Investing in Grand Rapids

2026 Operating Referendum

Securing Our Community's Services, Safety, and Future

Referendum Vote on the November 3, 2026 Election Ballot

The Core Ballot Question

- **State Cap:** Under state law, the town's baseline 2027 levy increase is capped at $1,888,036.
- **The Request:** Asking voters to exceed this limit by 15.89%.
- **The Additional Amount:** An ongoing increase of $300,000 annually.
- **The Purpose:** Dedicated entirely to continuing basic town operations, including public works, police protection, fire protection, and emergency services.

Individual Tax Impact Breakdown

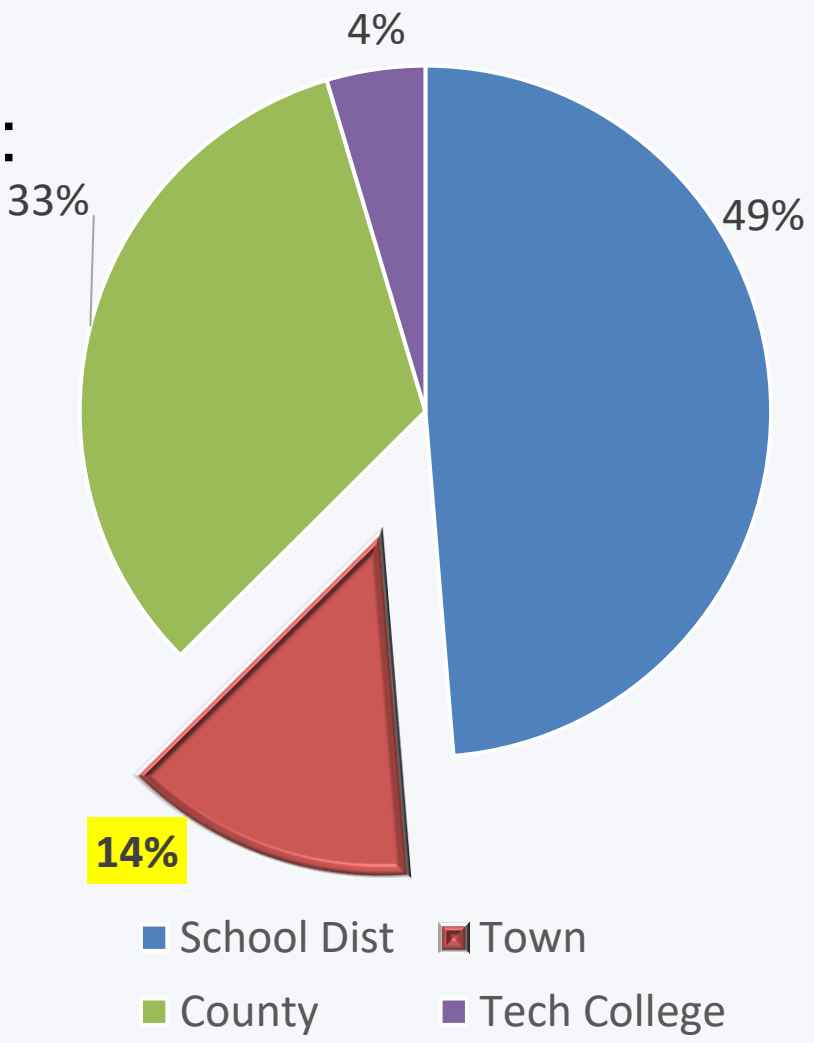
- **Impact Ratio:** Calculated based on current equalized town property valuations.
- **$100,000 Home Value:** A tax increase of $49.00 per year (or $4.09 per month).
- **$200,000 Home Value:** A tax increase of $98.00 per year (or $8.17 per month).
- **$300,000 Home Value:** A tax increase of $147.00 per year (or $12.25 per month).

Understanding Your Property Tax Bill

- The Town of Grand Rapids collects your entire property tax payment, but does not keep it all.
- **The Tax Bill Reality:** Your bill is split among multiple taxing jurisdictions.
- **Local Town Share:** The town's actual portion is only a small slice (~14%) of the total tax bill.
- **Other Jurisdictions:** The majority of your tax bill funds local public schools, Mid-State Technical College, and Wood County.

