

Public Safety Millage — Your Questions Answered

November 3, 2026 General Election

Why is the City facing a General Fund shortfall?

The City's financial challenges have developed over several years. The Headlee rollback has limited property tax revenue growth while the cost of providing municipal services has continued to increase.

Additionally, a recent review of the City's financial practices resulted in corrections to how revenues and expenses were allocated among City funds. These adjustments revealed a structural funding gap that had not previously been fully reflected in the General Fund.

Why have two different shortfall amounts been reported?

The City's original FY2026–27 budget reflected a projected \$285,000 General Fund shortfall. Since then, the City has reduced that projection to approximately \$230,000 through:

- An additional \$25,000 in property tax revenue.
- Approximately \$20,000 in General Fund savings from eliminating the Parks and Recreation Superintendent position.
- Other operational savings and spending reductions.

The \$230,000 figure represents the City's updated projection.

What has the City done to reduce expenses?

The City has reduced departmental spending, reorganized operations to improve efficiency, eliminated a supervisory position, and postponed certain purchases and capital improvements.

These measures have helped reduce the projected shortfall, but additional financial adjustments are still necessary.

Will the millage pay for additional police officers or expanded services?

No. The primary purpose of the proposed millage is to help maintain existing public safety services, rather than expand staffing or programs.

The City currently budgets approximately \$814,000 annually from the General Fund for police and fire protection.

The proposed 2-mill levy would generate an estimated \$129,596 in its first year, providing a dedicated funding source for eligible public safety expenses currently paid through the General Fund.

If the millage supports existing services, where will the General Fund dollars go?

The millage would allow the City to use a portion of its existing General Fund revenue for other essential municipal operations while reducing the overall funding shortfall.

This is not an increase in public safety spending by \$129,596. It is an additional revenue source to help sustain current services and stabilize the City's finances.

Will the millage eliminate the budget shortfall?

No. If approved, the estimated \$129,596 in first-year revenue would reduce the current projected \$230,000 shortfall to approximately \$100,000, assuming other budget conditions remain unchanged.

What happens if the millage does not pass?

Regardless of the election outcome, City Council will need to consider additional reductions in expenditures, staffing, and/or municipal services to achieve a sustainable budget.

The outcome of the millage will influence the size of the remaining funding gap and the extent of the adjustments Council must consider.

The City's goal is to provide residents with clear, accurate information about the proposed millage and its financial implications so they can make an informed decision on November 3.