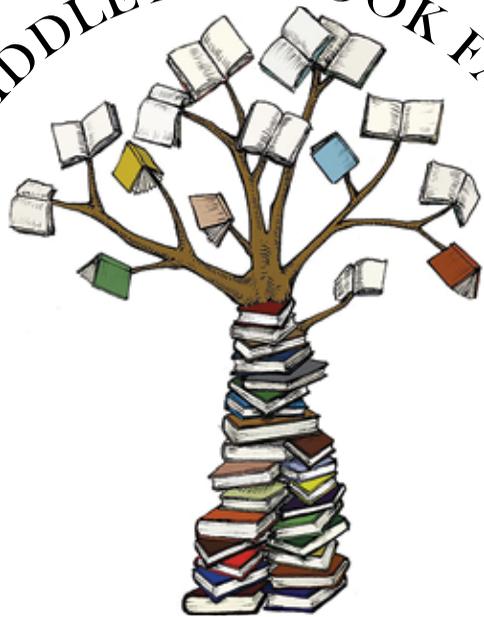
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THE MONTH IN REVIEW

Parks zoning, new GNF parade route, city staff woes, and other news

By GEORGE ZENS

Parisi Park: New basketball court coming

The city is going to spend just under \$16,500 for a new basketball court at Parisi Park (pictured right); the city council approved the relevant agreement with Wolf Paving on July 5. The current basketball court shares its space with the parking lot, which is apparently not only inconvenient and dangerous, but also conflicts with the planned installation of a 'handicapped' parking spot, which, as per federal regulations, needs to be placed closest to the restrooms.

Appraisal services: Contract renewed

Middleton property owners will by now have received notices about the reassessments of their properties from the city's outside appraiser, Greenville-based Associated Appraisal. They have been under contract with the city since 1999 as the result of a request for proposals after the city's in-house appraiser retired. Under the original four-year contract (1999 to 2022), Associated Appraisal was paid \$125,000 per year, plus \$100,000 for the 'market update revaluation' that is currently under way. On Tuesday, July 5, the city council unanimously approved an extension of the contract agreement for another four years under the same terms, including an optional \$100,000 for a further 'market update revaluation' or \$225,000 to \$240,000 for a 'full external revaluation'.

City salt shed: New roof approved (not steel)

The council unanimously approved a bid of \$27,505 (to Midwest Roofing and Construction) for a new roof on the public works department's salt shed on north Parmenter Street. The city had considered replacing the traditional shingle roof with a metal roof, but it was disappointed by both the higher-than-expected cost (up to \$80,000) and the lower-than-expected longevity (not quite twice that of heavy duty shingles), and abandoned the idea.

Lake Street boat launch: New master plan coming

The city is embarking on having a master plan done for the redevelopment and redesign of the boat launch area at Lake Street and the Lakeview Park area east of Allen Boulevard. To that effect, the council approved an agreement with Parkitecture and Planning in the amount of \$17,320; concept plans are expected in August, and a final presentation in early fall. Lake Street is currently scheduled for reconstruction in 2024, and its redesign would be coordinated with the new boat launch plans.

And talking about Lake Street: Since the old Captain Bill's restaurant building was torn down several weeks ago, nothing much has happened at the site of a planned four-story apartment building. According to Abby Attoun, the city's director of planning and community development, work has stopped because 'the construction bid came in much

Parisi Park Basketball Court



Site 1 – would create a conflict with our agreement with MBSC that uses the softball field for their games – there is not enough room to add a basketball court and maintain the playing dimensions needed for softball

Site 2 – too close to 3rd base dugout and negative impacts to tree roots

Site 3 – is the selected location



Rough view of what completed court will look like, dimensions of 50' wide by 60' long



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higher than expected on a project that already had tight economics. The developer is working on value-engineering the project, which will include removing some of the underground parking that is outside of the building footprint, among other modifications. The developer anticipates a fall construction start. City staff is working with the developer on reviewing the revised plans [which were on the plan commission's agenda for review on Tuesday, July 12], and anticipates receiving a revised TIF request based on the higher costs.'

Zoning: New neighborhood-parks district

The city of Middleton has created a new zoning district for neighborhood parks. After input from various committees, including the park, recreation and forestry committee and the plan commission, the city council approved the corresponding ordinance unanimously (and changes to the 'recreational facilities' section) on July 5. According to city staff, zoning should reflect (desired) land use, and the new ordinance 'reflects the city's longstanding commitment to protecting park land'. Also, 'updating the zoning ordinance and map is an action step identified in the 2021 comprehensive plan'.

Vandewalle & Associates, one of the city of Middleton's traditional consulting firms, is currently working on that zoning ordinance update under a \$100,000 contract, and a comprehensive draft is expected to be made public sometime this summer or early fall. It is not clear why the new neighborhood-park zoning district couldn't be created as part of the work being done by Vandewalle, and why city staff spent time and resources working on a change to the zoning code that the consultant is doing anyway, and is only weeks away from completing.

When asked the question, zoning administrator Mark Opitz largely evaded the issue: 'The zoning of the city's neighborhood parks is inconsistent with the future land use map, which designates these properties as public parks and recreation. The city is in the process of acquiring two additional park sites, which is why staff prioritized establishing the park-specific zoning districts.'

The rezoning directly affects Firemen's, Meadows, Middleton Station, Parisi, Parkside Heights, Stonefield, Stricker and Woodside Heights parks. A neighborhood park must have a minimum area of three acres (and an unstated maximum of about ten acres, above which it becomes a community park) and be at least 150 feet wide. Under the new zoning district, 'permitted uses' include nature preserves and passive recreation areas, playgrounds, 'active recreation facilities' with 'spectator seating' (specifically 'excluding archery ranges and similar activities', which were included in the original draft, but then removed at the recommendation of the plan commission, together with letting dogs run loose), 'outdoor exercise and fitness facilities', skating rinks, swimming pools, courts for tennis, racquetball, pickle ball and similar sports, golf courses - mini and other 'and associated facilities', and community gardens.

Other zoning districts for other park sizes will be introduced in the near future, although it is not known whether it will be done again separately or as part of

the comprehensive zoning code overhaul. The 'two additional park sites' the city is buying, by the way, are located near the Parmenter Street roundabout between the creek and the Bruce Company, and at the northern end of Parmenter Street, south of Greenbriar Road (for the future 'Belle Farm' development).

As an observation, it seems that there is little point in paying a consultant if city staff is going to do some of the work anyway, and it also seems that city staff can't really complain about having too much work if they have time to do work that a consultant is also getting paid to do at the same time. All of that said, however, the new neighborhood-park zoning district and the accompanying rezoning of the affected parks will have virtually no effect at all on our everyday lives - or on the parks for that matter.

North Mendota Trail construction: Maybe soon

Construction of the east segment of the North Mendota Trail (from Highland Way east to the city limits) is expected to begin in a couple of weeks or so.

On July 12, city staff representing the planning, engineering, and the sewer and water utility departments held a pre-construction meeting with KL Engineering staff (hired by the city to do both design and construction engineering), Badgerland Excavating (the general contractor who will build the trail), and representatives of various local utilities. At that meeting, the contractor indicated that they anticipate starting construction in mid-August, and that they do not anticipate having difficulty completing the work by November 1. The contractor has permission to work each weekday between the hours of 7:30 AM and 6:00 PM, and has been asked by city staff to 'minimize closures of driveway connections with Century Avenue'. That said, it will be necessary at some point to close the driveways connecting the Dollar General, Sage Meadow, and Arbor Lakes properties to Century Avenue for about a week, and drivers wanting to access or leave those properties will have to use other driveways (from Valley Ridge Road and CTH Q, for instance). The easternmost driveway serving Arbor Lakes will be kept open at all times. The contractor is required to notify adjoining properties of driveway closures at least 24 hours in advance.

Property owners have been made aware that the project will require certain trees and other vegetation to be removed, and the city is providing compensation for impacts on existing landscaping.

Traffic safety: Trying to rein in motorists

On July 13, the ped/bike/transit committee endorsed the idea of installing a traffic circle 'on a trial basis' at the intersection of Elmwood Avenue and Bristol Street in an effort to improve pedestrian and bicyclists' safety.

