



## **GOSHEN COMMON COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 Regular Meeting**

*Convened in the Council Chambers, Police & Court Building, 111 East Jefferson Street, Goshen, Indiana*

Mayor Gina Leichty called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Assisted by the Mayor, Sky Stanton led the Pledge of Allegiance. Sky is a student at Model Elementary School.

Mayor Leichty asked Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre to conduct the roll call, and the following was the result.

**Present:** Linda Gerber (At-Large) Phil Lederach (District 5) Doug Nisley (District 2)  
Megan Peel (District 4) Donald Riegsecker (District 1) Matt Schrock (District 3)  
Council President Brett Weddell (At-Large)

**Absent:** Youth Adviser Abril Reyes (Non-voting)

#### Approval of Minutes:

Mayor Leichty asked the Council's wishes regarding the minutes of the June 23, July 28 and Aug. 25 Regular Meetings. Councilor Nisley made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Councilor Peel seconded the motion. **The motion passed 7-0 on a voice vote.**

#### Approval of Meeting Agenda:

Mayor Leichty presented the agenda as submitted by the Clerk-Treasurer. Councilor Peel moved to approve the agenda as submitted. Councilor Nisley seconded the motion. **The motion passed 7-0 on a voice vote.**

#### Privilege of the Floor:

At 6:06 p.m., Mayor Leichty invited public comments regarding matters not on the agenda.

Gregg Lanzen of Goshen, the lead chaplain of the Goshen Fire and Police Departments and the founder and lead chaplain of the First In Chaplain Crisis Response Team, made a brief presentation about the chaplains and the budget appropriated to them. He distributed information, which included a budget report, brochures about the program, coping with the death of a loved one and what to do after a fire (EXHIBIT #1).

Lanzen, who became the chaplain in 2006, said the team now includes four other members who are all credentialed chaplains through the International Conference of Police Chaplains, the Federation of Fire Chaplains, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, the Federal Emergency Management Association and the Department of Homeland Security.

Lanzen said, "We do victim assistance at fires and at death calls. When Goshen fire or police have a death call, they call us to come in and help the families. If there's a working fire in Goshen, we come in and help the victims, find them temporary housing, food, clothing, things of that nature. If it's a death call, we just help them through that process for the first 24 hours or so. Our service is short-term, 24 hours to 48 hours."

Lanzen continued, "We also do rehabilitation for the Fire Department and the Police Department. If they're on a long-term scene, fire, SWAT call-out, whatever, we provide things that they need for that – drinks, food."

Lanzen said, "We also work with stress management for them. We do counseling. We do sharing, we do teaching, we just help out; peer support, we help out with their stress problems."



"We do ride-alongs, station visits and we help their spouses. This year, we've done three events for spouses of police officers and firefighters to help them with the various stresses that come with being a spouse of a firefighter or a police officer.

"We also serve and support retirees. We've assisted with three funerals, firefighter funerals this year, two of them retirees. One was a line-of-duty-death for another community, but they asked us to help because they didn't have chaplains. And then we represent the Fire and Police Departments at some community functions.

"So far this year, we've been called out over 50 times; 16 of those were actually working fires, 13 of them were death calls, three funerals. We've done five memorial services, and we've done three family support things."

Lanzen said that in the past, the Fire and Police Departments helped cover the program's expenses using their training funds. However, he said about a year, Mayor Leichty supported the program through a different area of the City budget. So, Lanzen said he wanted to provide the Council with an overview of the program.

Mayor Leichty thanked Lanzen for his work.

Patt Huff of Goshen expressed concern about speeding on Wilden Avenue, which she said occurs between 9 and 11 p.m., usually on Fridays or Saturdays. She said she worries that one of these days someone will be killed. Mayor Leichty recommended that Huff discuss the issue with City Police Patrol Division Chief Ryan Adams.

Norm Kauffmann of Goshen asked Mayor Leichty and Council President Weddell to convene a town hall meeting with State Rep. Joanna King and State Sen. Blake Doriot to discuss ways to lessen the impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1, a new law passed earlier this year that will reduce property taxes and cut local government revenue. Kauffmann said, "Tonight, we will hear how SEA 1 negatively impacts City budgets, cuts in services, loss of jobs, and increased fees on both. At one of the last City Council meetings, Council President Weddell indicated that we need to make sure that all local legislators understand the difficulty SEA 1 is causing libraries, schools, counties, and the City of Goshen. He went on to suggest that prior to the January 26th legislative session, we should invite Joanna King, Blake Doriot, and others to attend a meeting where we could share our concerns and hear the response. I'm here to urge that this be done."

Kauffmann said he has known and worked with Rep. King for many years and collaborated with her in the completion of the Pumpkinvine Trail into Shipshewana. He added, "We came together with others and overcame challenges that seemed insurmountable. Key to all this was listening, hearing each other out, and then deciding how, as a team, we could work together to solve the challenges that faced us."

Kauffmann continued, "Honest dialogue does not mean just making sure my point of view is the only one that counts. We must be willing to change our minds when data indicates otherwise. I would urge that we invite her to come to present her perspective, and that if she has data that we have not heard before, we acknowledge it and see what it might mean to change our plans. We ask that she come with the same commitment."

Kauffmann added, "After a serious exchange of views, we urge her to work with members of the City to form a team that helps alter SEA 1 that will benefit all parties impacted. If she and Blake, who I do not know, refuse our invitation. I urge you to still hold a town hall meeting for the public so we can better understand the actual impact and how it might take the next steps to change make changes downstate."

Kauffman concluded, "I am not naive. Changing opinions is hard, but I would like Joanna and all of us to listen to each other and perhaps rediscover that we hold common core values and a common love for our community.

Mayor Leichty thanked Kauffmann for his comments.



Geoffrey Landis who lives one mile south of the City limits on State Road 15, said he is chairing a community task force that is planning the town hall meeting with Sen. Doriot and Rep. King that Norm Kauffman discussed. Landis said, "The purpose of this group is to have our elected officials explain to us all why they voted for Senate Bill 1 and how they can help get the bill amended so it's not detrimental to the City of Goshen. This is not a partisan problem. We want to work together with the Mayor and the City Council to get a good resolution for all of us." Mayor Leichty thanked Landis for his comments.

There were no further public comments, so the Mayor closed Privilege of the Floor at 6:18 p.m.

**1) Public Hearing for Ordinance 5233, An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates (First Reading for the proposed 2026 Goshen Public Library budget)**

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction on First Reading of Ordinance 5233, *An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates* (the proposed 2026 Goshen Public Library budget). Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5233 by title only, which was done.

**Weddell/Nisley made a motion to approve Ordinance 5233 on First Reading.**

**BACKGROUND:**

In a memorandum to the Common Council dated Sept. 22, 2025, Ann-Margaret Rice, the Director of the Goshen Public Library, wrote that the Goshen common Council is the fiscal body for the Goshen Public Library under certain conditions, as mandated by the State of Indiana.

Rice wrote that Indiana Code 6-1.1-17-20.3 identifies the conditions that trigger a binding budget review process for public library budget approval as summarized below:

(1) The governing body of the library is not comprised of a majority of officials who are elected to serve on the governing body (the governing body of a public library is comprised of appointees made by elected officials); and  
(2) has a percentage increase in the proposed budget for the taxing unit for the ensuing calendar year that is more than the result of:

(A) the maximum levy growth quotient determined under IC 6-1.1-18.5-2 for the ensuing calendar year, rounded to the nearest thousandth (0.001) minus

(B) one (1).

Rice wrote that for the 2026 budget year, Goshen Public Library's proposed budget exceeds the maximum levy plus 1 as a result of the bonds the library issued in 2024 (that were approved by the Common Council in 2024). As the identified fiscal body for the Goshen Public Library, the Common Council is tasked with advertising, reviewing, opening and closing one public hearing, and approving the library's budget for 2026.

Following protocol, with the assistance of Baker Tilly, and for the convenience of the Council, Rice wrote that the Library has prepared and submitted the 2026 budget on the Indiana Gateway website. She wrote that the Council's role was to complete the submission, review, and approval of the budget.

Upon completion of the process, the Library will resume responsibility for its budget and financial affairs.

**Before the Council was the Goshen Public Library's proposed 2026 budget as set forth in Ordinance 5233.**



If Ordinance 5233 was approved by the Common Council, it would be ordained/resolved "that the expenses of Goshen Public Library for the year ending Dec. 31, 2026, the sums herein specified are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the several funds herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same. Such sums herein appropriated shall be held to include all expenditures authorized to be made during the year, unless otherwise expressly stipulated and provided for by law. In addition, for the purposes of raising revenue to meet the necessary expenses of GOSHEN PUBLIC, the property tax levies and property tax rates as herein specified are included herein. Budget Form 4-B for all funds must be completed and submitted in the manner prescribed by the Department of Local Government Finance."

