

On Wednesday evening, October 26, 2011, the city council members met at the Montpelier High School Cafeteria for a Spaghetti Dinner and Town Hall Meeting.

Present: Mayor Hooper; Council Members Weiss, Sherman, Jarvis, Golonka, Hooper, and Timpone; also City Manager Fraser. Department Heads were also in attendance.

Community Dinner

City Council and Staff advertised, inviting members of the community to a Spaghetti Dinner and a Town Hall Meeting.

The Spaghetti Dinner took place from 6:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M.

Call to Order by the Mayor

Mayor Hooper called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

She thanked the kitchen staff and everyone who had provided assistance and food for the Community Dinner. Child care was being provided. She also spoke about the Neighborhood CAN meetings being scheduled for November 19th.

11-262. "SETTING OF TIMES" by City Council for the evening ...

Skipped for this evenings meeting.

11-263. "Town Hall Meeting"

This will give the attendees an opportunity to weigh in on City funding priorities before the FY 2013 Budget is drafted.

City Manager Fraser provided a power point presentation which gave key questions and information from the 2009 National Citizen Survey. He explained how the budget worked, gave a breakdown of the tax rate and where the money was spent. The major cost factors were health insurance, energy costs and infrastructure/equipment. He spoke about the Matrix Report and the consultants conclusions and reviewed the budget process that leads up to the March 6th Annual City Meeting. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

Mayor Hooper moderated the meeting where the following comments and questions were discussed. The comments and questions were provided by City Manager Fraser.

Comments and Questions from Community Dinner 10/26/11

What revenue options are available?

What would it take to fix streets and sidewalks?

Raise parking rates and use revenue for other purposes.

What causes roads to deteriorate?

Set a tax rate/budget target and ask management to hit the target.

Concerned about the effect of the tax rate on the health of the city
6th highest tax rate in the state

Can we bond for infrastructure backlog?

Identify new or added programs in recent years

Address vacant store fronts – vacancy tax?

Factor in climate change in infrastructure planning

Promote conservation

Jockeying for retail space downtown

Businesses also pay personal property tax

Crosswalk painting – very important

School budget – have similar meeting

City salaries/benefits – too high

City needs more residents – get rid of sprinkler requirement, fix Barre & Main
intersection

Permit system is not business friendly

Health insurance – employees should share cost

Appreciated the updates during Irene

Appreciates Montpelier Alive

Do we get full PILOT from state?

Tasers on November 16th

Affordable housing? Need single family housing

Houses aren't available

Increase housing trust fund

Don't pin hopes on 500 new housing units

Commit one person to inspire economic development

Not getting our share of creative entrepreneurs
District heat – what’s happening?
What is status of water fund? Biggest problem down the road
How can we get citizens opinions on issues?
Use bonding for infrastructure, rates are low right now
Implement Local Options taxes
Services cost money, people vote yes
Look at attrition to reduce staff

THE TOWN MEETING PORTION OF THE MEETING ENDED SHORTLY BEFORE 8:30 P.M. A SHORT RECESS TOOK PLACE BEFORE THE REMAINDER OF THE MEETING WAS CONDUCTED.

Council will conduct other business as part of their regularly scheduled Council Meeting for this evening.

11-264. Consideration of the Consent Agenda:

Consideration of the minutes from the October 12th, 2011 City Council Meeting.

Consideration of becoming the Liquor Control Commission for the purpose of acting on the following:

Ratification of the issuance of a Catering Permit to Valley Bowl, Inc. for a Dance held on Saturday, October 22nd, from 5:00 P.M. to 12:00 A.M. at the College Hall Chapel.

Application for an Educational Sampling Event Permit from Cameron Keitel for a “winter wine tasting” to be facilitated by Calmont Distributors for the purpose of educating consumers on new and existing wines at Hunger Mountain Co-op. This event is being held at a private home at 20 Bailey Avenue but sponsored and staffed by the Co-op.

Additional Catering Permit

Application for a catering permit received from Yebba, Inc dba The Abbey Pub & Restaurant to cater a cocktail party at the Capitol Food Court, 115 State Street, Montpelier, VT from 2:00 P.M. to 7:00 P.M. on October 29, 2011.

Payroll and Bills

None signed this evening.

Motion was made by Council Member Jarvis, seconded by Council Member Hooper to approve the consent agenda with the additional catering permit. The vote was 6-0, motion carried unanimously.

11-265. Consideration of an Application for a Municipal Planning Grant. 

The Planning Commission approved the submittal of this application. The project description on this application reads: "To bring the zoning ordinance into compliance with the new Master Plan by reviewing and revising the City's land use regulation, drafting neighborhood level development standards, and creating performance criteria for smart growth, historic preservation, and rural uses and livelihoods."

A copy of the application is attached which describes the project in further detail.

Recommendation: Approve the application as requested by the Planning Commission.

Council Members expressed concern about not having a copy of the application or information needed to make a decision. Concern was also expressed about receiving updates on the Zoning Revisions.

Motion was made by Council Member Sherman, seconded by Council Member Jarvis to approve submission of the application and meet with the Planning Commission at a later date to understand their intentions and that the council will have a right to reject the funding if awarded. The vote was 4-2, with Council Member Weiss and Golonka voting against the motion.