In regard to the real safety issues at the intersection of Branch Street and Maywood Avenue, which is regulated by all-way stop signs that are ignored by many drivers, especially on Branch Street, the committee voted unanimously to refer the issue to the public works committee with the recommendation that the latter consider 'enhancing the crosswalk design (through use of different or additional color,

for instance), installing flashing stop signs, installing curb extensions, and extending no-parking zones to improve sight-distance'. Public works hadn't taken the topic up yet, as this edition of the *Middleton Review* went to print.

City budget: Parks request includes gypsy moth spraying

The city's park, recreation and forestry commission (PRFC) got a first look at a possible 2023 budget for the parks and recreation department.

In a memo to the members, department head Matt Amundson pointed to the growing gap between the city's rapidly increasing park system and insufficiently increasing resources to maintain it: 'I strongly believe we are at a critical point for Middleton parks and recreation. We have infrastructure needs that current funding levels cannot support while at the same time the potential for significant growth of the park system that will exacerbate long-term funding concerns.'

The department's difficulties arise mainly from the fact that - one - due to changes in state law, park development fees (paid by developers) cannot be used indiscriminately anymore as a funding source for any type of park project anywhere in the city (which means the department has to rely more on the property-tax supported general and capital funds for some projects), and that - two - the city is currently on a buying spree to acquire more park land along Parmenter Street, which will add to the pressure on the department's resources.

In that context, it is only a matter of time before the city's self-imposed requirement of having fifteen acres of park land for every one thousand residents becomes unsustainable in terms of city resources required to maintain it all.

Meanwhile, the 'potential 2023 projects' to be funded through capital borrowing include playground replacement at Stonefield Park (\$40,000), repairing the tennis practice wall at the same park (\$10,000), work on the Taylor Park parking lot (\$100,000), 'shade structures' at Quarry Skate Park and Lakeview Park playground (\$20,000 each), replacing 'all existing basketball hoops' (\$20,000), and making Penni Klein Park ADA-compliant (no amount given). The list also includes \$30,000 for 'spongy [gypsy] moth suppression', presumably aerial spraying in the Saks Woods neighborhood. A mix of capital borrowing and park development funding would be used for tennis and pickle ball courts at Lakeview Park (\$300,000) and a new shelter at Parisi Park (\$350,000).

Improvements to the Lake Street boat launch and Lakeview Park east of Allen Boulevard would also be funded through the mix, but no amounts are given.

Strictly park development funding would be used for a new basketball court at Hinrichs Family Park (\$24,000), an 'all-abilities playground' (no amount or location given), and improvements of an unspecified nature (and unspecified amount) at the MRD site off Highway Q. Which, if any, of those projects can indeed be funded through park development fees depends on a review by the city's external auditor Baker Tilly.

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Good Neighbor Festival: New parade route

This year's Good Neighbor Festival parade will not take place, as in previous years, on University Avenue, but on Franklin Avenue (see map). It seems the route was mostly changed at the insistence of the police department (apparently a long-standing request) because University Avenue was too much of a hassle to keep closed. Also, the thinking is that Franklin Avenue would be less prone to attacks and incidents like the ones in Waukesha last year and in Highland Park earlier this month, as Middleton police captain Jeremy Geiszler explained in an email to this newspaper:

'For a number of years the PD [police department] has been concerned with the route down University. It is obviously the main east/west thoroughfare through the city, and closing it for an extended period of time is quite difficult and involves a lot of staff. More importantly, there have been many times where we have encountered vehicles driving on University after the route has been closed because it is impossible to control the one hundred-plus business and residential driveway access points. Just last year I was leading the parade when a truck pulled out of a residence in the 7100 block of University and started driving right at me and the others up front. If that person had ill intentions, it would obviously have the potential for mass casualties. Equally concerning is a person who accidentally hits the gas pedal instead of the brake

like we just recently experienced at a restaurant in Greenway Station. Based on recent events throughout the country, including those close to home in Waukesha and Highland Park, we felt it was time to address the concerns we've had for a while. The PD is ultimately responsible for the safety of everyone in the parade and along the route, and we felt that we were not able to adequately address the issues we identified on University Avenue. While I know the tradition is to have the parade on University, I think it is important that we do whatever is in our power to mitigate our concerns. The new route is able to address our concerns while also keeping the route close to University. It also allows the parade to end at the Good Neighbor Festival grounds, which was a request of the Good Neighbor Festival board.'

In a press release with many carefully worded quotes, the Good Neighbor Festival organizers and the Middleton police department emphasized the safety aspect of the decision while trying to sound convincing that it would be an improvement on a wider scale:

Police chief Troy Hellenbrand: "One of the main concerns regarding the GNF event, and one which has been a safety concern for several years, is the closing of University Avenue for the parade based on the large number of vehicles which use this roadway. Yearly, the police department has encountered vehicles on the parade route well after the roadway was closed,

which is a major safety concern for those watching the parade. The GNF committee and the Middleton police department understand the history of the GNF parade being on University Avenue for several decades; however, we believe this new route will provide a safer environment for those participating in the parade and for those who are watching. The decision to move the parade route was not taken lightly and was made with the goal of providing the safest environment for everyone."

Chair of the GNF parade committee Mark Opitz: "Shifting the parade over just a block to the north means it will still run through the heart of Middleton while reducing the impact on traffic patterns, making it easier for people to get to and from the festival."

Festival president Nancy Vickery: "We recognize that this is a big change. We hope that the community will see that we take the safety of the festival seriously and that they will support the change."

The new route might take some getting used to, as it will not only mean less space for parade participants and spectators, but also a loss of convenient on-street parking, at least for the duration of the parade.

The city as employer: Competitive disadvantage

The city of Middleton has trouble hiring and retaining staff.

According to a presentation by its human

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FRI. SEPT 2nd	RED HOT HORN DAWGS
FRI. SEPT 9th	FMB AND THE NAMES
FRI. SEPT 16th	RETRO SPECZ
FRI. SEPT 23rd	DRIVEWAY THRIFTDWELLERS
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resources manager Brian Wolhaupter at a recent finance committee meeting, more than a dozen employees have left the city in recent months, and the applications for each vacancy are down significantly, both in quantity and in quality. Public sector wage increases in general have lagged behind those in the private sector since the start of pandemic, with the gap widening since the middle of 2020, but they seem to have lagged even more in the city of Middleton.

Meanwhile, formerly generous benefit plans are apparently becoming less attractive, with public-sector employees being asked to contribute more to health and other insurance (although for the most part still not anywhere near as much as private sector employees).

An increasingly important part of the compensation package for many existing and would-be employees, according to Brian Wolhaupter, is paid vacation. And here Middleton seems to be at a disadvantage, not least compared to peer cities in the area: Not only does Middleton offer fewer minimum and maximum vacation days than almost all other peer cities (12 days at the start and 27 days after 18 years of employment, compared to 12 days at the start and 30 days after 25 years in Sun Prairie, 15 and 33 days after 25 years in Fitchburg, and 15 and 30 days after 14 years in Verona), it also takes more steps to get to the maximum (11 in Middleton, compared to 5 and fewer in Fitchburg and Verona). The seniority-based system, long prized by bureaucracies as a way to promote employment longevity and stability, no longer seems to promote either. Some of its more rigid applications, like increases in the number of vacation days, are being successfully undercut by private (and public) employers offering full complements from the start.

Under current conditions, the staffing situation for the city seems set to get worse. Staffing levels have not

kept pace with the city's growth.

Thus for instance, in spite of significant increases in the number of acres of parks and of miles of trails and streets in the last twenty years, the number of crew persons to maintain them has not gone up.

Increased workloads with no comparable increases in resources in all departments lead to low morale and high attrition. This is compounded by a relative lack of advancement opportunities, and an absolute lack of training and development programs 'outside of simple rote learning of work tasks', as described by Brian Wolhaupter.

The city of Middleton's difficulties are illustrated by the fact that the 'average applicant pool per position (excluding the library) is down by more than 75%'; that 'failed searches due to poor candidates are up by 300%'; that 'salary negotiations required to secure acceptable candidates are up by 100%'; and that 'attrition due to employees leaving for the private sector or other municipalities for higher wages or benefits is up by 200%'.