**Ordinance 5233 would be in full force and effect after its passage and approval by the Common Council in the following amounts:**

Fund Code	Fund Name	Adopted budget	Adopted Tax Levy	AdoptedTaxRate
0061	RAINY DAY FUND	\$326,695	\$0	0.0000
0101	GENERAL	\$3,316,319	\$2,295,024	0.1351
0180	DEBT SERVICE	\$373,275	\$406,120	0.000
2011	LIBRARY IMPROVE- IMPROVEMENT RESERVE	\$428,002	\$0	0.0000
TOTALS		\$5,026,516	\$3,252,524	0.1915

**SEPT. 22, 2025 DISCUSSION AND FIRST READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5233:**

**At 6:19 p.m., Mayor Leichty opened a public hearing on Ordinance 5233, *An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates* (First Reading for the proposed 2026 Goshen Public Library budget).**

**No audience member asked to address the Council, so Mayor Leichty closed the public hearing at 6:19 p.m. On behalf of the Goshen Public Library, Lisa Huntington, a senior manager with Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, addressed the Council and provided the background and context for Ordinance 5233.**

**Huntington said, "We are here this evening because, pursuant to Indiana Code, public libraries with appointed boards may adopt their own budgets, provided that the advertised budget does not exceed the annual growth quotient, which for budget year 2026 is capped at 4 percent.**

**"The library's proposed 2026 budget exceeds this growth quotient due to an increase in debt service obligations related to the 2024 general obligation bonds. As a result, the library is subject to binding review and budget adoption by the appropriate fiscal body. As a designated fiscal body for the library, we respectfully request your review and approval of the 2026 budget.**

**Huntington concluded, "Please note that your approval does not in any way obligate the City to pay any of the debt of the library. You are simply approving the budget and the appropriation. We appreciate your consideration."**

**Council President Weddell asked how far above 4% the library's budget was. Huntington said she didn't know the exact percentage, but the debt service increased a little over \$700,000.**

**Mayor Leichty asked if Councilors were ready to vote. Council President Weddell indicated they were.**

**At 6:21 p.m., Mayor Leichty again invited comments from the audience. There were none.**

**On a voice vote, Councilors unanimously passed Ordinance 5233, *An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates*, on First Reading by a 7-0 margin, with all Councilors present voting yes at 6:22 p.m.**





***The Second Reading of Ordinance 5233 is scheduled for Oct. 27, 2025.***

**2) Public Hearing for Ordinance 5234, An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates (First Reading for the proposed 2026 City of Goshen budget)**

Mayor Leichty called for the introduction on First Reading of Ordinance 5234, *An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates* (the proposed 2026 City of Goshen budget). Council President Weddell asked the Clerk-Treasurer to read Ordinance 5234 by title only, which was done.

**Weddell/Lederach made a motion to approve Ordinance 5234 on First Reading.**

**BACKGROUND:**

Before the Council was the City of Goshen's proposed budget for 2026 as set forth in Ordinance 5234.

If Ordinance 5234 was approved by the Common Council, it would be ordained/resolved "that the expenses of Goshen Civil City for the year ending Dec. 31, 2026, the sums herein specified are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the several funds herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same. Such sums herein appropriated shall be held to include all expenditures authorized to be made during the year, unless otherwise expressly stipulated and provided for by law. In addition, for the purposes of raising revenue to meet the necessary expenses of GOSHEN CIVIL CITY, the property tax levies and property tax rates as herein specified are included herein. Budget Form 4-B for all funds must be completed and submitted in the manner prescribed by the Department of Local Government Finance."

Ordinance 5234 would be in full force and effect after its passage and approval by the Common Council in the following amounts:

Fund Code	Fund Name	Adopted budget	Adopted Tax Levy	AdoptedTaxRate
0061	RAINY DAY	\$0	\$0	0.0000
0101	GENERAL	\$31,986,350	\$23,545,800	1.6539
0180	DEBT SERVICE	\$371,350	\$555,800	0.0390
0201	BOND PROCEEDS	\$2,977,606	\$0	0.0000
0341	FIRE PENSION	\$567,200	\$0	0.0000
0342	POLICE PENSION	\$422,400	\$0	0.0000
0706	LOCAL ROAD/STREET	\$700,000	\$0	0.0000
0708	MOTOR VEH HWAY	\$4,834,420	\$3,090,500	0.2171
1191	CUM FIRE SPECIAL	\$210,000	\$732,100	0.0514
1301	PARK & RECREATION	\$2,971,988	\$4,273,900	0.0136
2102	AVIATION/AIRPORT	\$572,000	\$193,700	0.0136
2379	CUM CAP IMP (CIG TAX)	\$85,000	\$0	0.0000
2391	CUM CAP DEV	\$1,426,220	\$1,058,300	0.0743
2411	ECONDEV INC.TAX CED	\$3,628,000	\$0	0.0000
6290	CUM SEWER	\$1,700,000	\$732,100	0.0514
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>\$52,452,971</b>	<b>\$34,182,200</b>	<b>2.4009</b>



**Home-Ruled Funds (not reviewed by State Department of Local Government Finance):**

<b>Fund Code</b>	<b>Fund Name</b>	<b>Adopted Budget</b>
9500	PROBATION DEPARTMENT	\$123,130
9501	ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT	\$89,350
9502	LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTINUING EDUCATION (LECE 1)	\$0
9503	COURT FEES	\$56,000
9504	ARP Fiscal Recovery Fund	\$2,750,648
9505	RESIDENTIAL LEASE FEES	\$73,206
9506	LAW ENFORCEMENT CONTINUING EDUCATION (LECE 2)	\$36,000
9507	TIF BOND AND INTEREST	\$946,440
9508	Public Safety LOIT	\$3,549,790
9509	Township Fire Support	\$607,570
9510	REDEVELOPMENT NON-REVERTING	\$311,630
9511	STORM WATER MANAGEMENT	\$1,053,176
9512	TIF Lippert/Dierdorff	\$250,000
9513	SOUTHEAST GOSHEN TIF	\$7,087,000
9514	CEMETERY CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT	\$0
9517	Unsafe Buildings	\$0
9518	Opioid Settlement Restricted	\$71,832
9519	Redhawk Fire/EMS Training Academy	\$25,000
9520	2015 GO BOND PROCEEDS	\$849,472
9521	CONS RR/US 33 TIF	\$1,724,000
9522	Municipal Wheel Tax	\$750,000
9523	Aviation Federal Grant	\$4,042,500
9525	U.S. Forestry Grant	\$701,675
9526	Donation	\$30,000
9526	East College TIF	\$900,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$26,028,509</b>

After it is approved by the Common Council, the City's Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates must be signed by Councilors and submitted to the Indiana Department of Local Government Finance for review.

Mayor Leichty provided a "2026 Budget Overview – Short-Term Adjustments and Long-Term Preparedness" in a Sept. 16, 2025, six-page memorandum to the Council and City Department Leaders. She wrote as follows:

**Thank You.** I am grateful to the City Council, department heads, and colleagues across the City for their steady commitment throughout this budget cycle. Your work and perspectives have been essential as we take on the challenges of 2025 and plan responsibly for the years ahead.

**Long and Short Term Approach**

As we enter our first budget hearing on September 22, I want to provide context for the 2026 budget process. We are approaching this year's budget with both a short-term plan and a long-term plan:



- In the short term, we are making targeted adjustments to alleviate current General Fund imbalances while protecting core services, including clean water, wastewater disposal, emergency medical response, public safety, infrastructure, and Goshen's quality of place.

- In the long term, we are preparing for structural changes in state policy, particularly those introduced by SEA-1, which could significantly impact our 2028 budget. This two-track strategy ensures Goshen remains financially stable today while positioning us to adapt responsibly if the legislature does not act.

The General Fund has faced growing pressure for years due to Indiana's property tax cap system, which permanently limits the amount of revenue cities can collect, even as costs rise.

### Bond and SEA-1 Impact for 2026

We've seen two impacts on our General Fund revenue for 2026: SEA1 and an additional impact from the Library Bond. Combined, those two changes have reduced overall revenue for the city by approximately \$1.3 million.

### Cash Reserves

In 2025, we were able to fund our budget with temporary boosts and one-time reserves, including state levy relief, stronger investment returns, and COVID-era cash balances that supported infrastructure projects. Those resources are no longer available in 2026, leaving the City to manage permanent obligations with fewer tools.

To highlight the difference between last year's planning environment and this year's, the table below summarizes the key factors that funded the 2025 budget versus those that now define 2026.

#### General Fund Pressures: 2025 vs. 2026

##### 2025 Budget Planning

Temporary relief available: Extra state levy funding boosted revenues in 2023, and it carried into 2025.

Investment returns stronger: As the economy strengthened in 2022–24, the City's conservative investments generated modest gains that helped fund the 2025 budget.

COVID-era reserves: Deferred infrastructure funds allowed unprecedented one-time paving and roadwork in 2025.

Wages adjusted: Raises above cost-of-living granted for public safety in 2024–25 to narrow the pay gap with regional peers.

Inflation already high: Construction costs climbing more than 30% annually, shrinking purchasing power.

##### 2026 Budget Planning

No levy relief: 2024 did not qualify, so no additional state funding in 2026.

Market volatility: With continued instability in financial markets, conservative City investments are no longer producing the returns seen in prior years, leaving little support for the 2026 budget.

Reserves spent: One-time funds have been committed.

Pay gap remains: Recruitment and retention still strained; competitive wages continue to pressure the General Fund.

Inflation persists: Rising costs continue across services, equipment, and materials.



Federal and state funding intact: Public safety saw regular grant support.

Grant volatility and cuts at both state and federal level shift more cost burden to local revenues.

No new major bond obligations.

New obligations: The Library bond reduces revenues by about \$500,000 annually; state law changes (SEA-1) reduce revenues by another \$800,000.

LOIT revenues stable: Local Option Income Tax supported public safety, economic development, and infrastructure.

LOIT eliminated in 2028: SEA-1 will phase out existing LOIT within two years, replacing it with a weaker option requiring annual adoption

### **Short-Term Adjustments**

To adapt to these pressures, the City has taken deliberate steps to manage costs while protecting the services and values that make Goshen unique. This has required:

- Reducing staffing costs through attrition, rather than widespread layoffs, to preserve service levels where possible.
- Adjusting or reducing programming in lower-priority areas to protect core services.
- Pausing capital projects to preserve cash balances for essential operations.
- Consolidating departments to reduce duplication and improve efficiency.
- Conducting facility and utility audits to identify ways to lower ongoing operating costs.
- Leveraging technology to streamline operations and improve customer service.
- Identifying new revenue opportunities through user fees, grants, and sponsorships in 2024 and 2025, with implementation beginning in 2026.

This comprehensive approach is designed to strike a balance between fiscal responsibility and Goshen's long-standing commitment to quality of place.

### **Staffing Adjustments**

To manage costs responsibly, the City has reduced personnel expenses primarily through attrition and by holding positions vacant.