11-266. Mayor's Report

- 11-267. Report by the City Clerk-Treasurer
- 11-268. Status Reports by the City Manager
- 11-269. Agenda Reports by the City Manager

City Manager Fraser informed the council that the city had received approval from the Federal Government to proceed with the Carr Lot Project. The next steps would be to prepare preliminary design and begin the appraisal work.

Adjournment.

Motion was made by Council Member Jarvis, seconded by Council Member Timpone to adjourned the council meeting at 9:10 P.M. Motion carried unanimously.

Attest: 
Charlotte L. Hoyt, City Clerk

WELCOME!
Community Dinner & Discussion
Montpelier City Council
October 26, 2011
City of Montpelier, VT

Key Questions

- **What does the community need/want from city government?**
- **How do we pay for it?**
- **What additional information would be helpful?**

Resident Priorities and Concerns

- **Police/Public Safety**
- **Planning & Zoning**
- **Parks**
- **Roads**
- **Schools**
- **Taxes**
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Jobs**
- **Maintain Services**
- **High Quality of Life**

From 2009 National
Citizen Survey "Key
Drivers"

From Survey Open
Ended Question

From Survey Policy
Question

How Does the Budget Work?

- + Expenses for services, departments, projects, etc.
- - Less Revenues from fees, grants
- = Difference raised by Taxes
- \$ Tax dollars divided by total assessed valuation (Grand List) =
Property Tax Rate

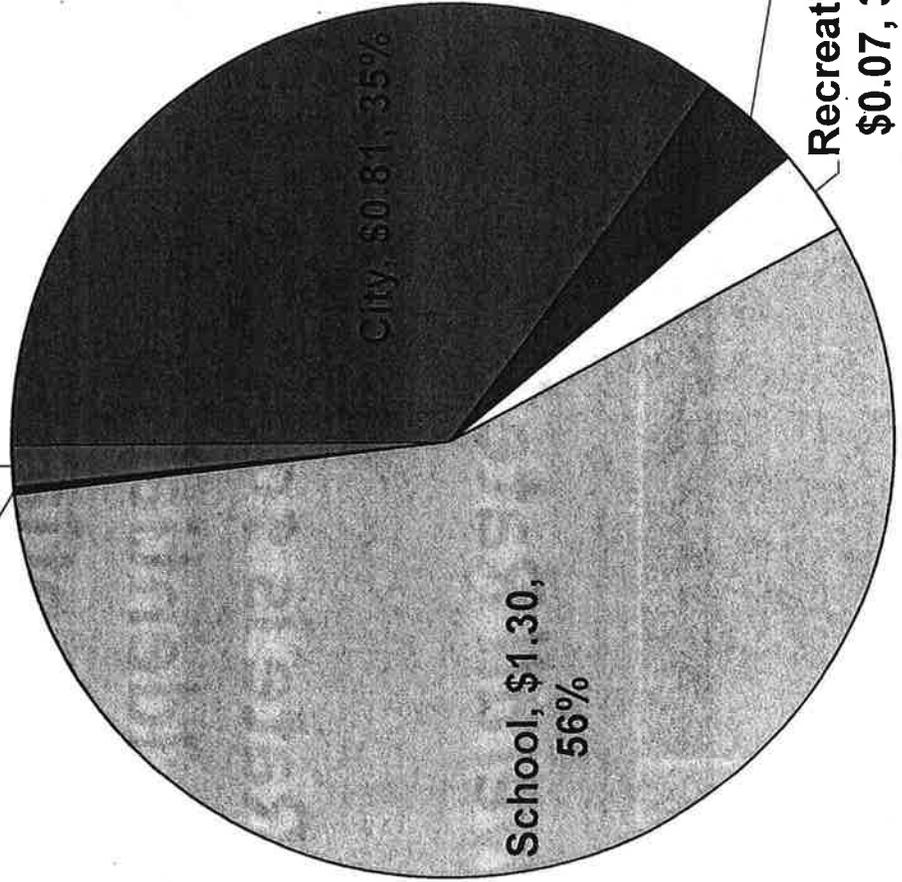
Property Tax Rate

- **Current Overall Rate is \$2.32 per \$100 of value**
- **Municipal Rate is \$0.92 per \$100 of value**
- **Average Residential property is \$223,000**
- **Average Residential tax bill is \$5,173**
- **One Cent on Tax Rate raises \$83,000**
- **One Cent on Tax Rate costs \$22.30 to average resident.**