The deeply ingrained practice by many former and current high-ranking city officials to pat themselves on the back and boast about the greatness of Middleton, seems misplaced when it comes to city employment: In Brian Wolhaupter's analysis, the city has nothing to offer an existing or potential employee that would set it apart positively from the private sector, or even from other comparable cities and villages in the area.

That is all the more disconcerting, as all employers, including public ones, are struggling with a challenging labor market.

Development: Blast it!

Middleton plan commission members recently got a look at a set of three apartment buildings that are proposed to be built on two combined Greenway

Center lots on Pleasant View Road just across from the golf course entrance. The buildings would each be eight stories tall, contain between 119 and 124 apartment units for a total of 376 units, and include two levels of underground parking. The site covers an area of just over 5.3 acres, and abuts the South Fork bike trail. (Pictured above looking northeast from Pleasant View Road near the golf course entrance.)

This project replaces a previous proposal (under a different owner and developer) for a fourteen-story building (later reduced to twelve stories) that was not approved by the city.

But like the older versions, this new incarnation is facing opposition from nearby residents as well as from PPD (ThermoFisher), which has a large campus with production facilities north of the site, and is Middleton's largest private employer with more than 2,200 employees. It develops and manufactures pharmaceutical products, and its main concern is that vibrations from blasting operations during construction of the underground parking ramps will harm the sensitive equipment it uses in its operations. Another concern is over stormwater runoff (the proposed development is on a hill compared to the PPD facilities) once the currently permeable area of brush and forest is paved over. Apartment and condominium owners and residents south of the site have voiced similar concerns.

According Abby Attoun, director of planning and community development for the city of Middleton, 'the city's planning staff is supportive of this project, which provides an opportunity to add compact and needed housing to an area that has a lot of jobs. The project will require a traffic impact analysis and a stormwater management plan.'

She recommended that 'the city conduct a geotechnical analysis to review the reports that are submitted by the development team'. In her opinion, 'this proposal has fewer challenges than the last proposal for the site because the developer would wait for the Pleasant View Road reconstruction project to extend utilities to the site. There are remaining concerns about the rock wall, blasting, and any disruption to PPD's operations during construction. Some of these same concerns exist for the city's reconstruction project [of Pleasant View Road], which will also require blasting. The height of the building is lower than the previous proposal but the footprint has expanded.'

It seems to be the developer's intention to coordinate their blasting operations as closely as possible with those for the reconstruction of Pleasant View Road, unless economic conditions upend the construction timing.

For the project to proceed, the site needs to be rezoned to PDD/GIP. The plan commission deferred a decision on the rezoning request, and, among other recommendations, referred the matter to the park, recreation and forestry commission, as well as the conservancy lands committee. City staff has also been instructed to work with the developer to explore options for a land swap, the creation of a natural kids play area, and the restoration of an oak woodland.

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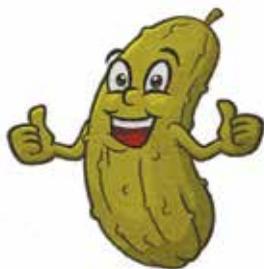
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- Why subsidized affordable housing is unaffordable?
- How the city plans to transform downtown?
- Why traffic seems to be getting worse?
- How city officials get tangled up in their own red tape?

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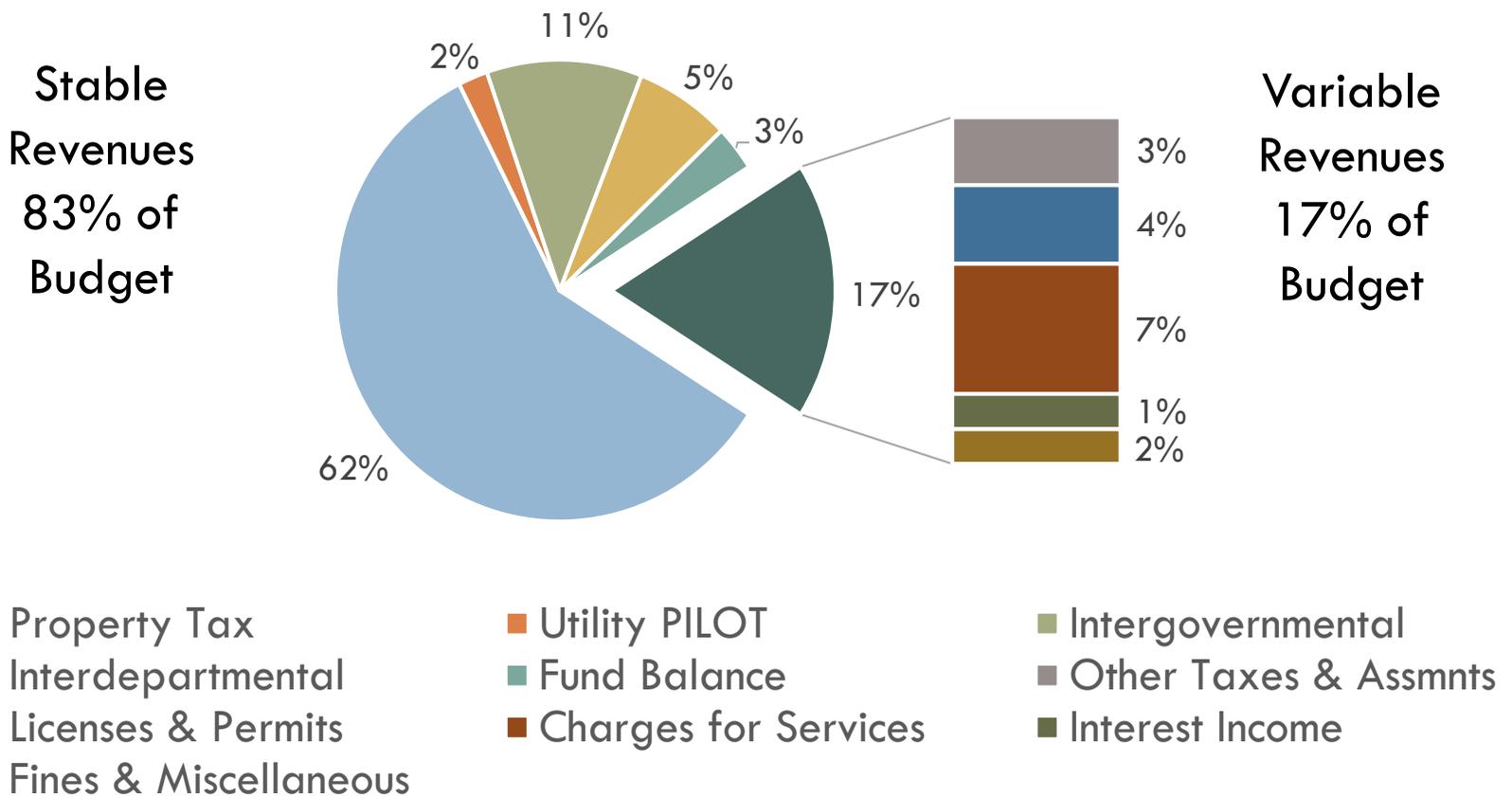
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2022 General Fund Revenue Budget



CITY FINANCES

Between a rock and a hard place

As city officials prepare for a referendum asking residents for an increase in the property-tax levy, some background information provides context.

By GEORGE ZENS

According to the city of Middleton's 2021 finance report, the community's economic framework is basically sound, but it also points to a double-edged sword: Strong growth, which provides the basis for more property-tax revenue, but also for an increase in the demand for city services.

The city's equalized property valuation has increased from \$2.7 billion to \$4.3 billion over the past ten years, an increase of 58.5%. This makes Middleton's equalized property value the second highest in Dane county, behind only the city of Madison.

Middleton's estimated population has increased from 17,903 to 21,964 between 2012 and 2021, an increase of 23.1%.

Per capita adjusted gross income in the city of Middleton was \$64,623 in 2020. That is an increase of \$10,620 (19.7%) since 2012.

The city maintains an Aa1 bond rating from Moody's Investors Service, based in part on the strong economic climate of the city.