#### **Eliminated through Attrition**

- Community Relations Manager
- Communications Manager
- Clerk in the City Court
- Paralegal

#### **Unfilled Positions from the 2025 Budget**

- Maintenance (1.5 FTE)
- Finance Manager and Purchasing Agent
- Payroll Clerk
- Three additional Firefighters intended for full staffing and training of the South Fire Station





### **Support for Our Team in Challenging Times**

Even as we make adjustments to relieve General Fund pressures, this budget continues to prioritize support for our team. Our colleagues are the City's greatest asset, and investing in them is essential to maintaining high-quality services.

- The 2026 budget assumes a 3% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), with an additional .5% budgeted for merit-based increases as warranted. This approach keeps Goshen closer in line with regional peers and strengthens our ability to attract and retain qualified employees, especially in competitive fields like public safety.
  - We will also continue to provide a robust healthcare program, including strong mental health support, ensuring that our workforce remains healthy and resilient.
  - The City will also continue staff appreciation events such as the annual picnic, holiday open house, and birthday recognitions to express gratitude for the contributions of colleagues, board members, and council members alike.
- These commitments are a vital part of balancing fiscal responsibility with our obligation to maintain a high-performing, dedicated team that serves the community well.

### **Other Organizational Shifts**

In addition to cost-saving measures, the City is making targeted organizational adjustments to better align funding with operations and long-term priorities. These include:

- **Engineering to Technology:** Funding for GIS, interns, and asset management is moving from the Engineering Department to Technology, under the supervision of the Information and Technology Director.
- **Clerk-Treasurer's Office to Technology:** One part-time administrative assistant is shifting from the Clerk-Treasurer's Office to the Technology Department, where they will work under the Information and Technology Director.
- **Parks to Buildings and Grounds:** Parks Maintenance is transferring to the Buildings and Grounds Department, with corresponding funding moved to reflect the new structure.
- **Parks Revenue to General Fund:** Because the Parks Department currently holds an unusually large cash balance, the City will shift 100% of the property tax levy from the Parks Fund to the General Fund for 2026. Beginning in 2027, the Parks levy will resume at a reduced rate, aligned with the department's ongoing operational needs. At the same time, Parks Maintenance expenses will be carried within the General Fund.
- **Infrastructure Spending:** Overall spending on infrastructure will decline compared to 2025, as major planned projects (Shanklin Pool reconstruction, Annex ADA remodel, South Fire Station, Police Evidence Storage Facility) were budgeted in the prior year but are now paused indefinitely due to financial uncertainty at the federal and state levels.
- **Environmental Services:** Costs for brush, recycling, and trash services are now shared between the Board of Works and the Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT) fund to balance responsibilities and ensure sustainable management.

### **Paving and Infrastructure Investments**

Council has requested evidence that paving expenditures in 2026 will exceed those in 2025, particularly in light of the recently adopted wheel tax. It is important to clarify that this is not possible.

In 2025, paving expenditures reached anomalously high levels because they were funded with accumulated cash reserves from prior years when projects were delayed during COVID due to staffing shortages and supply chain challenges. Those reserves allowed for a one-time surge in road and paving work.



In 2026, paving expenditures will return to levels comparable to 2022 or 2023, which reflect the City's sustainable annual funding capacity. The wheel tax will provide a modest increase over those historical levels, but the City cannot replicate the 2025 spending spike because the accumulated reserves have been spent.

This distinction is critical: the 2025 spike was an anomaly, not a new baseline. Going forward, paving will be funded at consistent, sustainable levels that balance available revenues with long-term infrastructure needs.

### **Community Partnerships and Economic Development Investments**

While fiscal pressures require significant restraint, the City must remain committed to preserving key community partnerships and economic development incentives. These investments are critical to Goshen's vitality and long-term growth.

In 2025, I introduced a new review process to enhance transparency and accountability over our Community Partnership and Economic Development Partnership processes. After the Council appropriated funding, I invited prior applicants to reapply. Each applicant presented their case to the Community Relations Commission, which deliberated and made recommendations to the Mayor on how to allocate the approved funding block. Councilor Lederach served as the Council liaison to this initiative.

I intend to continue this practice in 2026. The overall level of spending will remain essentially flat compared to the previous year, with only modest adjustments, including a reduction of approximately \$10,000 in arts funding.

These partnerships remain a cornerstone of Goshen's quality of place, supporting cultural programming, events, and nonprofit services that make our community a destination for residents, businesses, and visitors alike.

### **Looking Ahead Summary**

#### ***Short-Term Adjustments and Long-Term Preparedness***

Our approach is twofold:

**Short term (2026)**, we are making careful adjustments to relieve current General Fund imbalances while keeping a close eye on the looming state policy changes that could impact our 2028 budget.

**Long term (2027 and beyond)**, we will be watching the 2026 state legislative session closely, and advocating loudly, for meaningful reform to correct the imbalances created by SEA-1.

**If the legislature does not make significant changes**, Goshen will need to adopt more drastic measures to realign operations, starting with the 2027 budget. We have already begun that planning with department heads this year and have outlined a plan of action for staffing and operational reductions, should they become necessary.

We have a little time, about eight months, before we will know whether reform is forthcoming. That time allows us to prepare responsibly. Our goal is to avoid disruptive cuts that would disrupt resident services or hike fees until we are certain they are unavoidable.

State legislators have pledged to revisit these issues in the 2026 session but have been noncommittal about the scope or specifics. Until clarity emerges, we remain prepared to adapt.

### **Key Takeaway**

The 2025 budget was funded with unusual, short-term resources, state levy relief, stronger investment returns, and leftover COVID-era reserves. By contrast, the 2026 budget faces lasting pressures: the loss of temporary revenues, ongoing inflation, continued workforce challenges, and new permanent obligations from the Library bond and SEA-1 changes.



Our short-term adjustments keep Goshen financially stable today, while our long-term planning ensures that we are prepared for the structural challenges ahead.

Thank you again for your thoughtful consideration to this process.

Respectfully,

Mayor Gina Leichty

The Common Council's meeting packet for Sept. 22, 2025 contained: Draft Ordinance 5234, *An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates*; the City's 2026 Proposed Budget, which included summaries of proposed spending for all City departments along with 2023 and 2024 actual expenditures, and 2025 and 2026 budget figures; Mayor Leichty's six-page "2026 Budget Overview – Short-Term Adjustments and Long-Term Preparedness," a Sept. 16, 2025 memorandum to the Common Council and City Department Leaders; and a PowerPoint about the proposed budget to be presented Monday night by Amber Nielsen, a Senior Manager for Baker Tilly Municipal Advisers.

#### SEPT. 22, 2025 COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND FIRST READING APPROVAL OF ORDINANCE 5234:

At 6:23 p.m., Mayor Leichty opened a public hearing, for general comments or questions, about Ordinance 5234, *An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates* (the City's proposed budget for 2026).

No one asked to speak, so Mayor Leichty closed the initial public hearing on the budget.

Mayor Leichty then invited a presentation from Amber Nielsen, a Manager at Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, the City of Goshen's financial advisors. Using a 21-page PowerPoint presentation, titled "2026 Budget Overview, Sept. 22, 2025," Nielsen provided a detailed overview of the 2026 budget.

Nielsen said she would be discussing the City's "Big Four+ Operating Funds (General, Motor Vehicle Highway, Motor Vehicle Highway Restricted, Parks and Public Safety Local Option Income Tax), historical financial information, the 2025 proposed budget, and future considerations, including operational accountability.

Using her PowerPoint presentation, Nielsen made the following points:

- The Big Four+ make up about 92% of the City's payroll and benefits, 84% of supplies purchased for the City 55% of services and charges, and 18% of the City's capital budget. Other locally managed funds are primarily related to: Pensioners (Police and Fire), Economic development, Capital improvements, and Debt service.
- The proposed budget for 2026 is just over \$40 million.
- In 2015 and 2016, the City's revenues were slightly ahead of expenditures and just under \$23 million and cash balances were just above \$5 million. However, revenues and cash balances started to grow faster and accelerated in 2020 and 2021, 2022 and 2023. The same pattern was evident when it came to all budgeted funds.
- Cash balances grew in 2023 and 2024 due to increases in interest income and local income taxes. Those made for increases in cash balances because revenues exceeded expenditures.
- The State requires the City to maintain a minimum 15% cash reserve, which should pay for two months of expenses if all revenue stopped immediately. Baker Tilley recommends a 50% cash reserve, which would pay for six months of expenses and which the City has maintained going back to 2014.
- The City's 15% cash reserves and 50% cash reserves for the Big Four+ funds and all funds also have grown similarly, especially during the past few years.



Continuing her presentation, Nielsen pointed out that:

- A City's Certified Net Assessed Value (of property) is an important indicator of a City's well-being and growth. Healthy growth also keeps a city's property tax rates down and it helps keep the circuit breaker down.
- The City's historical Certified Net Assessed Value (NAV) dipped between 2012 and 2016, but it has steadily grown since then, pushing down the City's property tax rates, which is good for taxpayers and stabilizes circuit breaker credits.

(By way of background, according to the State of Indiana, an Indiana taxpayer's property tax bill is capped at a set percentage of a property's assessed value. The difference between the gross tax bill and the net tax bill is commonly referred to as a "circuit breaker credit." Circuit breaker credits are summed together at a taxing district level and proportionally allocated to taxing units. Circuit breaker credits serve as a reduction in revenues relative to a taxing unit's levy.)

- The City's tax levy increases yearly based on increased property taxes. So, for 2014, the levy total was \$15,412,321 compared with \$24,896,883 in 2025. Although there have been variations, the City's assessed property values also have increased, from \$1,703,366,032 in 2024 to \$1,779,620,050 in 2025.
- An analysis of historical levies, circuit breakers, assessed values and tax rates for the City of Goshen, shows that in 2025, the City had \$4.2 million in circuit breaker credits. That means that if the circuit breaker tax credit law didn't exist, the City would have received \$4.2 million in tax revenue as well as additional revenue for other years dating back to 2010 – total lost revenue of \$52.6 million.
- It's not yet known what the tax levy amount will be known for 2026.
- Between 2021 and 2021, the City's circuit breaker credits were about \$2.6 million, but it has continuing rising since 2024.