Tax levy breakout

- For every $1,000 of assessed value (2026):
- School = $10.14
- **Town = $2.88**
- County = $6.84
- Mid-State Technical College = $0.96
- State Tax Credit = ($2.12)
- Net Tax Rate = $18.70



2026 Budget Summary

2026 Budget

REVENUES			EXPENDITURES		
Taxes:					
	General Property Taxes	$ 1,762,175	General Government	$	686,969
	Other Taxes	$ 21,120	Public Safety	$	1,573,739
Special Assessments			Public Works	$	1,638,749
Intergovernmental Revenues		$ 851,116	Health & Human Services	$	10,400
Licenses & Permits		$ 64,005	Culture, Recreation, & Education	$	8,050
Forfeitures		$ 55,150	Conservation & Development	$	18,928
Public Charges for Services		$ 637,738	Capital Outlay	$	135,100
Intergovernmental Charges		$ 370,483	Debt Service	$	497,588
Miscellaneous Revenues		$ 51,000	Reserve for Contingencies	$	-
Loan		$ 400,000	Reserve for Fire Equipment	$	-
	TOTAL REVENUES	*$ 4,212,787*	Reserve for Capital Purchases	$	-
Cash Balance applied		*$ 356,736*			
	TOTAL REVENUES	*$ 4,569,523*	*TOTAL EXPENDITURES*	*$*	*4,569,523*

Expense Description Breakout

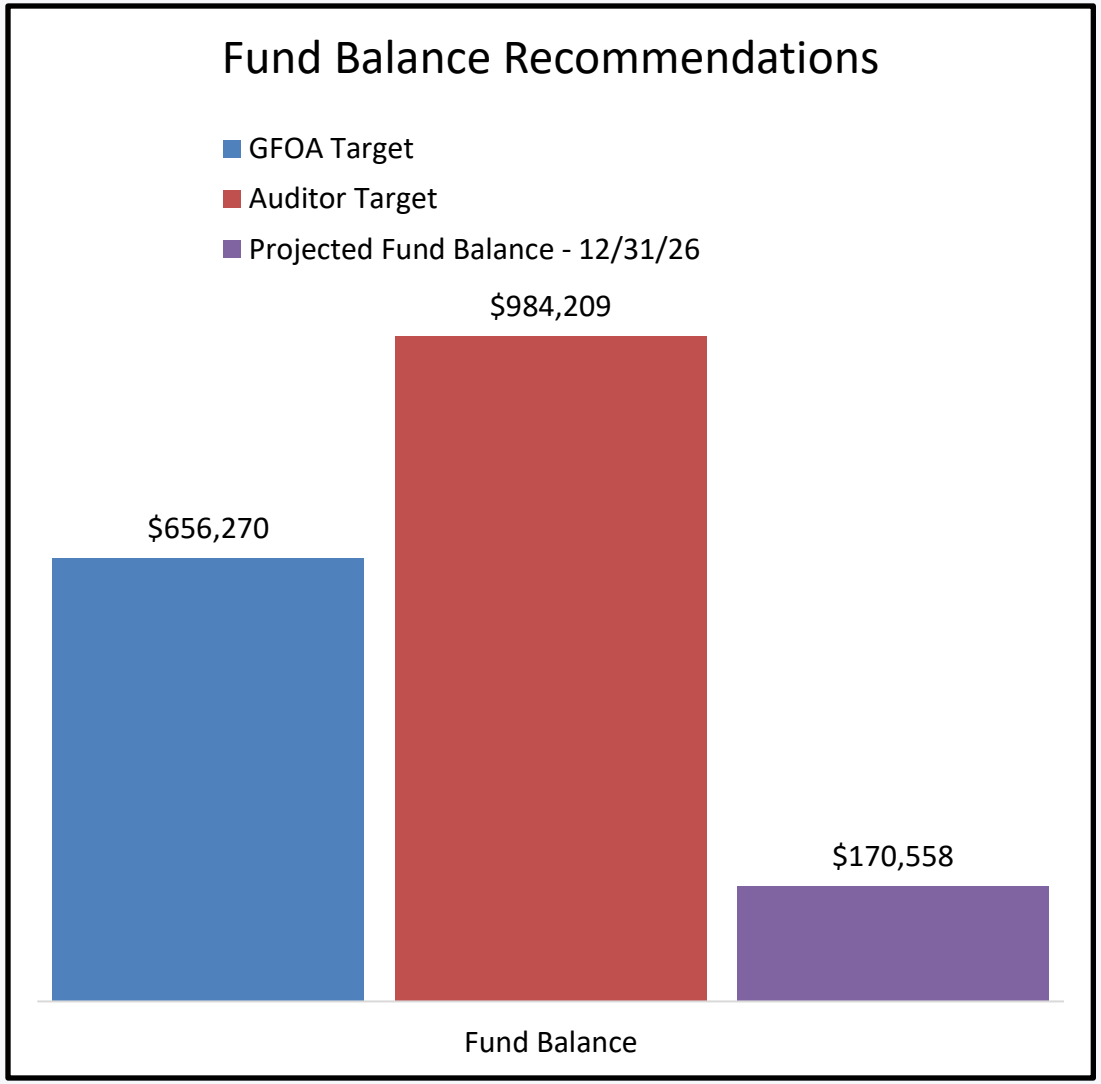
General Government – Board, office staff and election workers, professional fees.

