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NEWS RELEASE

Coulter's recommended budget is balanced, transparent, and invests in people

- Coulter's three-year, balanced budget recommendation ends the practice of planning to use fund balance to support ongoing operations.
- The budget's revenue assumptions are prudent, ensuring the County is prepared for changing economic conditions.
- Priorities include hiring and retention of law enforcement personnel, an older adult advocate position, and creating a comprehensive, campus-wide environmental sustainability plan.

Pontiac, Mich., July 19, 2022 – Oakland County Executive Dave Coulter's balanced, three-year budget recommendation for fiscal years 2023-2025 includes funding to support the hiring and retention of law enforcement personnel, an older adult advocate position, an environmental sustainability plan for the county government campus, and investments in affordable housing, healthcare, and efforts to provide equitable opportunities for county residents and businesses. Coulter and his administration presented his priorities Tuesday evening during his annual budget message to the Oakland County Board of Commissioners

The total budget, which equals just over \$1 billion, eliminates the planned use of fund balance to support ongoing operations, projects budget surpluses in the coming five years that can be used to address the needs of county government and its residents, and utilizes prudent revenue projections to be prepared for changing economic conditions.

"At its core, our budget is about people – our residents and businesses, our communities, and our employees - and how best to serve their needs and give them the tools to succeed and thrive," Coulter said. "There are many things in this budget to be proud of, but one of the most significant for me is that we've officially ended the practice of planning to use our fund balance for operating expenses."

The budget also recommends a five percent cost of living adjustment for county employees' salaries to lessen the impact of the rising costs of basic needs such as groceries and gas and to ensure the county continues to attract and retain a well-qualified workforce. Click [here](#) to view Coulter's complete budget recommendation.

Public Safety

Public Safety continues to be the largest category of County spending in this budget recommendation, at 40% of the total General Fund budget. Funding will support hiring and retention bonuses for law enforcement personnel in the Sheriff's Office. Fairness in the criminal justice system is also a priority, as the

County pursues \$9.7 million in state grant funding to stand up a Public Defender's Office and ensure that all residents receive qualified legal representation.

Older Adult Advocate Position

This is a new position who will coordinate and help improve services the county provides to older residents across all departments.

Environmental Sustainability

Oakland County is creating the first comprehensive, campus-wide environmental sustainability plan which will guide the county in achieving net zero greenhouse gas commissions by 2050. An investment of approximately \$650,000 is included in the budget recommendation for additional efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions, build the county's Climate Action Plan, and more efficiently manage facility maintenance projects.

Investments in Affordable Housing, Healthcare, and Diversity and Equity

- County investments will increase the inventory of affordable housing and expand home repair services.
- Oakland County's Health 360 Program will enhance its partnership with Honor Health by offering residency programs to help train doctors.
- The budget recommendation provides \$250,000 in ongoing support for the Diverse Abilities Program, which offers employment opportunities for individuals with physical and cognitive disabilities who face barriers to employment, frees up administrative and labor hours from other workers, and supports the county's diversity hiring goals.
- The recommendation includes a new position in the Oakland County Purchasing Division to support outreach efforts to ensure that businesses owned by minorities, women, and disable veterans can bid on county contracts.

The proposed general fund budgets for fiscals 2023-2025 are \$504.2 million, \$515.8 million, and \$527.2, respectively. The total budgets for all funds for fiscals 2023-2025 are \$1.0068 billion, \$1.0209 billion, and \$1.0326 billion, respectively. It includes \$5 million in appropriations from American Recover Plan (ARP) revenue to pay for direct county COVID response costs in fiscal 2023, but otherwise excludes ARP funds so that investments supported by those dollars can be specifically reviewed and approved by the Board of Commissioners.