As city of Middleton finance director Bill Burns recently explained to the finance committee, the city's operating budget is constrained for a number of reasons:

1. The city's operating costs are increasing faster than its revenues. This has limited the ability to add staff to meet the additional needs of a growing community.

2. Property taxes represent 62% of the city's general fund revenues [from which operating costs are paid].

3. State-imposed levy limits limit the increase in general property taxes to the percentage of net new construction with no adjustment for inflation. [When the current levy cap was introduced a decade ago, the state used then-existing local taxation rates as baselines to calculate future increases. Because of a tradition of fis-

cal prudence, Middleton's property taxes were comparatively low then, which has since limited their allowed increases and kept them at a comparatively low level.]

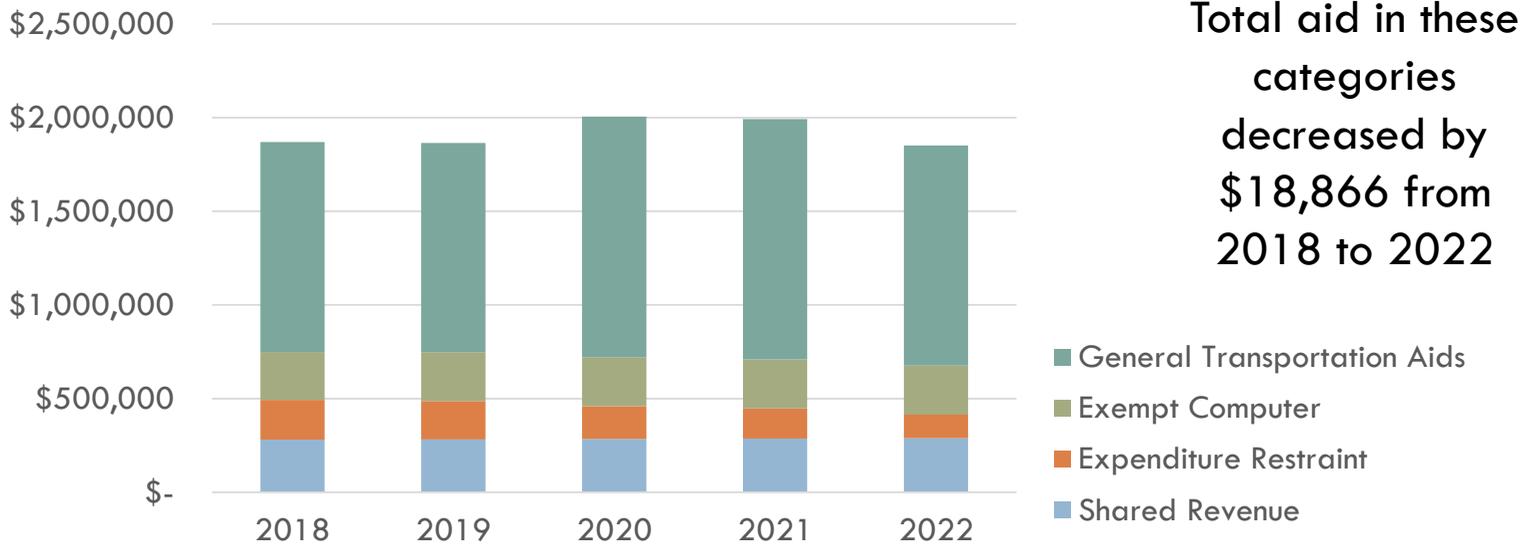
4. In Wisconsin there are no options for a local sales or income tax to offset reliance on the property tax.

5. After property taxes, intergovernmental revenue is the next largest source of general fund revenue, and in recent years state aid payments have been flat or negative.

6. The city will receive less in combined aids for a number of programs in 2022 than in 2018, including shared revenue, expenditure restraint [which 'rewards' a municipality for keeping its expenses under a certain threshold], exempt computer aid, recycling grants, and general transportation aids.

7. Population growth and inflation are increasing faster than property taxes and state aids.

Primary General Fund State Aids 2018-2022



Aid Category	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Shared Revenue	\$281,329	\$282,326	\$284,795	\$287,127	\$289,381
Expenditure Restraint	212,039	204,415	175,023	160,448	125,414
Exempt Computer Aid	255,717	261,905	261,905	261,905	261,905
General Transportation	1,120,641	1,116,057	1,283,465	1,282,589	1,174,160

The city of Middleton has one of the lowest property tax rates among fourteen Dane county cities and villages with a population over 5,000.

Its equalized local mill rate was of \$5.37 per \$1,000 in the 2021/2022 tax year, which puts it in third-to-last place among peer municipalities, just ahead of the city of Verona (about \$4.60) and the village of Windsor (\$4.00). The city of Madison has reliably the highest mill rate at over \$8.00, followed by Stoughton and Fitchburg (around \$7.50), and Sun Prairie (around \$6.75). DeForest, Mount Horeb, Monona, Cottage Grove, McFarland, Waunakee and Oregon (in decreasing order) also have higher mill rates than the city of Middleton.

Unlike many other area cities, Middleton does not have a separate charge on the tax bill for refuse and recycling. Additionally, it has one of the lowest storm water utility rates in the state with no staff funded by the utility. [These latter two points are ‘self-inflicted’, if you will, as they are the results of city council decisions.]

Over the past several years the city has implemented measures to increase revenues and limit costs to delay the need for a referendum, including: In 2018 it increased the hotel room tax to 8% (maximum rate allowed by state law); in 2019 it began allocating risk management and insurance costs to other city funds; in mid-2019 it shifted water utility public fire protection (upsized mains and hydrants) from the property tax to

utility bills; in mid-2019 it added building plan review services; in 2021 it adjusted utility cost recovery to the general fund, and in 2022 it changed health care providers to reduce premiums.

Since state law makes Wisconsin cities (and other taxing jurisdictions, such as school districts) rely heavily on property taxes and state aids, alternative revenue options are limited.

For the city of Middleton, the remaining ones include a wheel tax (i.e. an additional fee on vehicle registrations), which would not require a referendum, and, at \$20 annually per vehicle, could generate about \$400,000 (most municipal wheel taxes in the state range from \$10 to \$40). Special charges for recycling and trash could generate an as yet unspecified amount of money (a referendum would be required for a trash charge, but not for a recycling one).

Increasing the storm water utility fee to include personnel would require a referendum separate from the one on exceeding the general levy cap. Storm water utility personnel is currently paid through the general fund.

Tax increment financing (TIF funding) can’t be used for operating expenses for a variety of reasons:

1. During the life of a TIF district incremental tax revenues are restricted and many only be used for project costs of the district.
2. The city’s two active TIF districts are not projected to close until 2030 (district #3) and 2036 (district #5).

3. The city has been able to subtract almost half a billion dollars of value from the TID early, thus contributing to the general tax base and helping to keep tax rates low. TID #3 payments for general fund services (so-called cost-recovery) need to be phased out by 2025, which reduces and then eliminates another revenue stream.

The city has received its full allocation of American Rescue Plan Act funds at \$2,096,930, and so far the council has authorized the use of \$812,557. The remaining ARPA funds are allocated for 2023 and 2024, subject to approval in future budgets. These funds are a one-time source of funds and are best used for one-time program and capital projects. Funding personnel or ongoing operations with ARPA funds would create a hole in future budgets, and is therefore not recommended.