In preparing the 2026 budget, Nielsen said the City:

- Developed a proposed budget to match as closely as possible available revenues with the costs of providing services.
- With 2026 being the first year of Senate Enrolled Act 1 impacts, the City worked diligently to reduce costs, reallocate resources, prioritize capital needs, and consider additional revenue sources.
- These practices will need to continue, if not expand, past budget year 2026 to offset the SEA-1 impacts expected through 2031, with major impacts starting in 2028.
- The property tax levy growth rate for 2026 is 4.0%, which has been capped by Senate Enrolled Act 1 and without it would have been 5.6%.
- For Goshen, the 2026 gross levy between all property tax funds is estimated at \$25.8 million, but after the estimated circuit breaker and SEA-1 impacts, the net tax revenue is estimated at \$20.6 million.
- The 2026 Net Assessed Value has not yet been Certified.
- Because of action by the Indiana Legislative Assembly, Goshen and communities throughout Indiana are losing revenue they would otherwise get because of increases in property tax values.
- City revenue is expected to decline about \$500,000 from the total in 2024, but that will be offset by local income tax growth.
- Still there will be a decrease in the overall fund balances.
- The General Fund budget will be balanced due to decreases in expenditures, cost shifts, moving costs to other funds and operational efficiencies.





- City staff has worked hard to maintain balanced budgets, but assuming full budgets are spent, the City's cash balances will decline.
- The City will need conservative budgeting to maintain adequate cash balances.
- Depending on changes made to lessen the impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1, the City will need adapt to a "new normal" of budgeting every year with efforts to increase revenue and carefully manage expenses.

Nielsen invited questions from Councilors.

Council President Weddell confirmed with Nielsen that the City's tax rate is 1.399% but the budget the City submitted to the State calculated the City's tax rate at 2.4%. He asked Nielsen to explain the discrepancy. She said the levies municipalities list for the State are inflated tax rates – solely for purposes of budget planning – but will be adjusted downward and lowered by the State.

Council President Weddell and Mayor Leichty thanked Nielsen for the presentation. The Mayor also thanked Nielsen for her help putting together the budget over the past few months.

Starting at 6:51 p.m. and using an eight-page PowerPoint presentation (EXHIBIT #2), Mayor Leichty delivered a report on the expected impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1 (the new property tax reduction law) and the possible consequences on the City of Goshen's finances. The Mayor showed and described the following slides:

2026-2028

### SEA-1 ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT

Year	2026	2027	2028
SB1 Property Tax Loss	-\$807,740	-\$734,730	-\$1,243,330
SEA1 Certified Shares Income Tax			-\$6,737,995
SEA1 Public Safety Income Tax			-\$2,624,406
SEA1 Economic Development Income Tax			-\$2,620,849
Business Personal Property Tax			TBD
<b>Total Estimated Loss</b>	<b>-\$807,740</b>	<b>-\$734,730</b>	<b>-\$13,226,580</b>

2028 WITH MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX

### SEA1 REPLACEMENT INCOME TAX

Year	Goshen 2028
Property Tax + Income Tax Reduction	-\$13,226,580
Municipal Option Income Tax (at max 1.2%)	\$8,169,049 - \$10,597,689
Shortfall Estimate (based on Median Household Income)	-\$5,057,531
Shortfall Estimate (based on MEAN Household Income)	-\$2,628,891

We will not have final numbers on potential revenue replacement until July 2026.





## SHORT AND LONG-TERM APPROACH



### Expense Management and Cost Adjustments

Budget restructuring and prioritization



### Reductions in Service and Program Levels

Adjustments to frequencies, lead times, etc. Alterations to services overall



### Revenue Increases

Environmental Services Fee • Service Fee Increases • Food and Beverage Tax • Local Wheel Tax • Municipal Income Tax

## SEA-1 2028 POLICE

20% Reduction Scenario

- **Loss of Special Officers** → No SROs, courthouse security, or mental health follow-up.
- **Cut 10 sworn and all reserves** → Slower response times, less street presence.
- **Patrol limited to major felonies/injury crashes** → Everyday concerns go unaddressed.
- **Minor/property crimes online only** → Victims see no officer response.
- **Detectives only for severe felonies** → Break-ins, fraud, drugs left uninvestigated.
- **Exit drug task force** → Reduced fentanyl enforcement, more overdoses.
- **Eliminate body cameras** → Less transparency, weaker public trust.
- **Slash vehicles, training, and equipment** → Officers are less prepared and less safe.

## SEA-1 2028 FIRE AND EMS

20% Reduction Scenario

- **Eliminate 24 firefighter/paramedic positions** → Fewer responders available in emergencies.
- **Close up to two fire stations** → Longer travel times, slower response citywide.
- **Decommission fire engines/ambulances** → Reduced ability to cover multiple calls.
- **Permanently Suspend 4th station project** → No coverage expansion in growing neighborhoods.
- **Slower fire response** → Higher risk of flashover, greater property loss.
- **Slower EMS response** → Lower survival chances for cardiac arrest and trauma.
- **Greater reliance on mutual aid** → Delays when nearby departments are busy.
- **Fewer crews on duty** → More overtime, fatigue, and risk to remaining firefighters.



## SEA-1 2028 STREETS

20% Reduction Scenario

- Fewer lane miles paved → Rougher roads, more potholes left unrepaired.
- Long-line striping reduced → Faded crosswalks and lane markings increase hazards.
- Routine patching scaled back → Slower fixes for dangerous road conditions.
- Sidewalk repairs delayed → More tripping hazards and slower ADA compliance.
- Parking lot maintenance deferred → Aging surfaces at public facilities.
- Jobs cut → Longer response times for brush pick-up, snow removal, **storm response**
- Lower service levels → Decline in overall quality of streets and neighborhood appearance.

## SEA-1 2028 PARKS & REC

20% Reduction Scenario

- Seasonal programs cut back → Fewer camps, leagues, and community events.
- Shanklin Pool permanently closed → Families lose only public pool and summer jobs tied to it.
- Shorter hours at facilities → Less access to Parks, Fidler Pond, and pavilions.
- Events consolidated → Smaller festivals and neighborhood gatherings eliminated.
- Equipment rentals reduced → Less support for weddings, reunions, and tournaments.
- Staffing cuts → Fewer seasonal staff, more reliance on volunteers.
- Deferred park upgrades → Playgrounds, trails, and landscaping decline.

## GENERAL DEPARTMENTS

20% Reduction Scenario

- Slower permits and inspections → Homeowners and businesses wait longer for approvals and projects.
- Reduced code enforcement → More visible property neglect and neighborhood issues.
- Delayed drainage fixes → Standing water, flooding, and invasive plants left longer in ditches and basins.
- Weaker financial operations → Slower payroll, billing, and financial reporting that affect city services.
- Fewer infrastructure projects → Road, bridge, and sidewalk improvements delayed.
- Less maintenance on city vehicles → Police cars, fire trucks, and snowplows out of service longer.
- Technology setbacks → Slower response to issues, higher cybersecurity risks.
- Cutbacks in outreach → Fewer community events, celebrations, and cultural programs.
- Airport expansion halted → Lost opportunity for business growth and hangar rentals.

When discussing these PowerPoint slides, Mayor Leichty made the following key points:

- The State has not been able to tell communities the exact impact of SEA-1 and won't be providing better revenue numbers until July 2026.
- It's now anticipated that the City of Goshen will have an \$800,000 revenue loss in 2026, about the same in 2027 and a \$13.2 million loss in 2028 because of a loss of all local income taxes.



- The State has provided an option for replacement income starting in 2028. That includes a **Municipal Option Local Income Tax** which could provide **\$8.1 million to \$10.5 million to the City**.
- However, it's estimated that even including that would still leave a **shortfall in the City budget of \$2.6 million to \$5 million**.
- In response to budget shortfalls caused by SEA-1, the City is considering **better expense management and making cost adjustments**.
- The City also is considering **reductions in services and program levels**.
- In 2026, the City may start considering revenue increases, including a **trash collection fee, more service fee increases, a food and beverage tax and a Municipal Income Tax**.
- The Mayor also asked City Department leaders to prepare potential budgets with 20% reductions.
- A **20% budget cut for the Police Department** could mean the loss of all police officers in schools, cutting 10 sworn officers and all reserves, reducing patrols, only investigating major felonies and injury crashes and reducing vehicles and equipment.
- For the Fire Department, a **20% cut** could mean the elimination of 24 firefighters and paramedics, the closure of up to two fire stations, decommissioning equipment, slower fire and medical responses and a greater reliance on neighboring departments.
- For the Street Department, a **20% cut** could mean fewer miles of paved roads, a reduction in routine patching, delayed sidewalk and parking lot repairs and cutting job, which would mean slower brush pickups and storm responses.
- A **20% cut for the Parks and Recreation Department** could mean seasonal program cutbacks, permanently closing the Shanklin pool and even swim programs, shorter hours at facilities, consolidating events and staff cuts which would reduce park maintenance and upgrades.
- And for the rest of the City, a **20% cut** could mean slower permitting and inspection times, reduced code and safety inspections, delayed drainage repairs, weaker financial oversight, less maintenance of City vehicles, cutbacks to community outreach and engagement programs and halting the airport expansion.
- City leaders have asked the Indiana Legislative Assembly to take action in 2026 to reduce the impact of SEA-1, but that may not happen until 2027.

Mayor Leichty said the City is facing an "abysmal scene" if the Legislature does not reverse the impact of SEA-1. She said, "Goshen will be an entirely different city under that scenario. And I look at all the faces in this room, and I think about all the hard work and investment that has gone into making Goshen a beautiful, vibrant community, and all the Department heads that have dedicated decades of their lives as public servants, making true sacrifices for the benefit of this community. And it's genuinely disheartening."

Mayor Leichty said legislators could have responsibly addressed property tax complaints but instead imposed drastic revenue cuts on cities. "So, they've handed us quite a pile to deal with, and we're working through it."