Property Tax Breakdown

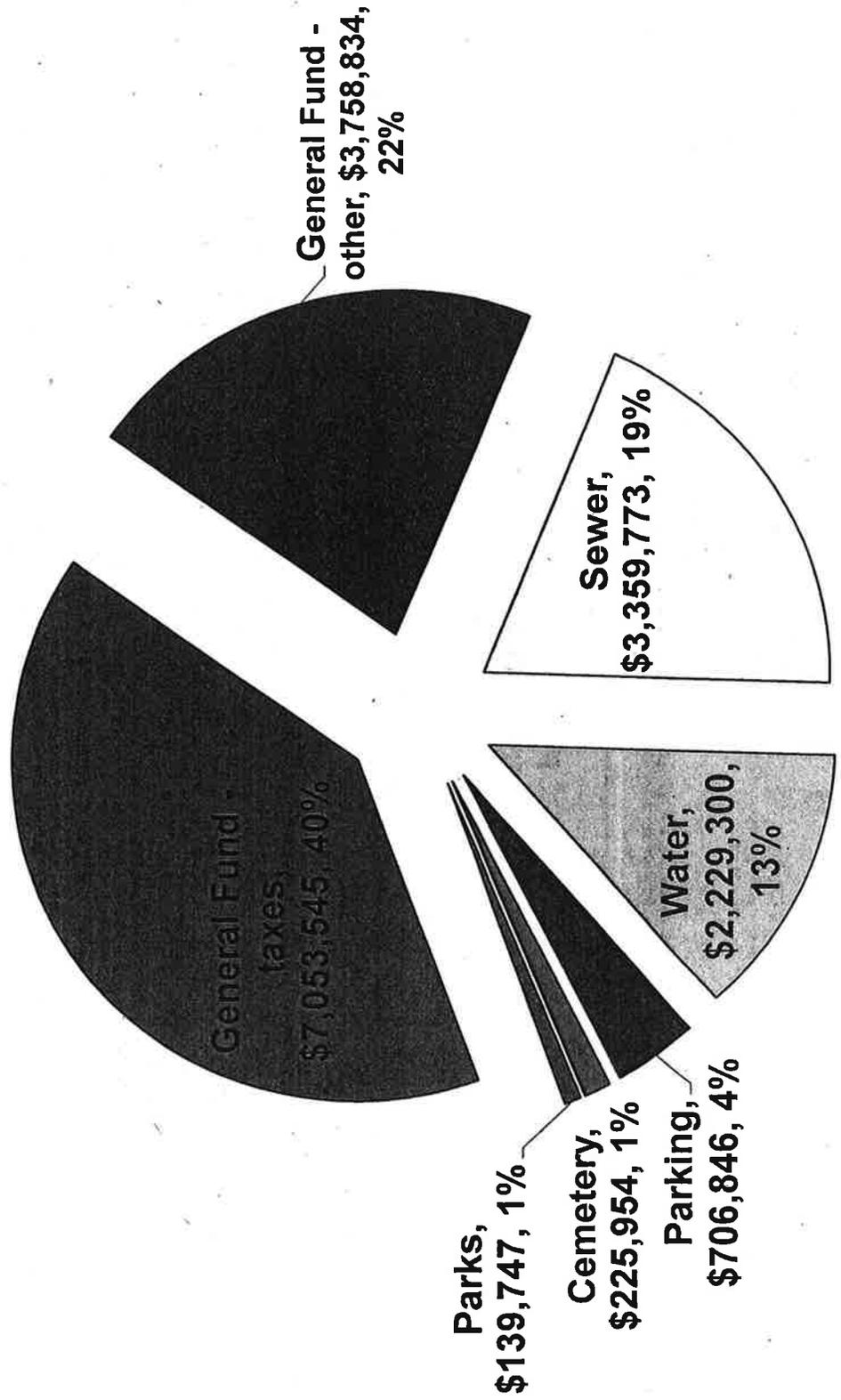
FY12 Residential Tax Distribution

County Tax, Library, \$0.01, 0% \$0.04, 2%