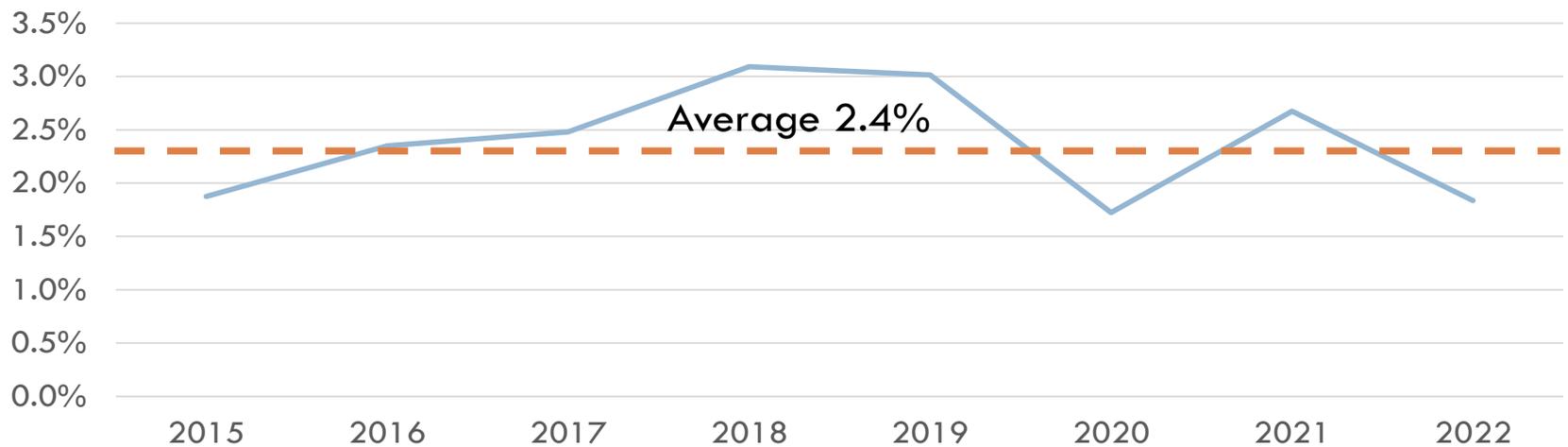
A payment-in-lieu of taxes from the Pleasant View Golf Course to the general fund could help, but would not be enough to cover projected deficits.

The city council’s decision to ask voters for an extra \$1 million annually on November 8 to fund added staff and salaries would add \$32.10 per \$100,000 of value to property owners’ tax bills.

(See graphs on this double-page and on pages 26, 27, 30 and 31 for more information.)

Graphs by CITY OF MIDDLETON FINANCE DEPARTMENT

Change in 'net new construction' and allowable tax-levy increases under state law



Budget Year	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
% Net New Construction	1.87%	2.4%	2.5%	3.1%	3.0%	1.7%	2.7%	1.8%
Allowable Increase	\$210k	\$268k	\$291k	\$371k	\$373k	\$220k	\$348k	\$240k