The Mayor said the City may increase some fees but will be doing so carefully because of the impact on residents. Similarly, Mayor Leichty said the proposed 2026 budget was developed to benefit both the Departments but also advance the greater good of Goshen.

Starting at 7:02 p.m., Mayor Leichty led Council members through a comprehensive review of the 2026 budget. Her review included summaries of proposed spending for all City departments along with 2023 and 2024 actual expenditures, and 2025 and 2026 budget figures.



**The 2026 Spending Plan for the City of Goshen included schedules for the following funds:** Board of Public Works and Safety, Building Department, Building and Grounds Department, Cemetery Department, Central Garage City Council, Clerk-Treasurer's Office, Community Engagement, City Court, Engineering, Environmental Resilience, Fire Department, Legal Department, Mayor's Office, Planning and Zoning, Police Department, Technology Department, Street Department, Parks and Recreation, the Airport and the Redevelopment Department. **The spending plan also included schedules for other funds, including:** Debt Service, Fire Pension, Police Pension, Local Road and Streets, Motor Vehicle Highway, Motor Vehicle Highway Restricted, Cumulative Capital Improvement Fire, Township Fire Support, Park and Recreation, Cumulative Capital Improvement, Cumulative Capital Development, Cumulative Capital Improvement/Storm Sewer, and Economic Development,

**As the Mayor presented the spending plan, Councilors sometimes asked questions or made comments. In addition, City Departments heads answered questions or provided additional information.**

**The Mayor presented the following budgets:**

- **Board of Public Works and Safety** ("significant portion" of budget moved to Economic Development fund)
- **Building Department** (budget increase because two ordinance officers were moved from the Police Department)
- **Building & Grounds** (being merged with Parks & Recreation Department)
- **Cemeteries**
- **Central Garage**
- **City Council** (includes \$10,000 for meeting management software and funds are available for travel and training)
- **Clerk-Treasurer's Office**
- **Community Engagement** (includes funding for the Community Relations Commission)
- **City Court** (one full-time clerk position was eliminated; Court is moving to the County Courthouse)
- **Engineering**
- **Environnemental Résilience and Forestry**
- **Fire Department**
- **Legal Department**
- **Mayor's Office** (includes the reduction of positions)
- **Planning and Zoning Department**
- **Police Department** (technology expenses are being reduced)
- **Technology Department**
- **Local Roads and Streets Fund**
- **Motor Vehicle Highway Fund**
- **Parks and Recreation Department**
- **Aviation Fund** (budget increased because a part-time administrative assistant was hired)
- **Edit Tax Fund**
- **Probation Fund**
- **Redevelopment Operating Fund**



- Public Safety Local Income Tax Fund
- Unsafe Building Fund
- OPIOID Restricted Fund
- Township Fire Fund
- Police Donation Fund
- Court Fees Fund
- Residential Lease Fees Fund
- Stormwater Management Fund (budget reduced due to purchase of a street sweeper)
- Economic Improvement District (self-taxing district of downtown property owners)
- Redhawk (Fire Department) Academy (class sizes doubled in 2025, so expenses increased)
- Debt Service
- Cigarette Tax
- Cumulative Capital Funds
- Tax-Increment Finance District Funds
- Cemetery Capital Funds
- Fire & Police Pension Funds
- Municipal Wheel Tax (the new City wheel tax is expected to raise about \$750,000 in 2026)

At 7:43 p.m., the Mayor completed her overview of the budget. The Mayor then recessed the Council meeting for a brief break.

At 7:51 p.m., Mayor Leichty called the meeting back to order. She then invited public comments on the budget. She said each speaker would be limited to two minutes to comment.

Chuck Hamilton of Goshen thanked the City for supporting Air Supremacy Over Goshen, a three-day radio-controlled aircraft event for large-scale military and civilian classics held yearly at the Goshen Airport. Now in its eighth year, Hamilton said the show brings 150 pilots to the City and provides a boost to the local economy.

Chris Stager, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Economic Development Corporation of Elkhart County, discussed the significant role his organization plays in enhancing quality of life by increasing business and manufacturing in Elkhart County. He especially cited its role in improving local technology and increasing wages. Stager also said, "There's about 30,000 students that graduate within 100 miles here, and we do an abysmal job at retention of those. So, we work with industry to try to establish additional career pathways that grow income opportunities locally."

Bethany Hartley, President and Chief Executive Officer of the South Bend–Elkhart Regional Partnership, discussed Goshen's critical regional role in terms of its quality of place and its economy. She said, "When we talk about this region and attracting people and companies into this region, Goshen is that quality of place, the small-town feel, the amenities that our newcomers are looking for, the current residents are looking for, and we're really proud to have Goshen as a part of the South Bend–Elkhart region."





**Hartley** said Goshen benefitted from a major state grant administered by the partnership that will provide quality housing, trails, amenities parks and recreation.

**Hartley** added, "We want this to be a place that people pick, not that they're forced to be here, and we know that your city is doing that. And when I look at the proposed 20% budget cuts, my heart breaks because this is a community that we love and cherish, and it's a destination not only for the residents here, but residents outside of your city limits, and we would love to see that continue."

She said communities in Elkhart, Marshall, and St. Joseph counties have economic ties and residents live and work across the region. In closing she said, "As goes any one county, any one city, any one town, so goes the region."

**Trevor Daugherty, Executive Director of the Northern Indiana Clay Alliance and the owner and publisher of Edible Michiana**, a regional food and culture magazine, both based in Goshen, told Councilors that thousands of visitors will come to Goshen this week for the **14th Annual Michiana Pottery Tour**.

**Daugherty** said some people return every year to support local artists while others will experience Goshen for the first time. Together, he said they will spend more than \$120,000 on clay art this weekend, but they will also stay in Goshen hotels, eat at Goshen restaurants and learn more about the Maple City.

**Daugherty** said the tour is possible in part because of the City's support through the Community Partnership Program. While the City's funding matters, he said the partnership itself carries significant weight because "it signals to the public, to other granting organizations, and to our Clay Alliance members that Goshen values this work."

**Daugherty** also said, "I've lived here for 25 years and regularly travel around this region for both of my jobs. Everywhere I go, people know Goshen, and what we've built here is unique. It's an ecosystem created over decades by individuals, organizations, and neighbors working together." He thanked Councilors for their "hard work to make Goshen a special place."

**Danaé Wirth, President of the Goshen Historical Society Museum**, thanked the Councilor for its partnership and grant. She said, "Nonprofits often bridge the gap between physical needs and social, creative, and educational needs that foster a community sense of belonging. Continuing grant opportunities for nonprofits is an investment in both community building and well-being.

"This type of investment impacts both current and future generations. The grant also serves as proof that the City of Goshen values our work and our services, which lends credibility to encourage others to invest in our efforts."

**Wirth** said the museum has managed its City grants "responsibly, and as a catalyst, leveraging the funds to grow our museum and build sustainability, allowing us to continue our work. Their value has been multiplied many, many times over. The museum building itself represents one of the few businesses that have had a continuous presence in downtown Goshen since 1888 and it's our goal to serve and be there for many years to come."

**Wirth** asked that the City keep supporting the museum so it can "continue to strengthen our downtown, enrich cultural life, and preserve Goshen stories for generations to come."

**Ron Hoke, Executive Director of the Goshen Historical Society**, thanked the City for its partnership program which has benefitted the museum and other non-profit organizations. He said the City of Goshen benefits from the multiplying effect when such organizations are able to do things the City cannot do.



Still, he acknowledged the budget difficulties facing the City: "I wouldn't want to sit in your chairs. I've been watching Goshen City budgets since 1974 and the task that the State has given you to solve over the next three to four or five years is the worst one I've ever seen a deck of cards dealt to a City Council. I don't envy your position."

Hoke said he knows there will need to be some budget cuts and non-profit organizations understand that. So, he encouraged Councilors to continue providing funding even if it has to be a reduced amount. He said, "We don't want to have that cut ... but let's ease it down. We're willing to take some of the pain, and then by 2028, the State may actually know what they're going to do, and you'll know what you can do."

**Wayne Stubbs, President of the Elkhart County Symphony Association**, said even if the symphony loses financial support "doesn't minimize the fact that we need to have a good life. In Goshen, in Elkhart and in Elkhart County, I believe that the Elkhart County Symphony plays a huge role in that."

Stubbs said the symphony produces cultural and social value and the musicians are neighbors, work colleagues and teachers. He said, "They bring together people of all ages and backgrounds, encouraging social interaction and forming connections that can turn into lifelong friendships."

"We bring diversity and inclusion value to the community. The symphony strives to be more culturally relevant by featuring diverse musicians, composers, collaborating with local community musicians, and celebrating different musical traditions. Our symphony musicians participate in community outreach beyond the traditional concert hall. They perform in local libraries, for local businesses, for youth programs, and much, much more."

Stubbs said the symphony provides educational experiences and performs widely, often with students. He said the City grant that the symphony received has helped develop other partnerships and stage concerts.

**Deb Ferguson of Goshen** spoke in support of the **City Department of Environmental Resilience**. She said many people are fortunate enough to live and work in environments that are comfortably warm or cool and have running water and electricity. Many people, she said, tend to take their spaces for granted until they lose them.

Ferguson said many people are aware of the cost of these comforts and act to save money, use energy responsibly and conserve water. She said that is what the Department of Environmental Resilience (DER) is doing for Goshen.

"Since its inception in 2019, thanks in large part to the youth of our City, the DER has been working with City Departments to make sensible decisions which enable them to use energy wisely while also saving money,"

Ferguson said. "Successful programs have been implemented in several departments, and energy audits will continue this work as our community grows. In fact, from the figures I've seen, the DER is going a long way to pay for itself. By continuing their work, the DER is saving money for the community while helping the greater environment. In the process, they are keeping the Council's promise to the youth of our community."