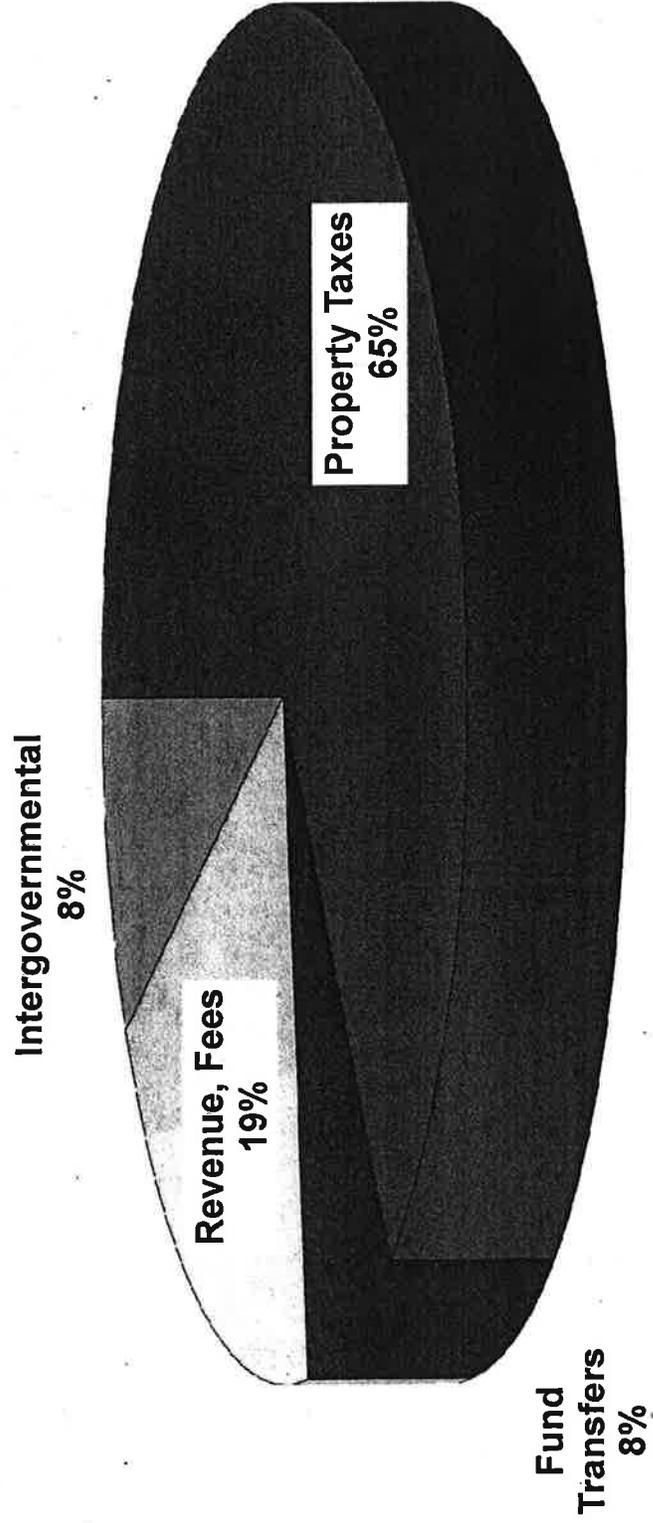
Overall City Budget

All Funds \$17,473,999

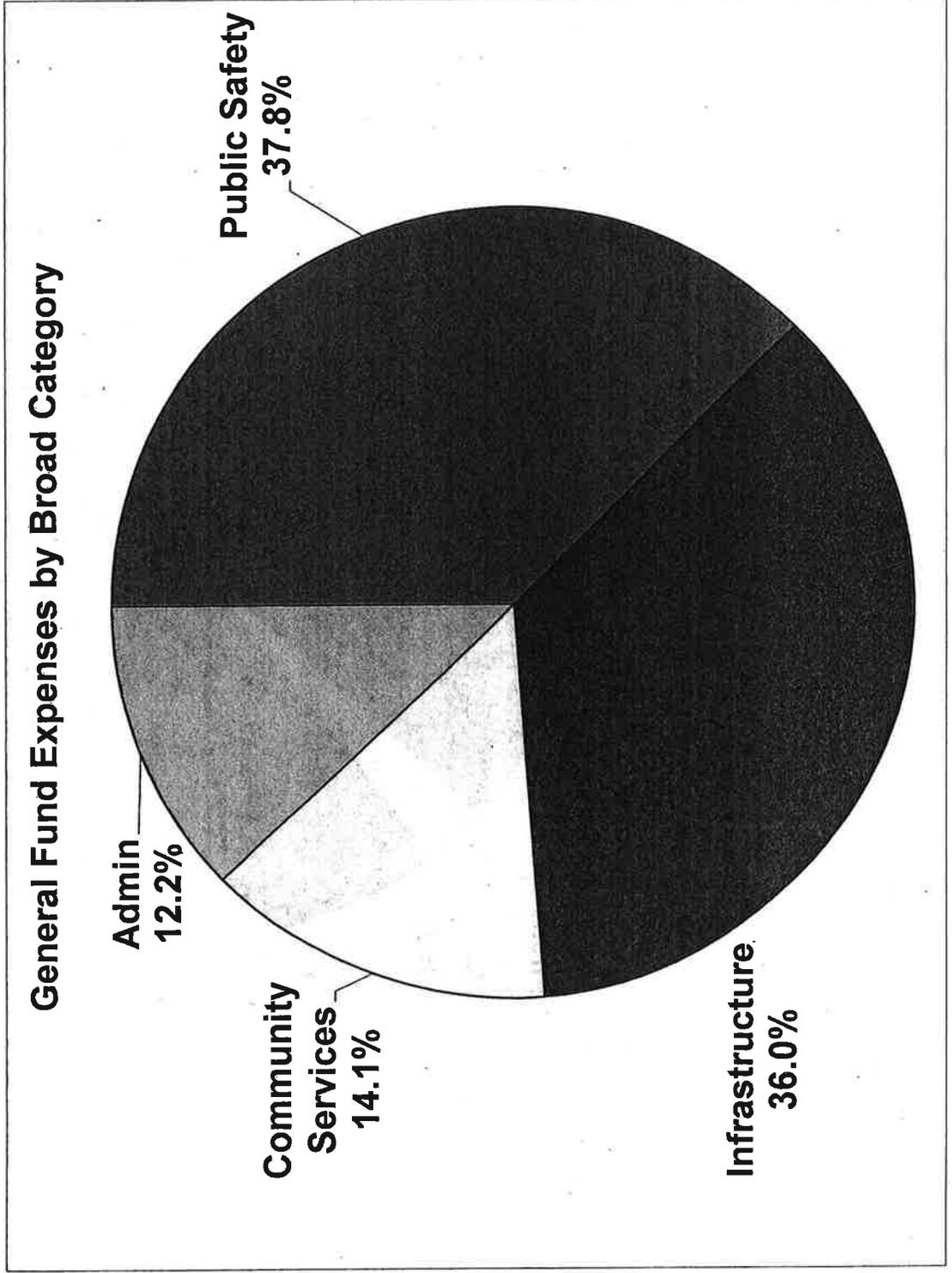


Where does GF
money come
from?