Five-Year Change 2016-2021

Cost Demands

Population +13.7%

Inflation (CPI) +17.0%

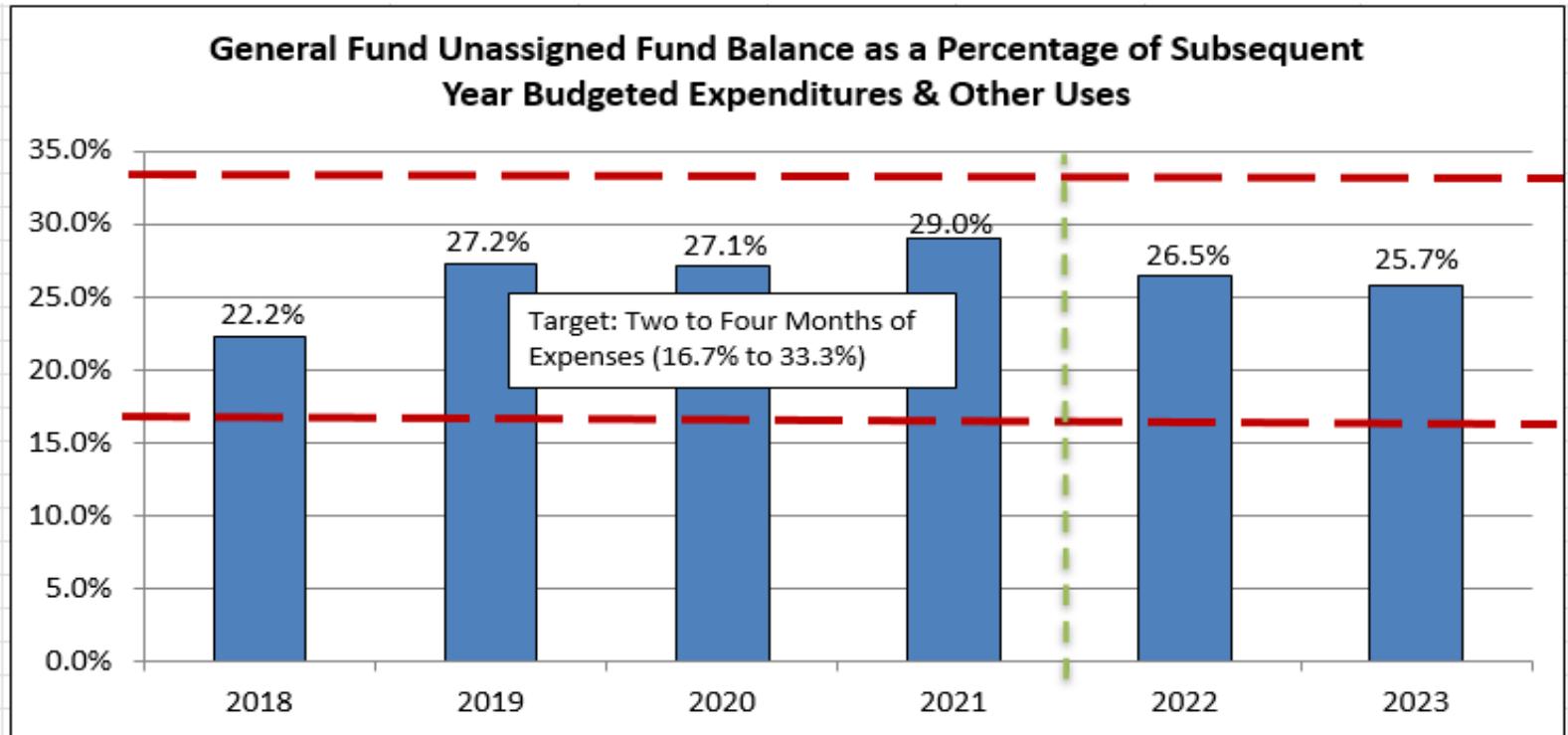
Combined +30.7%

Revenues

General Property Taxes +11.1%

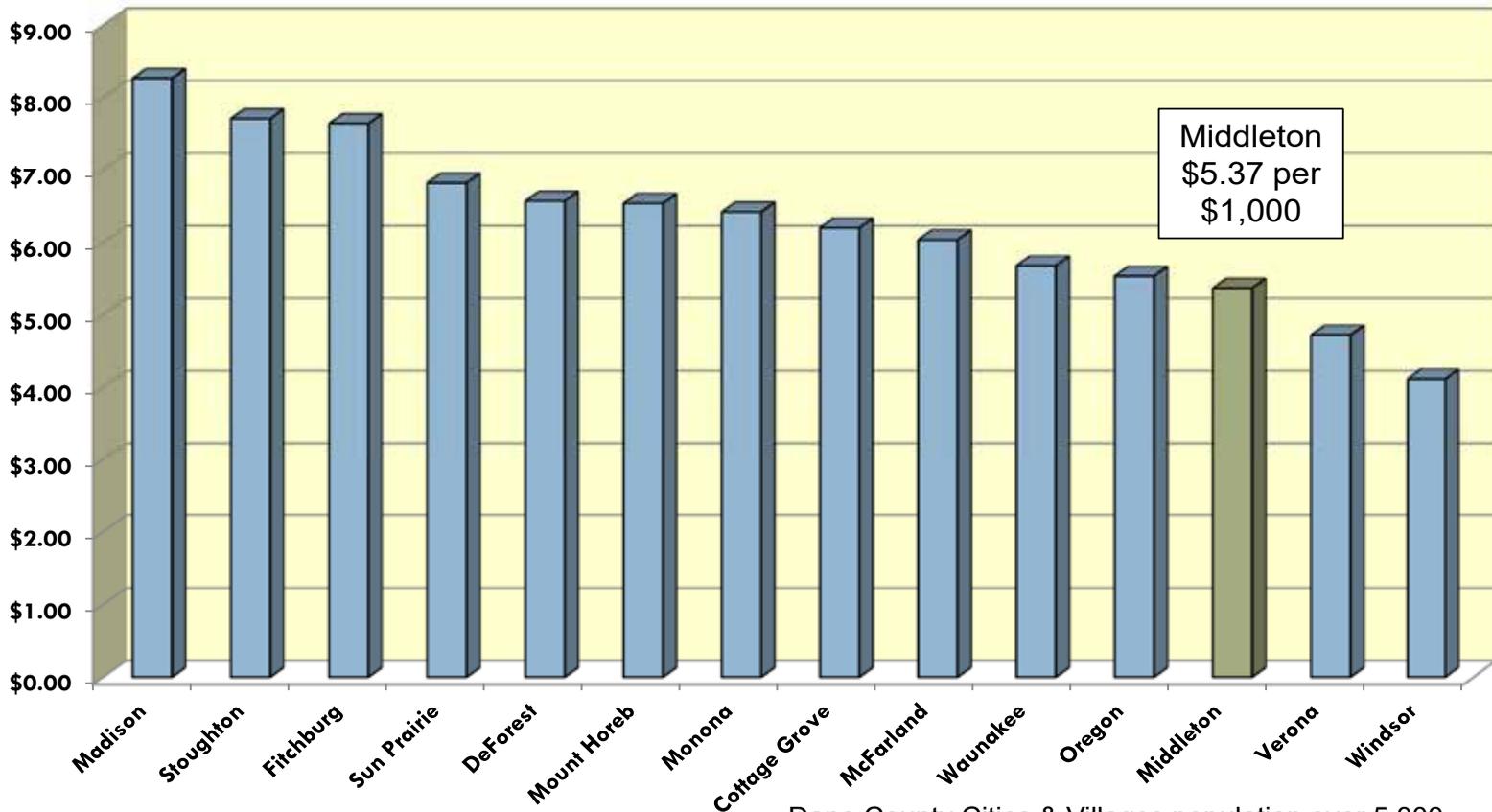
General State Aids -1.1%

Combined (Weighted) +9.4%



	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Unassigned Fund Balance	\$ 4,834,398	\$ 6,084,396	\$ 6,220,424	\$ 6,665,188	\$ 6,415,188	\$ 6,415,188
Next Year Budgeted Expenditure	21,735,215	22,351,056	22,942,136	23,001,445	24,206,488	24,932,683
Percent of Next Year Budget	22.2%	27.2%	27.1%	29.0%	26.5%	25.7%

2021 Tax Year / 2022 Budget Year Equalized Tax Rates



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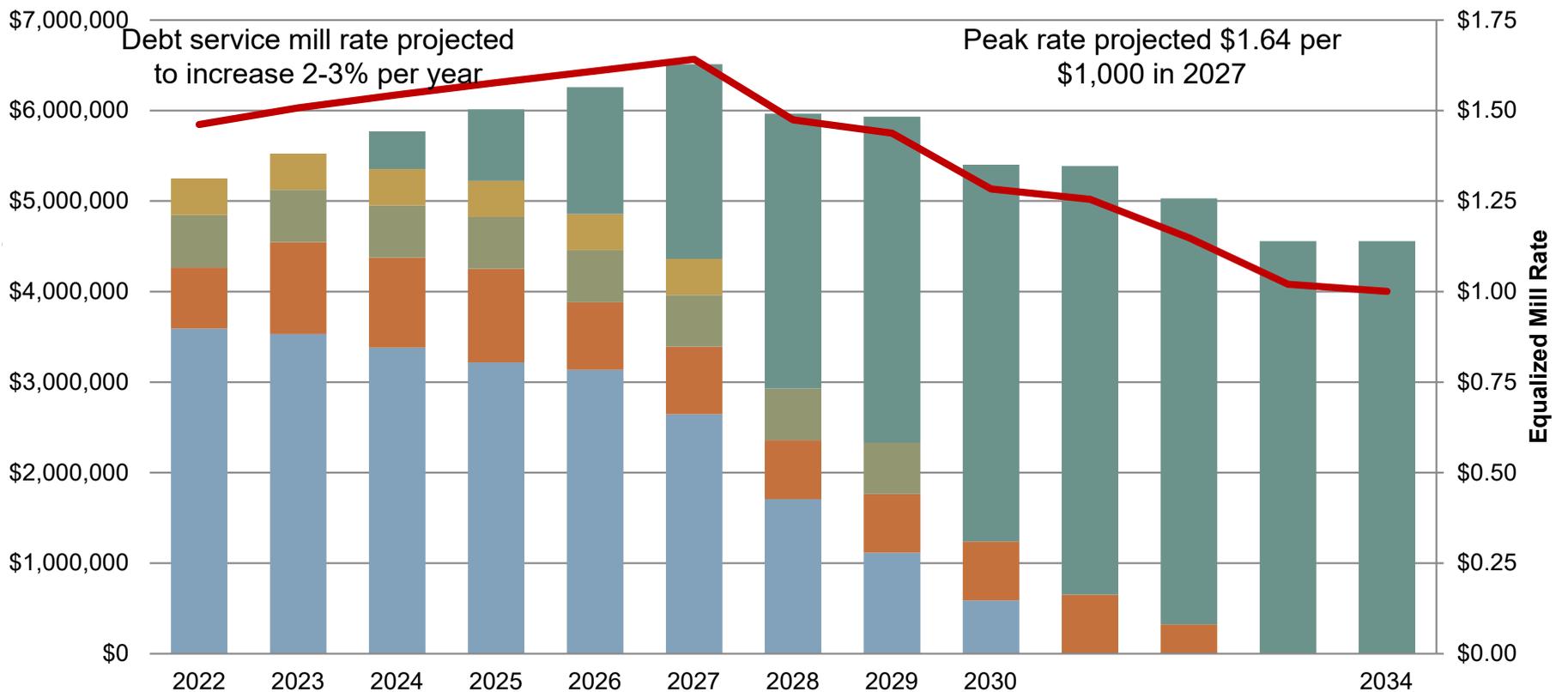
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Capital Borrowing Plan Projection

	2023 Budget	2024 Projected	2025 Projected	2026 Projected	2027 Projected
Street Projects	\$2,270,000	\$2,100,000	\$2,030,000	\$2,000,000	\$2,000,000
Vehicle Replacement	\$500,000	\$525,000	\$550,000	\$575,000	\$600,000
Other Admin/IT/CS Bldg. Insp/Library	\$204,000	\$295,000	\$275,000	\$595,000	\$765,000
Other Police & EMS	\$293,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$150,000
Other Public Works & Water Resources	\$400,000	\$200,000	\$225,000	\$150,000	\$180,000
Other Public Lands & Conservancy	\$333,000	\$680,000	\$720,000	\$480,000	\$305,000
Total Borrowing	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$4,000,000

Projected Debt Service Levy & Equalized Mill Rate: \$4.0 Million Average Annual Capital Borrowing



CITY OF MIDDLETON GENERAL FUND BUDGET FORECAST SUMMARY 2023-2027			BASE SCENARIO 2% Wages & Benefits No Referendum or New Revenue Sources				
	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	2023	2024	Forecast 2025	2026	2027
General Fund Revenues							
Property Taxes	13,365,786	14,042,426	14,299,283	14,618,872	14,945,652	15,279,785	15,621,436
Room Taxes	352,545	475,000	510,625	548,922	590,091	634,348	681,924
State Road Aids	1,282,589	1,175,843	1,199,360	1,223,347	1,247,814	1,272,770	1,298,225
Other Intergovernmental	1,238,977	1,248,147	1,257,665	1,267,449	1,277,508	1,287,851	1,298,485
TID Cost Recovery	1,026,530	725,000	543,750	362,500	181,250	-	-
Interest Income	277,128	200,000	270,000	347,000	381,700	419,870	461,857
Other Revenues & Sources	3,883,871	4,885,029	4,960,317	5,101,273	5,247,677	5,399,751	5,557,730
TOTAL REVENUES	21,427,426	22,751,445	23,041,000	23,469,363	23,871,692	24,294,375	24,919,657
General Fund Expenditures							
Wages	9,750,587	10,101,231	10,312,555	10,517,595	10,726,736	10,940,059	11,157,648
Benefits	3,150,402	3,107,744	3,185,780	3,249,386	3,314,262	3,380,437	3,447,933
Operating	6,631,112	7,368,030	7,138,541	7,231,910	7,258,713	7,425,492	7,460,673
Transfers (Library & YC)	1,457,464	1,480,284	1,509,889	1,540,087	1,570,889	1,602,306	1,634,352
Risk Management	340,000	300,000	365,000	383,250	402,413	422,534	443,661
Contingency & Cap Reserves	-	644,156	747,586	749,562	751,558	753,574	755,610
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	21,329,565	23,001,445	23,259,351	23,671,790	24,024,571	24,524,402	24,899,877
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	97,861	(250,000)	(218,351)	(202,427)	(152,879)	(230,027)	19,780

Budgeted deficit of \$250,000 in 2022. Increases in room tax collections and interest income and timing of TID 3 cost recovery phase-out could help reduced projected deficits 2024-2026.