Ferguson said the department also helps the City's parks and outdoor spaces by removing invasive species, trimming trees and planting new native plants and trees. "They do all that's necessary to preserve our resources, both indoors and out, for our use now and in the future. It's a huge task, which they're handling with great success. I confess that until recently, I had no idea of the scope of their influence, our community, and I'm very grateful."

**John Mishler, a local sculptor and Goshen College art professor**, said Goshen is becoming known as an artistic city in part because of the sculptures made by his current and former students. He said, "You can put artwork in buildings, and that's a good thing to do, but placing sculptures outside really shows, that your city has culture, and people can see those sculptures when they drive down Main Street."



**Mishler** said his students have learned "to create large-scale sculptures that will stand up to the weather, and they also make artwork that reaches beyond just classroom assignments. I think that's very important, where the community gets involved."

**Mishler** said the new sculptures placed downtown, in partnership with the City of Goshen, reflect well on the City and have given his students recognition and self-confidence as artists. Some of the art has even been purchased by local businesses. He asked the City to continue this project.

**Gabo Brenneman-Ochoa**, a senior at Goshen High School, spoke in support of the Senate Bill 1 town hall meeting that was proposed earlier in the Council meeting by Norm Kauffmann. He said that he knows this legislation will cut City revenues and he would like other community residents to also know about its impact.

He said, "A town hall meeting would be great, because while I am aware that Council members have voiced their concerns about this bill, I think it would be appropriate for anybody living in this town, to voice their concerns. I also think, like me and a lot of other people, we just want to understand why the State Legislature is doing this."

**Brenneman Ochoa** added, "I really appreciate the many programs and recreational activities that this town provides, and that's one of the reasons why I love this community, and I do not want that to change."

**Amanda Rose**, the Director of First Fridays in Downtown Goshen, spoke on behalf of the arts and cultural community as well as "the thousands of residents and visitors whose lives are enriched because of the investments this body has made in many of these programs.

"I know you are faced with difficult budget decisions. Every dollar must be weighed against competing needs, notably supporting much-needed public safety initiatives, but I want to urge you, respectfully and strongly, not to reduce funding for our community partnerships, and to continue reaching out to state legislators about the consequences of SEA 1. These partnerships are not extras, but rather essential to our community."

**Rose** said such programs "are vital, not only to our sense of place, but to our local economy. People who attend performances and festivals also dine in our restaurants and shop in our stores. These programs generate tax revenue, attract tourism, and fuel small business growth. But beyond the dollars, these partnerships do something incredibly powerful.

"They build community. They help us tell our shared story and give our town a sense of place. In this major time of divide, they bring people together across districts, regardless of age, race, background, or income. They give our young people opportunities to express themselves in positive, constructive ways in safe environments. They provide joy and reprieve in times when our community desperately needs them."

**Rose** added, "When you invest in arts and culture, you invest in the health, identity, and future of this City. When you cut those investments, you don't just cut a line item, you cut opportunities, connections, and pride in place. Your continued investment in these partnerships builds a great deal of trust in the City in a time when many of us are feeling unheard by our state representatives ... I urge this body to invest in that trust and the health and happiness of Goshen, not because it's easy, but because it's absolutely necessary."

**Evan Miller of Goshen** spoke in support of the City Department of Environmental Resilience. Miller said he went back and listened to recordings of 2019 Council meetings at which this department was initially discussed and created with great enthusiasm. He said, "Some Council members remarked that attendance at these three meetings was arguably the highest in recent memory."



Miller said the department has produced substantial financial benefits for the City, but it has also created action and hope "for our young people in the face of some very difficult conditions."

Miller explained, "I'm an old man and a grandfather. I know of many young people, my children's age and younger, who are fearful of the world they're inheriting from us. They do not believe that their lives will be anywhere near as good or as comfortable as the life I'm blessed to live. I find that sad beyond words.

"This department is an antidote. It was born out of the request of young people asking for action. The story that we've heard this last year of the young AmeriCorps volunteers showing up to hand out City trees on behalf of our community and this department, last spring, after they had been told to stay home because their funding was cut. That they showed up fills my heart with hope."

Miller concluded, "I don't envy the job that you have in front of you, but I'm here to tell you that I and others will be watching and calling on you to uphold the commitments our City has made to the future generations to make Goshen a good place to live and work."

**Marica Yost, a longtime music educator in Goshen, said she has lived in Goshen for many years and loves the community. She said, "I've given 50 years to the arts in this county. We've heard many artists of various kinds up here sharing and what I want to say is, about 30 years ago, Goshen didn't look like this at all.**

**"What made the difference for this town is the arts. Our guilds, our performances, our Crimsonaires ... all these things that have come together to make us unique. And to that end, the Goshen Theater is the hub of that in our downtown. Our downtown, that marquee, that's Goshen."**

**Yost continued, "The arts have taken a hit. The National Endowment of the Arts, the Indiana Arts Commission, all of them have watched their funds get reduced. As you have watched, Goshen's funds be reduced, there are lots of needs there. We voted for you, and we trust you to do what's best for our community."**

**Yost called on Councilors to remember the value of the arts and to support them and especially the Goshen Theater which hosts a multitude of activities and events. She concluded, "Goshen needs Goshen's theater. And we need a leg up. And we need Goshen to help us. Keep the arts vibrant and alive. I love this town. And I'll leave you with that."**

**Grant Sassaman, the owner and operator of the Black Squirrel Golf Club in Goshen, talked about the golf course's sponsorship of Fireworks on the Fairway, a 4th of July fireworks show for the community the past three years. He thanked the Mayor and Councilors for their support in bringing back this annual tradition.**

**Next year will be the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration of the United States and Sassaman said he would like to sponsor the event again in 2026.**

**Sassaman said, "As you know, we are not a not-for-profit, but I will guarantee you that we do not profit off of this event one bit. We actually put a lot of our own money into it, because we care a lot about the community. We have 117 acres, and we say, 'What can we do with it to offer up to the community?' This is not something where we're trying to get rich off a golf course. We believe that we have more of an impact and a calling on our lives to further into Goshen ... It's the 4th of July next year, 2026, that we're campaigning for. And I want to say thank you so much for what you've done in the past, and moving forward, I'd love to see if we can continue it."**

**Andy Murray, a board member for First Light Mission, discussed the mission, which is a homeless shelter in Goshen exclusively for families and single women. This year it will serve about 100 guests.**





**Murray** said that over the past three years he has seen significant changes at the facility. He said, "The level of unmet need would suggest that we need to be serving more like 400 to 500 guests to meet the level of need that we're seeing today."

**Murray** also said that three years ago, only 20-30% of guests were employed. "Today, over 90% of the folks seeking shelter are employed, which is a sign of the things that are happening in our community, unfortunately." He said the mission provides wraparound services, which is one of the reasons it chooses only to serve 100 guests – so staff can nurture deep relationships and seek transformational change.

**Murray** said the mission also has a clothing closet, which is accessed by the schools and by the Police Department and other local organizations, and also provides financial counseling, life skills training, employment support, and case management.

**Murray** said all this has enabled First Light to achieve a 93% success rate. He said this also means that the mission is a significant cost-benefit for the community. He ended by thanking the City for supporting the mission.

**Mindy Moorhead, Executive Director of First Light Mission**, added, "I just want to say thank you for your time. I know this job is really hard. I appreciate all the support, and hope it continues. And we appreciate you."

**Brad Hunsberger, Senior Vice President of Real Estate Development at Lacasa, Inc.**, thanked the City for supporting Lacasa's decades of work in the community. He mentioned the City providing funds that Lacasa is using to develop supportive housing at Oak Lawn.

**Hunsberger** also spoke on support of Arts in the Mill Race. He said, "A couple of folks have spoken much more eloquently than I will about that, but we've also appreciated the support of Arts in the Mill Race by this body, over the years, and we'd appreciate that to continue."

**At 8:26 p.m., Mayor Leichty** closed the public comment period and offered her appreciation for the speakers. She said there would be another budget hearing on Oct. 6 with more opportunities for public comment.

**Mayor Leichty** then invited comments from Councilors.

**Councilor Lederach** said, "Thank you all for showing up. It's pretty incredible, turnout, and you sat through a very long time where all you were looking at was a blue screen and us. And so, I think Marcia (Yost) hit it on the head. We live in an incredible community, and people love this community, and you all showing up is an example of that, certainly. So, thank you."

**Council President Weddell** said he would love to hear presentations from more of the City's community partners but would find it difficult to decide which organizations to support financially. He said, "I think it's safe to say that we would love to be able to provide more to those partnerships because of what they do, and like you said, this is just a glimpse of what we have in our community. Those that aren't able to be here, I'm sure, are just as worthy, and so I wish we had more money to give to those partnerships, because they are what makes Goshen Goshen."

**Mayor Leichty** agreed and said, "It's not easy. There are lots of, very compelling organizations who do good work on behalf of our City."





**Councilor Gerber** said, "I was really struck in reviewing the budget ... by what's effectively a flat budget from year to year. I know there were significant changes due to projects but, I understand that means doing more with less, and if my calculation is correct, we will be looking at 10 and a half fewer staff positions than budgeted for 2025."

**Mayor Leichty** said she believed there would be a reduction of eight to ten staff positions.

**Councilor Gerber** continued, "That has an impact. That changes what our City staff is able to do. And so, I just really want to acknowledge the sacrifices that have gone into this budget. And I know it's not easy. I mean, we've heard that a lot, but from the people sitting behind us and on this side, it's a lot."

**Mayor Leichty** thanked **Councilor Gerber** for her comments and added, "You're absolutely right. It was so very difficult and painful for our Department heads to even contemplate what that could look like for their teams, and ultimately what it means for our community. They were so dedicated and gracious about it, so I appreciate your acknowledgement on their behalf. They worked very hard."

**Council President Weddell** said, "I think we can go farther and say it's not really flat. I think it's quite a bit less than last year." He added, "You've taken action to try and prepare for the future."

**Council President Weddell** said it was also "startling" to contemplate the impact of a 20% citywide budget cut. He said, "Everyone should know that wasn't just an example that one of those cuts could take care of everything. It's every one of those departments. If you just look at this year's numbers, the budget, and you take 20% of that, you're looking at about \$14 million having to cut out of a budget."