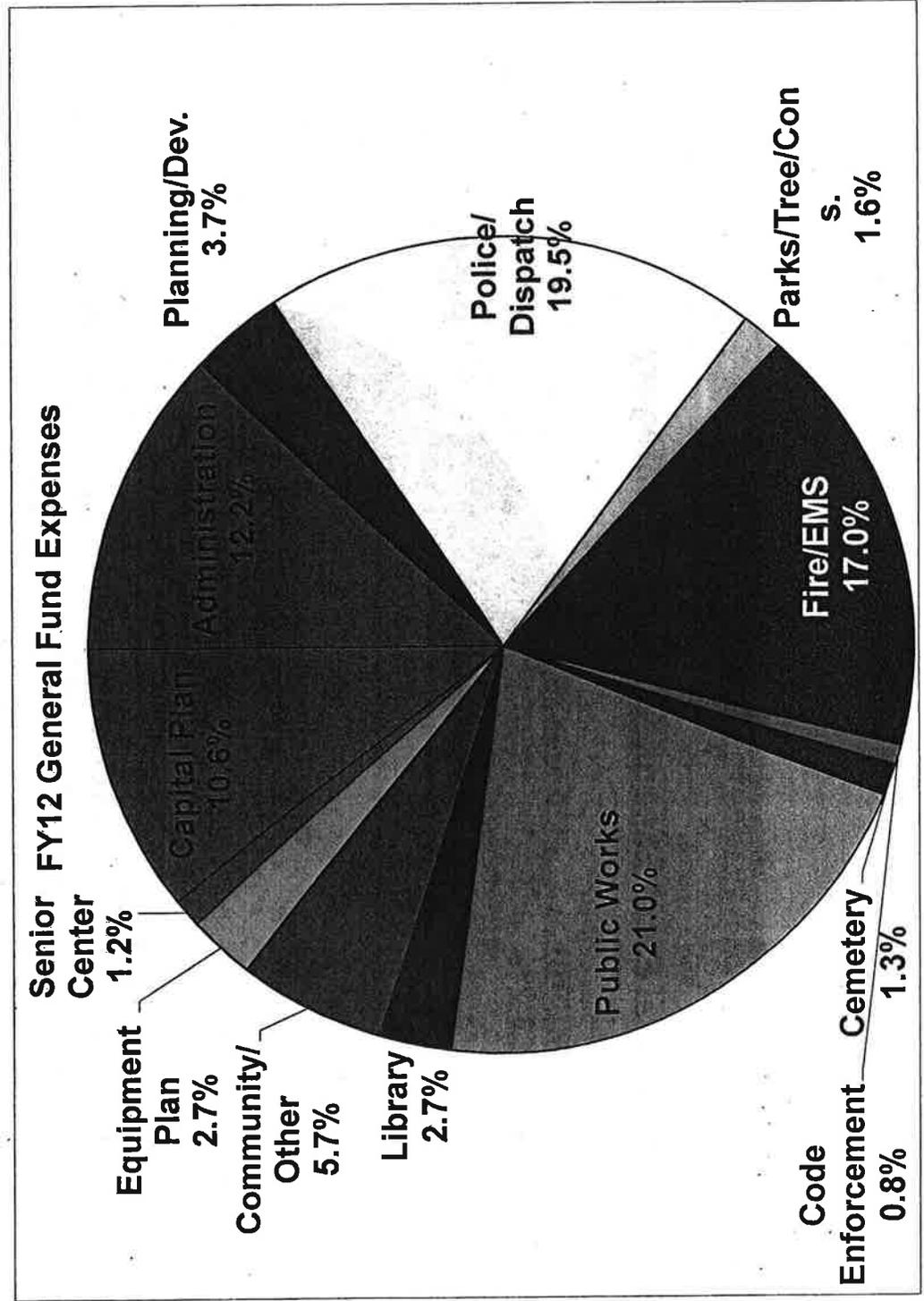
FY12
GENERAL FUND REVENUES



Where is
money spent?