Public Safety – Police and fire departments, EMS, building inspector.

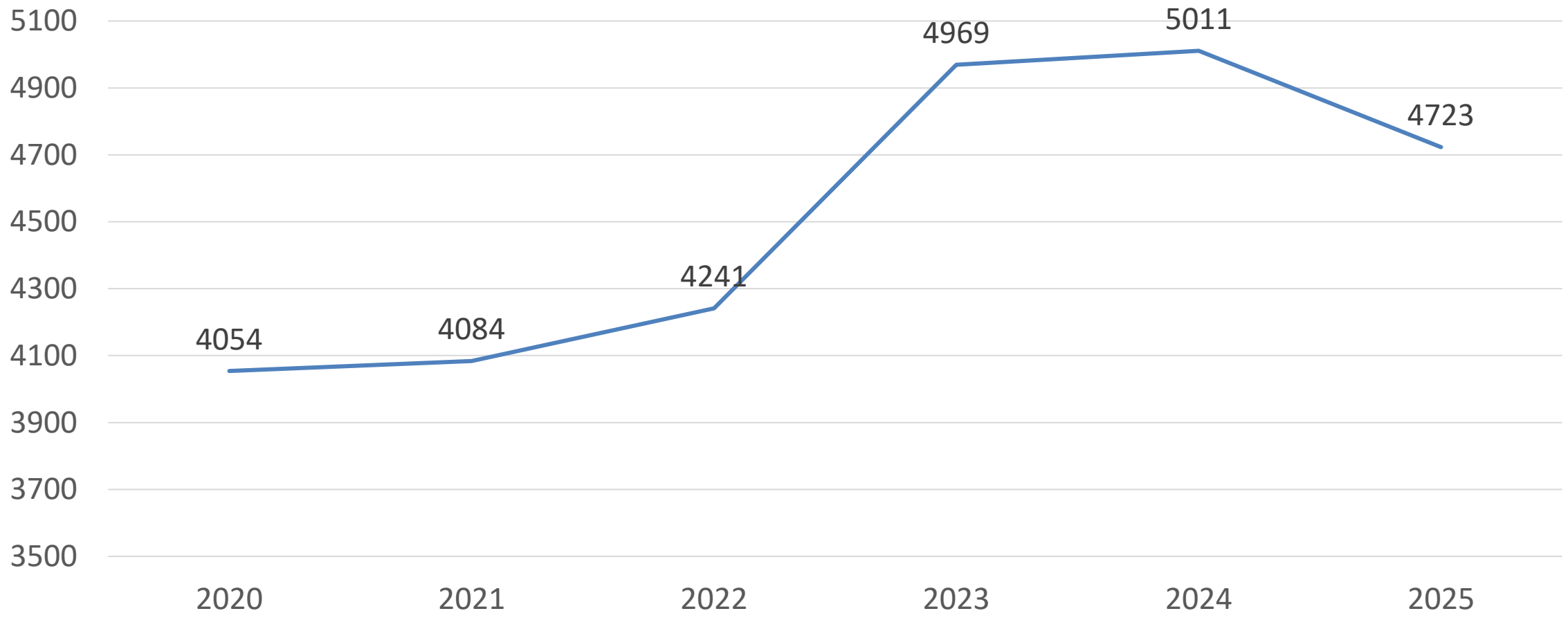
Public Works – Road maintenance and construction, snow plowing, garbage and recycling, humane society.