"And you can say, well, 'We can trim here, trim there,' but trimming \$14 million ... you just can't get rid of a department. Even if you did get rid of a department, it's still not even going to come close to that kind of a cut, so it's going to be very daunting moving forward."

**Councilor Lederach** said, "We did hear some calls from the audience for a meeting to make sure that the people who can change this are aware that there are people in our community that want it to be changed, and so maybe we can move forward down that road."

**Council President Weddell** said he planned to raise that issue later in the meeting.

**Councilor Lederach** said such a town hall meeting would need to be nonpartisan. He said, "It has to be not seen as coming from one or the other political parties and that there is, as **Mayor Leichty** said, not much daylight between all our positions when it comes to what we have to face. Certainly, in this coming year, we'll feel it, but in the three years from now or two years from now, if it doesn't change, we're going to feel in a whole different way."

**Councilor Geber** said she and **Council President Weddell** sent a letter inviting Rep. King and Sen. Doriot to attend tonight's Council meeting. **Council President Weddell** said Sen. Doriot called and said he couldn't attend tonight. The **Mayor** said Rep. King was out of town but plans to attend the Oct. 6 Council meeting.

**Mayor Leichty** asked if Councilors were ready to vote.

**Council President Weddell** said they were. He then asked for a roll call vote.

**On a roll call vote, Councilors passed Ordinance 5202, *An Ordinance for Appropriations and Tax Rates, on First Reading* by a 6-0-1 margin, with Councilors Gerber, Lederach, Peel, Riegsecker, Schrock and Weddell voting "yes" and Councilor Nisley voting "pass" at 8:33 p.m.**



In explaining his decision to "pass, Councilor Nisley said, "I'm not comfortable with the way the budget is now, and I know we have another meeting to pass this again. I just want to do a little more looking into it after tonight with a couple concerns I have. That is my reason for passing."

**Mayor Leichty** thanked **Councilor Nisley** and encouraged him to be in communication with Department heads. She also said she would be happy to meet with him and talk between now and the Council's next meeting on Oct. 6.

#### **Elected Official Reports:**

**Mayor Leichty** asked if there were any reports from Councilors.

**Council President Weddell** thanked **Gabo Brennenman-Ochoa**, a Goshen High School senior who will soon turn 18 soon and spoke earlier in the meeting, for his comments. He said, "Even though you're not a voter, I think you're more informed than a majority of the population about what's going on, so thank you for being so articulate."

Regarding calls for a Town Hall meeting on SEA-1, **Council President Weddell** said he was working with **Councilor Gerber** to make that a possibility. He said they sent a letter to Rep. King and Sen. Doriot inviting them to meetings and would be happy to work with any of the people who have contacted him to help organize a town hall.

"I don't know how successful that will be. If I had to speculate, I would think that maybe our state legislators would want to wait until maybe they discuss things in the next year," **Council President Weddell** said.

Still, he said he was willing to work with anyone or the Council or the county or other cities to arrange for a town hall meeting. He added, "I think the door is open, whether you reach out to me or **Councilor Gerber** or anyone else. We're more than willing to work with anyone to try and make things happen to draw more light on the issue."

**Councilor Nisley** said he wanted to discuss what's happened over the past two weeks since the assassination of Charlie Kirk. He said, "Nobody should be murdered for their political or religious stance. Nobody."

**Councilor Nisley** said the main reason he was mentioning this was because of a Goshen connection to Charlie Kirk. He said **Matt Hay**, whose father, George Hay, owned the property where the Black Squirrel Golf Course is located, went to school with **Councilors Nisley** and **Riegsecker**. Matt Hay and his family later moved to Arizona and their son (Matt Hay Jr.) worked for Charlie Kirk.

**Councilor Nisley** said, "His Mom and Dad were at the memorial service (for Kirk) yesterday ... And so, I just want to mention to keep them in your prayers. And it's kind of hard for me, knowing Matt and knowing what they've gone through, too, because of this. I just want to reiterate, nobody deserves to be killed, assassinated, for their beliefs."

**Councilor Riegsecker** said the Mennonite Relief Sale will take place this weekend and he wanted to remind people to attend it on Friday and Saturday at the Elkhart County Fairgrounds.

Responding to **Councilor Nisley's** comments, **Councilor Riegsecker** said, "I think back, and one of the reasons that I wanted to be on this City Council was to make a difference and to help. And I'm very proud to be with this group right here, because sometimes you forget which party we're with because 90% of the time we're together, and we're doing what's best for the City of Goshen. That includes the Mayor. That includes the Department heads, too. So, I am I am very pleased to work with this group right here, and I consider each of you my friend."

**Mayor Leichty** thanked **Councilor Riegsecker** and added, "That's worth an applause."

The audience responded with applause.



Councilor Nisley briefly related a story about when Matt Hay Sr. met Charlie Kirk and how that interaction created a close connection.

Councilor Gerber said one of the City's student youth advisors, Ezra Tice who serves on the Board of Zoning Appeals, deserved congratulations for being named a National Merit Semifinalist.

Councilor Nisley said also deserving of praise was Travis Peak (Division Chief) was named Fire Instructor of the Year. Mayor Leichty said Fire Chief Anthony Powell would be saying more about that.

Clerk-Treasurer Aguirre said, "I just wanted to say something really quickly as the person who takes the minutes. Last year, at the equivalent meeting, there were no public comments. And I think it's a credit to the community that we have that people have responded to information that's been provided about what's going on with the City's budget. And I just want to express my gratitude for all of the people who turned out tonight, and the people who I believe will be here for the next budget meeting, for their involvement and their participation."

Chief Anthony Powell said he nominated his department members for awards from the Indiana Fire Chiefs Association. He said the following people from Goshen were presented these awards on Sept. 19:

- Division Chief Travis Peak was selected as Indiana Instructor of the Year 2025
- Sgt. Charles Stevens was selected as Indiana Public Safety Educator of the Year 2025
- EMS Supervisor Andrew Priem was named Indiana Specialty Care Giver of the Year 2025
- Division Chief Michael Hamby was named Indiana Paramedic of the Year 2025
- Mayor Gina Leichty was selected as Indiana Elected Official of the Year 2025

In response, Mayor Leichty said, "Goshen was very well represented. I think it speaks volumes of just what an exceptional team we have that they received so many accolades at that awards ceremony, and I felt so very proud to be a part of that and truly honored to be able to contribute in meaningful ways to public health and safety. And I'll just echo what you said, Councilor (Riegsecker), about being able to work across party lines and for the greater good. It's an honor and a privilege to be able to work with this group and with all of these Department heads for such an important cause, so thank you all."

There were no further comments by the Mayor or by Councilors.

#### **Adjournment:**

Councilor Nisley made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Councilors Riegsecker and Peel. Councilors unanimously approved the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Leichty adjourned the meeting at 8:44 p.m.



**EXHIBIT #1:** *Printed information distributed to Councilors by Gregg Lanzen, the lead chaplain of the Goshen Fire and Police Departments and the founder and lead chaplain of the First In Chaplain Crisis Response Team. Lanzen gave a presentation to the Council about the chaplains and the budget appropriated to them and provided a budget report and three brochures about the program.*

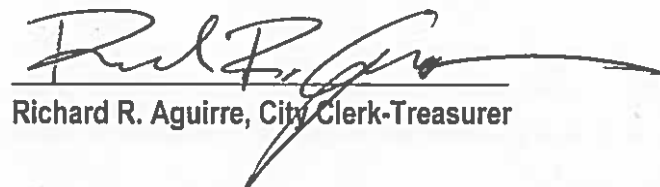
**EXHIBIT #2:** *An eight-page PowerPoint slide presentation by Mayor Leichty on the expected impact of Senate Enrolled Act 1 (the new property tax reduction law) and the possible consequences on the City of Goshen's finances. She delivered the presentation during the Council meeting.*

**APPROVED:**

A blue ink signature of Gina Leichty, Mayor of Goshen, written over a horizontal line.

Gina Leichty, Mayor of Goshen

**ATTEST:**

A black ink signature of Richard R. Aguirre, City Clerk-Treasurer, written over a horizontal line.

Richard R. Aguirre, City Clerk-Treasurer

Exhibit #1



**FIRST IN**  
CHAPLAIN CRISIS  
RESPONSE TEAM



17625 Shannon Avenue  
Goshen, IN 46526-8963  
Phone: 574-536-9030



FIRST IN is an US IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, and an IN Limited Liability Corporation. Donations are appreciated and are fully tax deductible.

**2025 ESTIMATED BUDGET TOTAL = \$24,450.00**

<b>A. REHABILITATION SERVICES:</b>	<b>\$5,750.00</b>
1. Victim Assistance: .....	\$2,250.00
2. Rehabilitation Supplies: .....	\$2,000.00
3. First Responder & Family Services: .....	\$1,500.00
<b>B. CHAPLAIN EQUIPMENT:</b>	<b>\$4,900.00</b>
1. Class A Uniform Purchase, Replacement & Upkeep: .....	\$1,200.00
2. Duty Uniform Purchase, Replacement & Upkeep: .....	\$1,200.00
3. Foul Weather Gear Purchase & Replacement: .....	\$1,000.00
4. Rehab Trailer & Equipment Purchase & Maintenance: .....	\$1,500.00
<b>C. CHAPLAIN TRAINING &amp; CERTIFICATION:</b>	<b>\$10,600.00</b>
1. Annual Continuing Education Conference Registration, Hotels, Meals:.....	\$6,000.00
2. Monthly Training: .....	\$ 600.00
3. Specialized Training Seminars Registration, Hotels, Meals: .....	\$2,000.00
4. Professional Certifications & Memberships: .....	\$2,000.00
<b>D. CORPORATE &amp; OFFICE EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$3,200.00</b>
1. Liability Insurance: .....	\$1,100.00
2. Non-Profit & LLC License Renewal: .....	\$ 350.00
3. Misc. Fees: .....	\$ 250.00
4. Office Equipment, Supplies & Maintenance.....	\$1,500.00
<b><u>TOTAL 2025 BUDGET ESTIMATE:</u></b>	<b><u>\$24,450.00</u></b>

**NOTE:** Currently FIRST IN receives - in addition to \$10,000 from the City of Goshen - about \$7,000 in donations from other regular and one-time supporters. We continually adjust our expenses to stay within the funds we have available. At times this requires the chaplains to personally cover some of their expenses, and we often do without some things that would be helpful but are not essential.