CITY OF MIDDLETON GENERAL FUND BUDGET FORECAST SUMMARY 2023-2027			BASE SCENARIO 3.2% Wages & Benefits No Referendum or New Revenue Sources				
	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	2023	2024	Forecast 2025	2026	2027
General Fund Revenues							
Property Taxes	13,365,786	14,042,426	14,299,283	14,618,872	14,945,652	15,279,785	15,621,436
Room Taxes	352,545	475,000	510,625	548,922	590,091	634,348	681,924
State Road Aids	1,282,589	1,175,843	1,199,360	1,223,347	1,247,814	1,272,770	1,298,225
Other Intergovernmental	1,238,977	1,248,147	1,258,784	1,269,746	1,281,043	1,292,687	1,304,687
TID Cost Recovery	1,026,530	725,000	543,750	362,500	181,250	-	-
Interest Income	277,128	200,000	270,000	347,000	381,700	419,870	461,857
Other Revenues & Sources	3,883,871	4,885,029	4,960,317	5,101,273	5,247,677	5,399,751	5,557,730
TOTAL REVENUES	21,427,426	22,751,445	23,042,119	23,471,660	23,875,227	24,299,211	24,925,859
General Fund Expenditures							
Wages	9,750,587	10,101,231	10,433,043	10,764,964	11,107,507	11,461,013	11,825,830
Benefits	3,150,402	3,107,744	3,223,006	3,325,964	3,432,216	3,541,869	3,655,033
Operating	6,631,112	7,368,030	7,151,631	7,258,771	7,300,053	7,482,047	7,533,208
Transfers (Library & YC)	1,457,464	1,480,284	1,509,889	1,540,087	1,570,889	1,602,306	1,634,352
Risk Management	340,000	300,000	365,000	383,250	402,413	422,534	443,661
Contingency & Cap Reserves	-	644,156	747,586	749,562	751,558	753,574	755,610
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	21,329,565	23,001,445	23,430,155	24,022,598	24,564,636	25,263,343	25,847,694
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	97,861	(250,000)	(388,036)	(550,938)	(689,409)	(964,132)	(921,835)

Budgeted deficit of \$250,000 in 2022. Personnel cost increases at 3.2% will outpace anticipated increases in room tax collections and interest income and a PVGC payment-in-lieu-of-taxes. Additional revenues or budget reductions would be necessary.



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WORKERMEE

Creating connections

One would think that with all the communications devices at our disposal and the ubiquity of social media, connecting people to anything and anyone at any time should be the easiest thing in the world. And yet.

It was when her teenage daughter tried to find work that Middleton resident Gretchen Erdmann-Hermans (pictured in the screenshot from her website) realized there was a disconnect between supply and demand, between young people willing to do small jobs, and other, often elderly, people needing to have small jobs done that don't necessitate a licensed professional - the workers couldn't find the jobs, and the jobs couldn't find the workers. The challenge seemed even greater living in a comparably small community like Middleton, where transportation could also be an issue, with parents not always available to play taxi, and public transit for all intents and purposes non-existent.

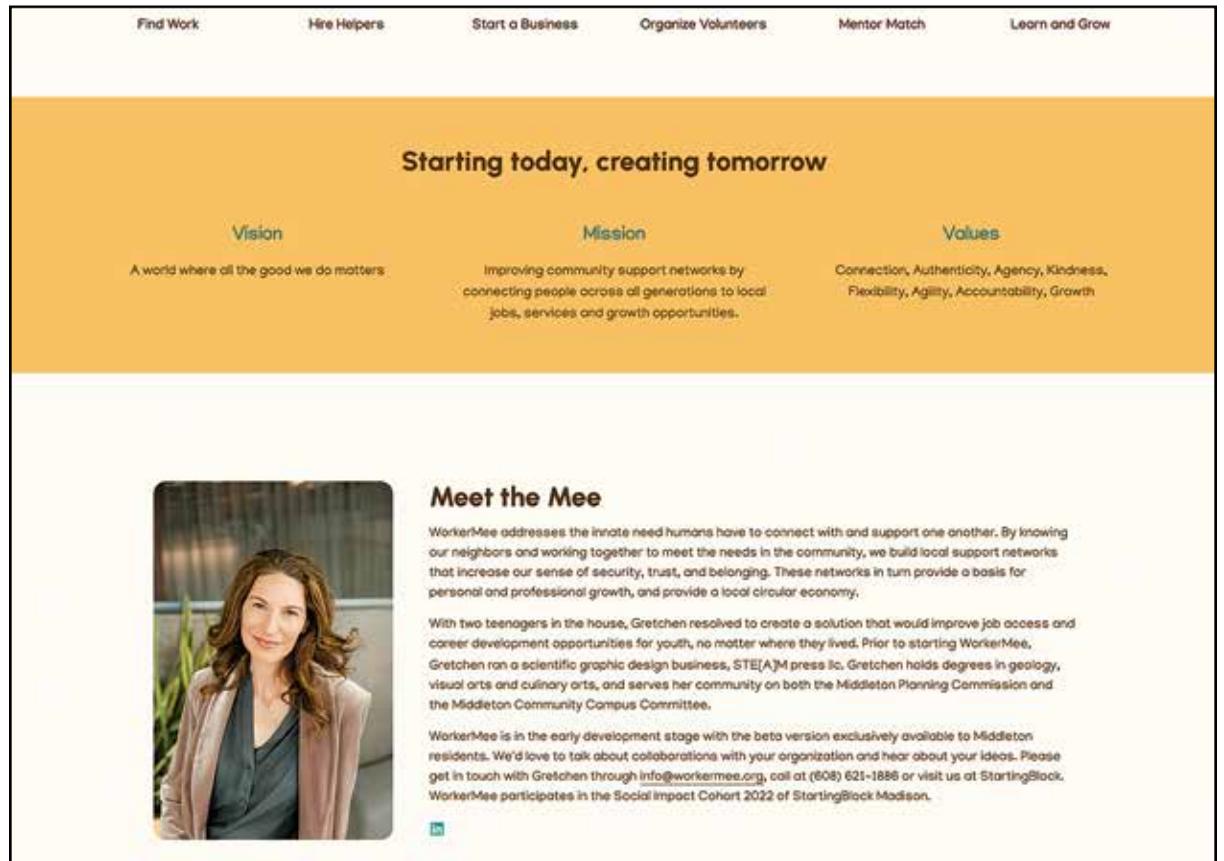
Her solution? To create a website, a community hub, if you will, where local job seekers and job givers could find each other without the noise, haphazardness and safety issues inherent in social media. With that idea, WorkerMee.org was born.

As explained on the website, 'anyone at least thirteen years and older can find jobs to do to help their neighbors and to advertise their services on the classifieds page'. The same way, 'adults and organizations can post jobs and volunteer opportunities for nearby neighbors to find. Hire one person, or build a team.' The opportunities range from manual labor to services. Recent job listings included requests for a large garden shed to be torn down, lawn mowing, guitar lessons, and playing with a dog, while services offered included cooking lessons, yard work, and tutoring elementary and middle school students in core classes.

The site is set up to go beyond finding work and hiring help, and to also include starting a business, organizing volunteers and matching mentors. As of this writing, one listing is by a teenager looking for members to start a jazz band.

Gretchen Erdmann-Hermans elaborates on her motivation: Many households struggle to find help with childcare and tutoring, cooking meals for an elderly parent, or with home projects and lawn services. Economic pressures due to rising inflation and service workers leaving the industry have further disrupted access to affordable help for many. Middleton needed a website built specifically with the peer-to-peer local job market in mind. With a mission of improving community-support networks across all generations, WorkerMee.org connects neighbors to local jobs, services and growth opportunities.