Fund Balance

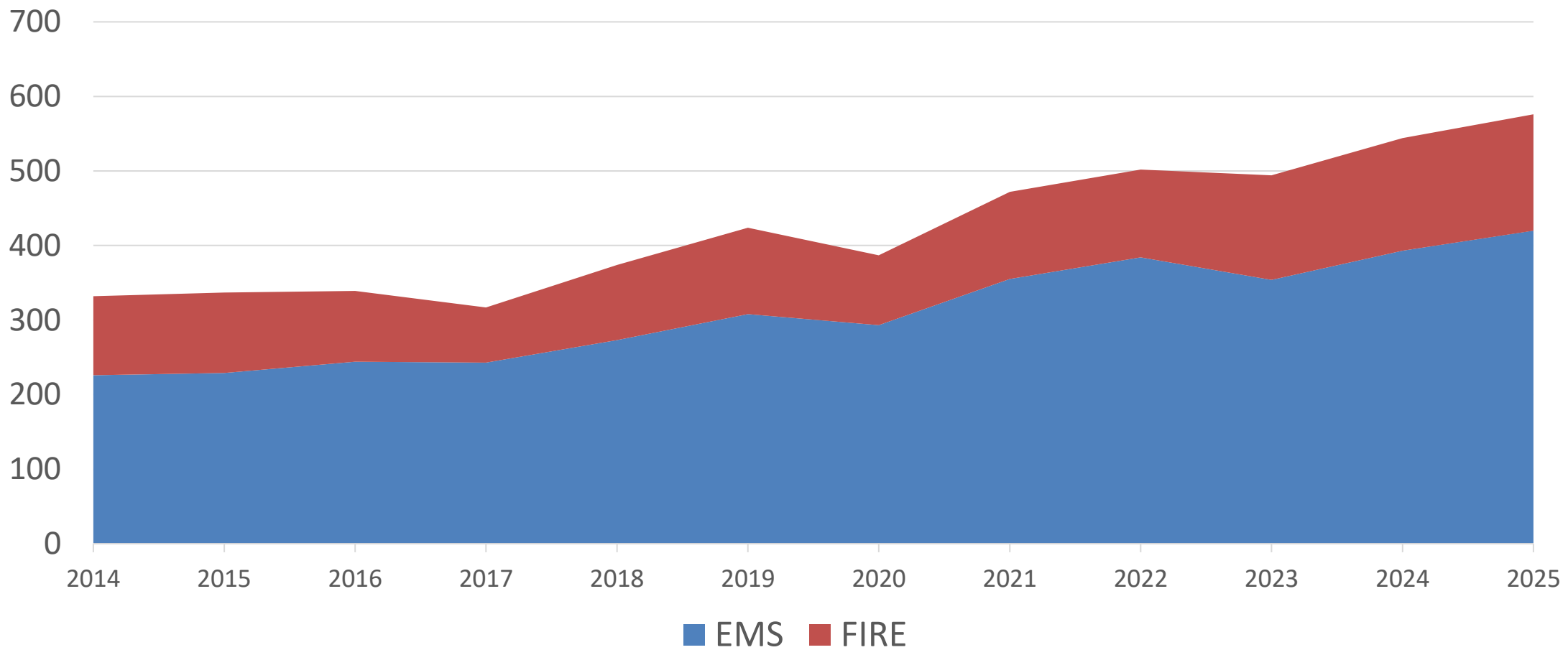
- **Fund balance** represents the difference between a fund's assets and its liabilities.
  - Ensures financial liquidity and service continuity, ensures adequate cash flow.
- GFOA recommends at least 2 months of operating expenditures in fund balance (16.7%).
- Auditors suggest 25% of operating expenditures in fund balance.



Police Department Calls for Service 2020-2025



Fire and EMS Calls – 2014 to 2025



'Yes' Vote vs. 'No' Vote

A 'YES' Vote Means: Maintained response times for public safety, stable winter plowing, and long-term operational predictability.

A 'NO' Vote Means: Operational budget deficit leading to unavoidable service pullbacks and faster road deterioration.

Voter Information & Key Dates

Election Day:

Tuesday, November 3, 2026.

Polling Hours: 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

In-Person Voting: Grand Rapids Town Hall.

Early Voting Options: In-person absentee voting begins Tuesday, October 20 at the Town Hall.

Questions