Expenses by Department



Expenses by Category

FY12

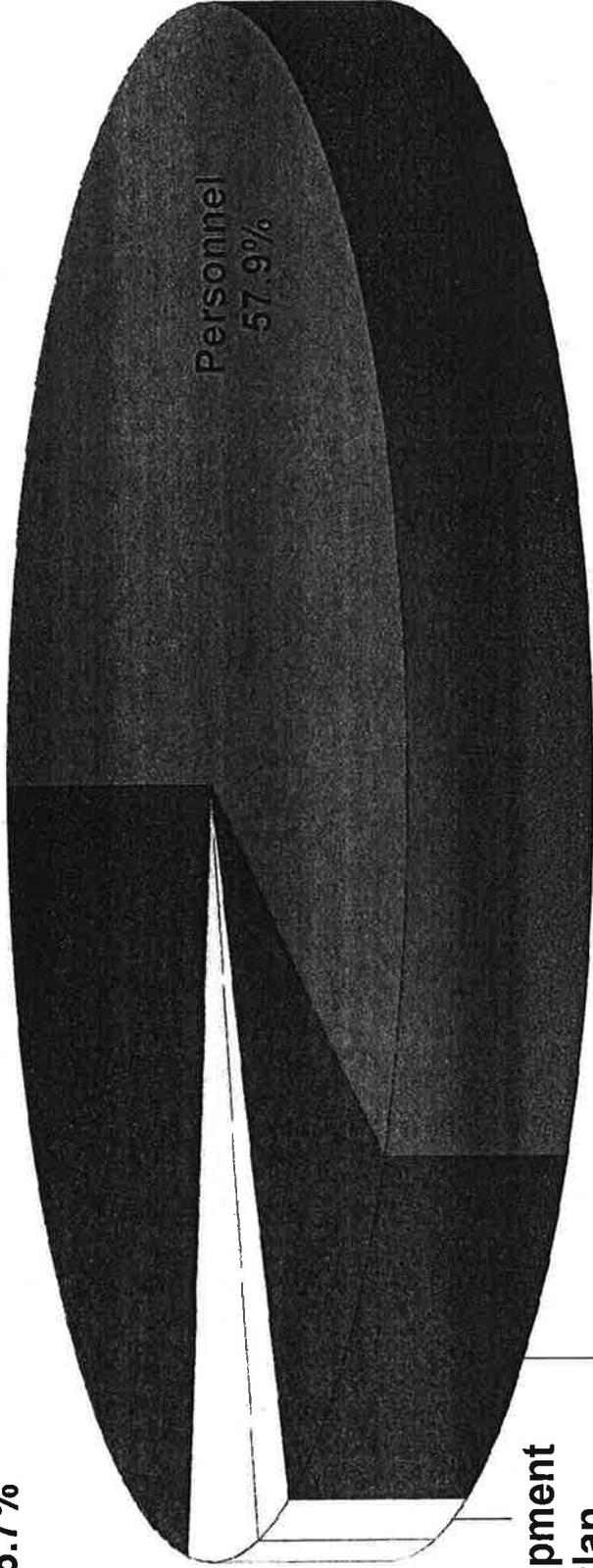
General Fund Categories

Operating Expenses
23.1%

Community/
Other
5.7%

Personnel
57.9%

Equipment
Plan
2.7% Capital Plan
incl. Debt
10.6%



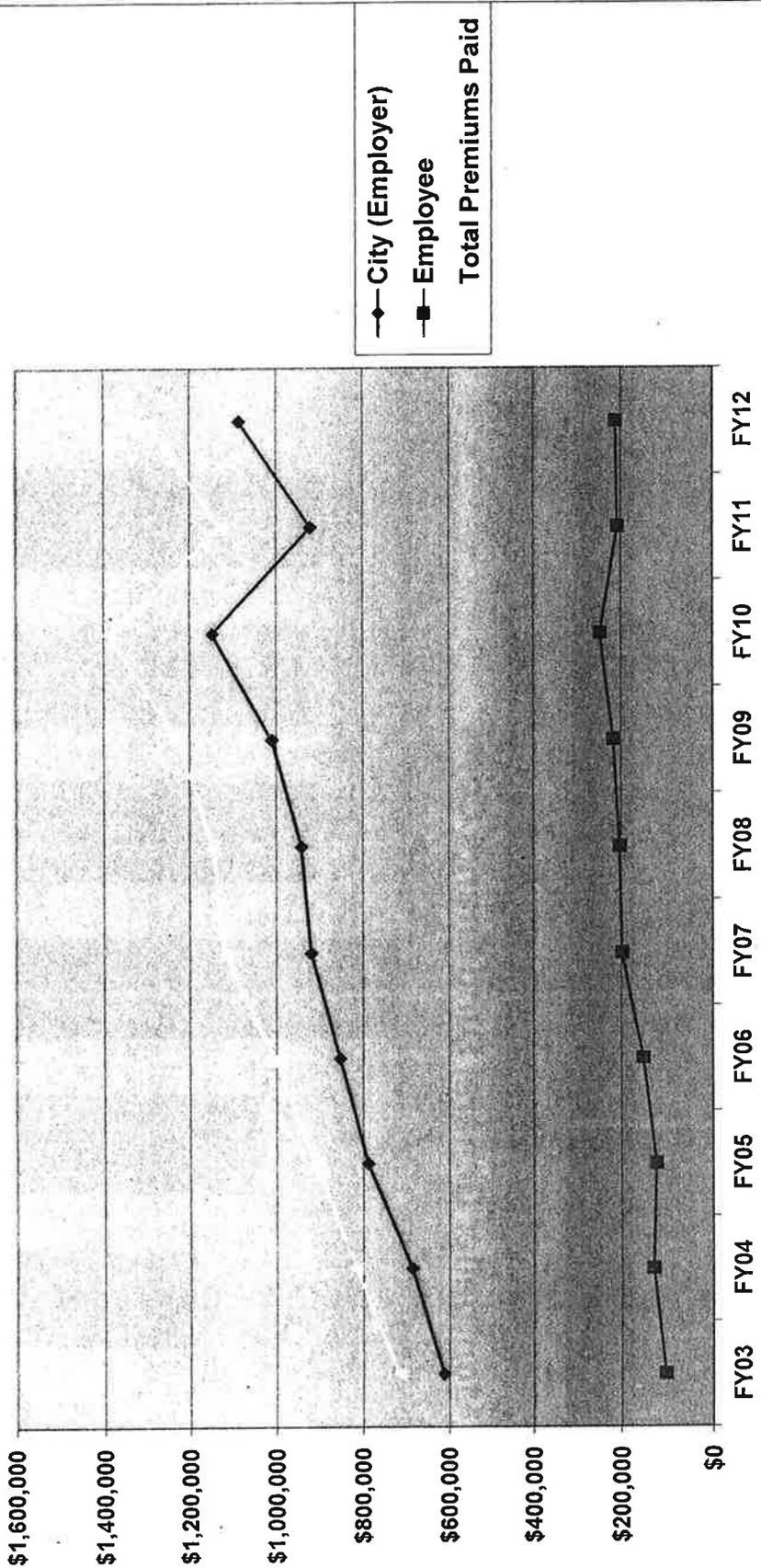
Major Cost Factors

- **Health Insurance**
- **Energy costs**
- **Infrastructure/Equipment**

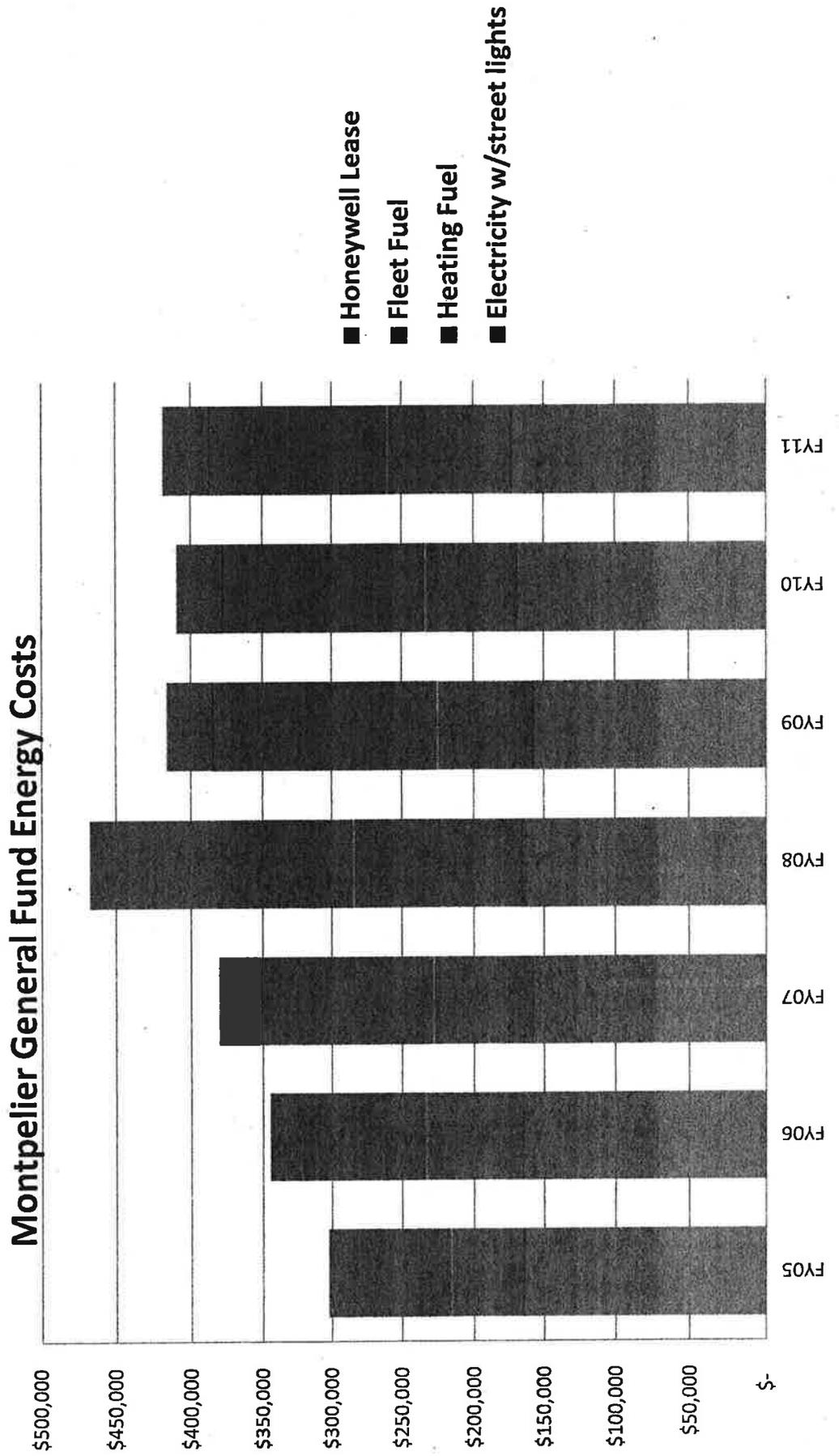
Health Insurance

Health insurance costs 10 cents on the tax rate

City of Montpelier Health Insurance Premiums/HRA Funding Paid



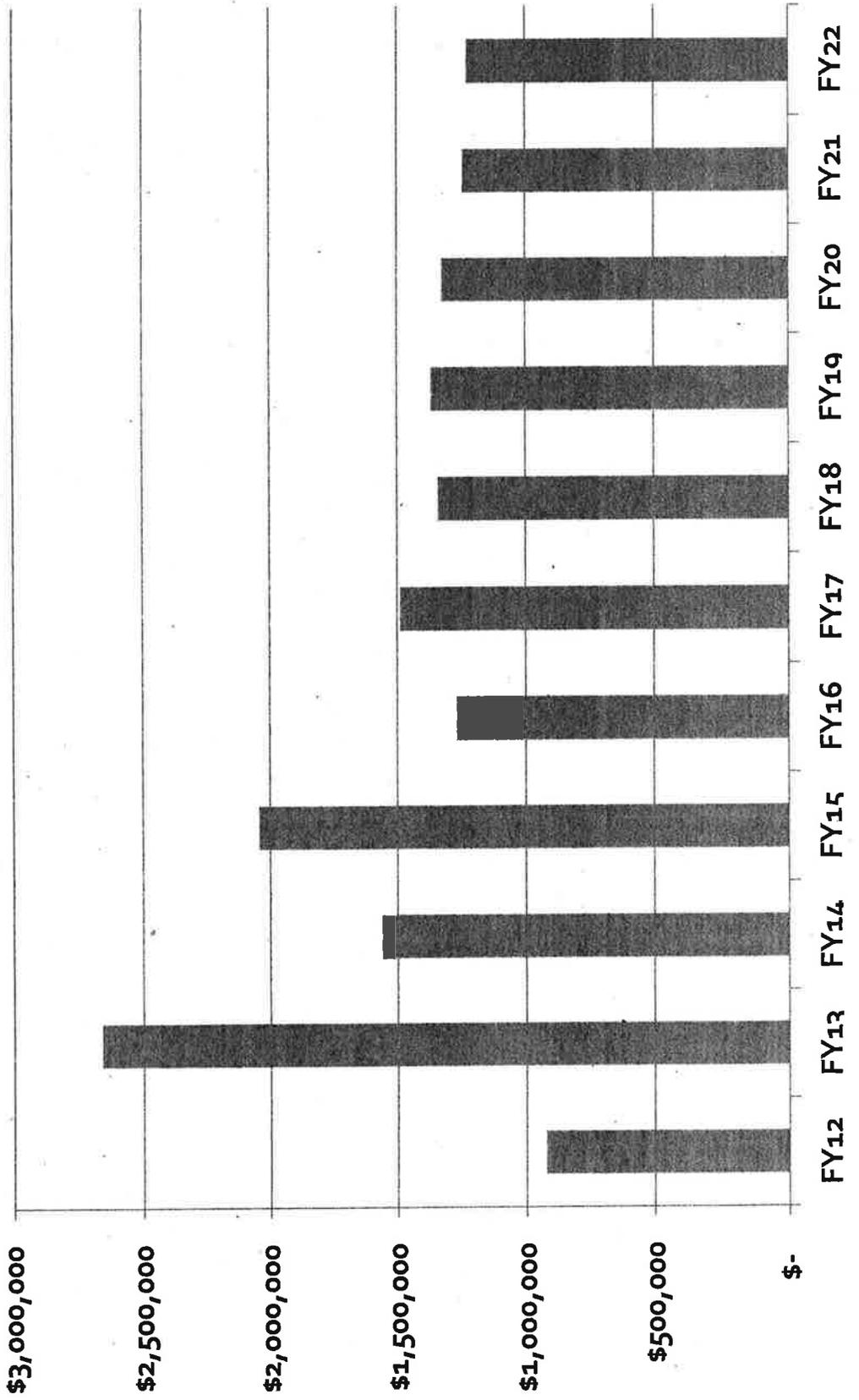
Energy Use



Capital & Equipment

Projected increase of \$500,000 per year to meet current/future needs.

Capital, Facilities & Equipment Needs



National Citizen Survey 2009

Highlights

Quality of life

Public trust

Public safety

Opportunities

Street repair

Affordable housing

Employment opportunities

Economic development



Policy questions

How important, if at all, is it for the City to maintain the following services at current levels:	Percent reporting "essential" or "very important"
Water	91%
Sewer	89%
Ambulance	89%
Fire	87%
Roads	86%
Schools	85%
Sidewalks	83%
Dispatch	82%
Police	81%