**CHAPLAINS**

Gregg Lanzen ~ Leon Geigley ~ Joe Smith ~ Michael Pennington ~ Jason Miller



## You have just experienced a very traumatic event

Right now, or very soon, you may feel some very strong emotional and/or physical symptoms of what we call "Critical Incident Stress Aftershock".

It is very common, and in fact quite normal for you to experience strong Critical Incident Stress Aftershock after you have passed through an extremely stressful incident. Most often this Aftershock will appear within hours or a few days after the traumatic incident, but in some cases, weeks, months, or even years may pass before Aftershock appears. The good news is that most Aftershock appears very soon after an incident and typically passes within a matter of weeks.

It is also important to understand that your life will never be quite the same even after the Aftershock has subsided. Over time you will adjust to life without your loved one, but things will never be quite the same as they were before your loved one died.

With this understanding and the support of family and friends, Critical Incident Stress Aftershock will often begin to fade within a few days, or a week or two, and usually passes in less than two months.

On the next page is a summary list of CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS AFTERSHOCK SYMPTOMS and some HELPS FOR OVERCOMING AFTERSHOCK SYMPTOMS. Have your family and friends help you watch for these symptoms and take steps to mitigate them. Practice the helps for the next few weeks and your Aftershock should begin to fade away.

Occasionally Aftershock does not fade away. This may be an indication that therapeutic counseling may be helpful. This does not imply weakness nor mental illness. It simply indicates that the Aftershock is too powerful for you to manage on your own. If your Aftershock does not begin to lessen in 3-4 weeks, do not be embarrassed, and do not hesitate to seek therapeutic counseling.

Our Chaplains are here to listen, help, and advise you in regards to your Critical Incident Stress Aftershock. Feel free to contact us at any time if we can be of assistance to you or another loved one who may be experiencing Critical Incident Stress Aftershock.

### SYMPTOMS OF CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS AFTERSHOCK:

(Any one or more of the following may indicate Aftershock)

- Extreme, Constant Grieving and/or Crying, for Days.
- Persistent Insomnia, or Extreme Persistent Fatigue.
- Nightmares and/or Repetitive Bad Dreams.
- Headaches, Dizziness, Mental Confusion.
- Inability to Concentrate and/or Make Decisions.
- Muscle or Joint Pain, Upset Stomach and Bowels.
- Unusual Anger, Fear, Paranoia, or Nervousness.
- Temptation to Overuse Alcohol or Medication.
- Long Term Loss of Appetite, or Overeating.
- Long Term Depressive Thoughts, Words or Actions.
- Withdrawal from Normal Healthy Relationships.
- Unusual Unwillingness to Talk or Communicate.
- Unusual Interest or Lack of Interest in Religion.
- Unusual, Persistent Preoccupation with Death.
- Unusual, Persistent Focus on or Talk of Revenge.
- Any Activity that is Not "Normal" and Persists.

### HELPS FOR OVERCOMING AFTERSHOCK SYMPTOMS:

- Try to maintain a normal routine and schedule.
- Get back to work, school, etc. as soon as possible.
- Get 8 hours of sleep every night even if not tired.
- Eat well balanced, healthy meals. Do not skip meals.
- Limit eating fast foods to only once or twice a week.
- Limit caffeine and alcohol intake. Do not get drunk.
- Do not use marijuana or illegal drugs, ever!
- Avoid overusing legitimate medications for pain.
- Exercise, walk, jog or ride your bicycle every day.
- Hang out regularly with family and friends.
- Do not hide feelings from your spouse, family, etc.
- Allow family, friends, coworkers, to check up on you.
- If religious, maintain regular worship and fellowship.
- Reach out for help if your symptoms do not fade.



**FIRST IN** is an IRS approved 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Donations are appreciated and are fully tax deductible.

## My Loved One has just Died...

*What Happens Now?*



*This Pamphlet is Provided as a help by your First In Goshen Police & Fire Department Chaplains*





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It is also important to understand that your life will never be quite the same even once the Aftershock has subsided. Some of the things you lost in the fire may be irreplaceable, but over the years ahead the good memories of these things will be a comfort to you.

With this understanding and the support of family and friends, Critical Incident Stress Aftershock will often begin to fade within a week or two and usually passes in less than two months.

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- If religious, maintain regular worship and fellowship.
- Reach out for help if your symptoms do not fade.



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Donations are appreciated and are fully tax deductible.

## We've Just Had a Fire!

## What Should We Do Now?



*This Pamphlet is Provided as a help by your First In Goshen Fire & Police Department Chaplains*



Exhibit #2

2026-2028

# SEA-1 ESTIMATED FINANCIAL IMPACT

Year	2026	2027	2028
SB1 Property Tax Loss	-\$807,740	-\$734,730	-\$1,243,330
SEA1 Certified Shares Income Tax			-\$6,737,995
SEA1 Public Safety Income Tax			-\$2,624,406
SEA1 Economic Development Income Tax			-\$2,620,849
Business Personal Property Tax			TBD
Total Estimated Loss	-\$807,740	-\$734,730	-\$13,226,580



2028 WITH MUNICIPAL INCOME TAX

# SEA1 REPLACEMENT INCOME TAX

Year		Goshen 2028
Property Tax + Income Tax Reduction		-\$13,226,580
Municipal Option Income Tax (at max 1.2%)		\$8,169,049 - \$10,597,689
Shortfall Estimate (based on Median Household Income)		-\$5,057,531
Shortfall Estimate (based on MEAN Household Income)		-\$2,628,891

We will not have final numbers on potential revenue replacement until July 2026.





# SHORT AND LONG-TERM APPROACH



Expense Management and  
Cost Adjustments

Budget restructuring and prioritization



Reductions in Service and  
Program Levels

Adjustments to frequencies, lead times,  
etc. Alterations to services overall



Revenue Increases

Environmental Services Fee • Service  
Fee Increases • Food and Beverage Tax  
• Local Wheel Tax • Municipal Income Tax

# SEA-1 2028 POLICE

## 20% Reduction Scenario

- **Loss of Special Officers** → No SROs, courthouse security, or mental health follow-up.
- **Cut 10 sworn and all reserves** → Slower response times, less street presence.
- **Patrol limited to major felonies/injury crashes** → Everyday concerns go unaddressed.
- **Minor/property crimes online only** → Victims see no officer response.
- **Detectives only for severe felonies** → Break-ins, fraud, drugs left uninvestigated.
- **Exit drug task force** → Reduced fentanyl enforcement, more overdoses.
- **Eliminate body cameras** → Less transparency, weaker public trust.
- **Slash vehicles, training, and equipment** → Officers are less prepared and less safe.

# SEA-1 2028 FIRE AND EMS

## 20% Reduction Scenario

- **Eliminate 24 firefighter/paramedic positions** → Fewer responders available in emergencies.
- **Close up to two fire stations** → Longer travel times, slower response citywide.
- **Decommission fire engines/ambulances** → Reduced ability to cover multiple calls.
- **Permanently Suspend 4th station project** → No coverage expansion in growing neighborhoods.
- **Slower fire response** → Higher risk of flashover, greater property loss.
- **Slower EMS response** → Lower survival chances for cardiac arrest and trauma.
- **Greater reliance on mutual aid** → Delays when nearby departments are busy.
- **Fewer crews on duty** → More overtime, fatigue, and risk to remaining firefighters.

# SEA-1 2028 STREETS

## 20% Reduction Scenario

- **Fewer lane miles paved** → Rougher roads, more potholes left unrepaired.
- **Long-line striping reduced** → Faded crosswalks and lane markings increase hazards.
- **Routine patching scaled back** → Slower fixes for dangerous road conditions.
- **Sidewalk repairs delayed** → More tripping hazards and slower ADA compliance.
- **Parking lot maintenance deferred** → Aging surfaces at public facilities.
- **Jobs cut** → Longer response times for brush pick-up, snow removal, **storm response**
- **Lower service levels** → Decline in overall quality of streets and neighborhood appearance.



# SEA-1 2028 PARKS & REC

## 20% Reduction Scenario

- **Seasonal programs cut back** → Fewer camps, leagues, and community events.
- **Shanklin Pool permanently closed** → Families lose only public pool and summer jobs tied to it.
- **Shorter hours at facilities** → Less access to Parks, Fidler Pond, and pavilions.
- **Events consolidated** → Smaller festivals and neighborhood gatherings eliminated.
- **Equipment rentals reduced** → Less support for weddings, reunions, and tournaments.
- **Staffing cuts** → Fewer seasonal staff, more reliance on volunteers.
- **Deferred park upgrades** → Playgrounds, trails, and landscaping decline.

# GENERAL DEPARTMENTS

## 20% Reduction Scenario

- **Slower permits and inspections** → Homeowners and businesses wait longer for approvals and projects.
- **Reduced code enforcement** → More visible property neglect and neighborhood issues.
- **Delayed drainage fixes** → Standing water, flooding, and invasive plants left longer in ditches and basins.
- **Weaker financial operations** → Slower payroll, billing, and financial reporting that affect city services.
- **Fewer infrastructure projects** → Road, bridge, and sidewalk improvements delayed.
- **Less maintenance on city vehicles** → Police cars, fire trucks, and snowplows out of service longer.
- **Technology setbacks** → Slower response to issues, higher cybersecurity risks.
- **Cutbacks in outreach** → Fewer community events, celebrations, and cultural programs.
- **Airport expansion halted** → Lost opportunity for business growth and hangar rentals.