The location-based job-pairing platform prioritizes member privacy, search efficiency, and supportive con-



Screenshot from the website WORKERMEE.ORG

nections. Available workers can view nearby job post while ensuring member privacy by keeping the exact addresses and profile details confidential. Unlike social media, job posts and classifieds for local services remain searchable until a member finds the help they need.

As a parent of two teens, she knew that there were plenty of kids who would love to do work for neighbors if they knew who needed help, if they could get to the jobs on their own, and if the hours fit in their schedules. Her own kids, and many other teens, struggle with finding work because of a split-household schedule, variable activities and a lack of public transportation. Teens need to be able to sort jobs by proximity to the house they would be at during different time periods. Sorting jobs by distance is just one of the features unique to the platform that breaks down barriers to youth employment.

She found that a survey of Middleton High School STEM Club students revealed that 60% would be more likely to start a microbusiness if they could advertise it to their neighbors. This prompted her to implement a classified-ads page to allow small local services a platform for visibility without competing with paid Google ads.

The flexible platform can equip local organizations with a tool for greater reach. As membership grows,

it will be simple for organizations to post volunteer workdays or summer positions where people are already looking for these opportunities. Community service is often a required component for school, club, or religious reasons, but often participants don't know where to find these opportunities. WorkerMee can aggregate all kinds of growth opportunities, with post categories for volunteering, mentoring, trades apprenticeships and professional internships.

Eventually she would like the website to be a place where people can create resumes of things they did growing up in their communities, 'more holistic' descriptions that go beyond traditional resumes focusing on school clubs and internships, and that would be useful when applying to college or for a job.

WorkerMee participates in the Social Impact Cohort of Madison-based business incubator StartingBlock. A team of local female web developers at TenForward Consulting is building the free beta version. The website is well designed, and easy to navigate and use. Gretchen Erdmann-Hermans's challenge? "Get people to find the website."

<https://workermee.org>

Grand (re)opening: Metro Market

The Pick 'n Save grocery store in Middleton Hills is now officially Metro Market. Still owned by Roundy's (which celebrates its 150th anniversary this year), a subsidiary of Kroger, the 45,000-square-foot store puts more emphasis on prepared foods, as well as renovated and upgraded bakery, produce, deli, and meat and seafood departments, and Murray's Cheese Shop's selection of cheeses. The floral department has been revised and includes a new 'party balloon' department. The official ribbon-cutting took place on a rainy Friday, July 15, in the presence of many store employees, local elected officials, Roundy's brass and other dignitaries. To mark the occasion, Roundy's president Michael Marx presented \$2,500 checks to MOM (bottom right) and to the Friends of Pheasant Branch Conservancy (left).



Photos by GEORGE ZENS

Ribbon cutting: Campfire Pediatric Dentistry



Campfire Pediatric Dentistry, July 14
8391 Greenway Boulevard, Suite 100, Middleton WI 53562
608-557-3856
www.campfirepediatricdentistry.com
Hours: Wednesday - Friday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Photo courtesy of MIDDLETON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Ribbon cutting: Madison Dentistry



Madison Dentistry, July 14
6519 University Avenue, Middleton WI 53562
608-824-0824
www.themadisondentist.com

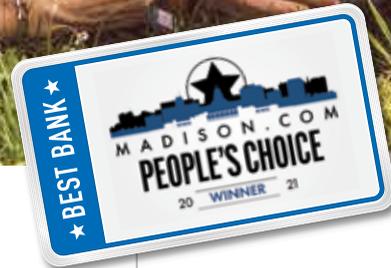
Photo courtesy of MIDDLETON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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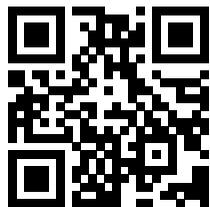
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CAPITAL FLIGHT, MIDDLETON MOREY AIRPORT

Rock the Ramp



Rock the Ramp, an annual fundraiser for Badger Honor Flight organized by Capital Flight, again drew large numbers of people to Middleton's Morey Airport on Friday, July 22, to listen to live music by Nashville artist Jake Maurer, watch an airshow by champion acrobat Michael Goulian, and cap it all off with a spectacular laser show.



Photos by GEORGE ZENS



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LAKEVIEW PARK Solarbration



On a marvelously - and appropriately - sunny day, the city of Middleton's 'Solarbration', held on July 10 at the Lakeview Park shelter, and organized by the city's sustainability committee, attracted many visitors to the numerous stands where they received information about climate change, renewable energy (especially, of course, solar energy), and many other sustainability-related topics.



Photos by GEORGE ZENS

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LAKEVIEW PARK National Night Out



Many people attended National Night Out at Lakeview Park on Wednesday, August 3, with the participation of area law enforcement agencies, the Middleton fire, EMS and public works departments, as well as the military, Dane county park rangers, and various private organizations.



Photos by GEORGE ZENS

HISTORICAL 1948 PHOTOGRAPH

Middleton Times Tribune



Historical 1948 photo by LEIF ERSLAND
Original negative in the possession of the MIDDLETON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Digital photo file created by JEFF MARTIN/JMAR FOTO-WERKS

Located at 1909 Parmenter Street, as it then was, the house was built around 1910 by Tom Everill, founder of the Middleton Times Tribune (Herald). The site is now BMO Harris bank.

HISTORICAL 1948 PHOTOGRAPH

William Hoffman Co.



Historical 1948 photo by LEIF ERSLAND
Original negative in the possession of the MIDDLETON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Digital photo file created by JEFF MARTIN/JMAR FOTO-WERKS

After his mill burned down twice on Elmwood Avenue (in 1900 and in 1936), Hoffmann moved his office to Hubbard Avenue. The site is now a parking lot next to the senior center.

HISTORICAL 1948 PHOTOGRAPH

Scott's Food Shop



Historical 1948 photo by LEIF ERSLAND
Original negative in the possession of the MIDDLETON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Digital photo file created by JEFF MARTIN/JMAR FOTO-WERKS

Located at 1918 Parmenter Street, Scott's Food Shop began as Dick's Food Store in 1931 before it became Glenn's in 1946 and then Scott's. It was located next to Schulze's (next page).

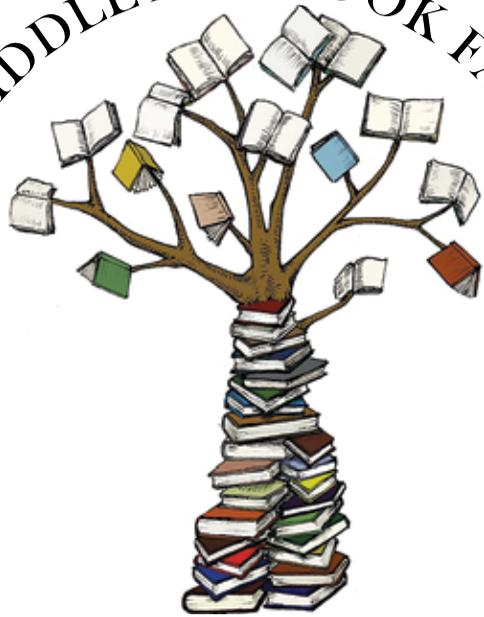
HISTORICAL 1948 PHOTOGRAPH
Schulze's Grocery



Historical 1948 photo by LEIF ERSLAND
Original negative in the possession of the MIDDLETON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Digital photo file created by JEFF MARTIN/IMAR FOTO-WERKS

Schulze's was the first grocery store in Middleton to offer (partial) self-service. It was located next to Scott's (see previous page), and is the present location of the Roman Candle.

MIDDLETON BOOK FAIR



Second annual Book Fair

Saturday, August 13, 2022

11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Terrace Avenue Pavilion (Capital Brewery)
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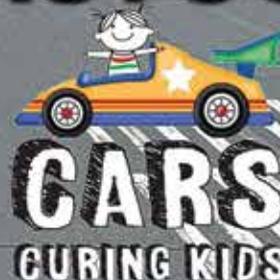
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