Capital Projects (i.e., road construction, buildings, bridges, etc.)	81%
Library	74%
Senior Services	73%
Parks	72%
Planning	71%
Recreation	66%
Downtown (i.e., events, promotions, etc.)	65%
Community Justice Center	59%

In Their Own Words

What is the most important issue the City of Montpelier will face over the next five years?

Jobs – people will want to move here, but we need employment opportunities, encourage business to invest here and create jobs. Also encourage small businesses to stay here.

Cost of living is the biggest issue. We are taxed to the max – my family could be forced to move out of Montpelier.

Affordable housing – people who work here can't afford to live here.



Matrix Consultant Conclusions 6/8/11

- The City of Montpelier is generally providing a high level of service to the public within the allocated staff and financial resources.
- There is a high utilization of cross-trained staff and inter-departmental cooperation to provide back-up and additional resources when needed.
- Staffing levels in the organization are generally “right” and “tight” for service expectations placed on departments.
- There are many strengths present in the organization that will serve as a strong base for implementing future improvements.
- Project team focused on solutions that could maintain / improve services with the least investment in additional resources.

Schedule

All at City Hall, Open to the Public, Accessible,
Broadcast on Local Cable. Streamed and archived
on website

- **Dec. 7 – Overview, DPW, Capital/Equip.**
- **Dec. 14 – Revenue, CJC, Parks, Cemetery, Administration, Senior Center**
- **Dec. 21 – Planning/Dev., Police, Fire**
- **Jan. 4 – Recreation, Adjustments**
- **Jan. 12 – First Public Hearing**
- **Thurs., Jan. 26 – Second Public Hearing, Petition Deadline**
- **Mar. 6 – City Meeting Vote, 7 AM to 7 PM**

Where to Get Information

William Fraser, City Manager, 802-223-9502
wfraser@montpelier-vt.org e-mail
www.montpelier-vt.org web site includes Matrix Study,
National Citizen Survey, Budget information, Meeting
video –live and archived, other notices



City of Montpelier, VT

Twitter @vtmontpelier

ORCA Media, local cable television
Montpelier Bridge, monthly page
Annual Report

Key Questions:

We're here to listen to you!

- 1. What does the city need/want?
(add, keep, cut)**
- 2. How should the city pay for what it
needs/wants?**
- 3. What information would be helpful?**