



Our Mission: We strive to provide exceptional services that enhance quality of life and promote a safe, healthy, and welcoming community for all.

Date: Sept. 10, 2024
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The following actions were taken at the Sept. 10, 2024, Washington County Board of Commissioners meeting at the Government Center in Stillwater, Minnesota.

County Board receives additional \$116,100 for family homelessness prevention, assistance

The Washington County Board of Commissioners accepted \$116,100 in additional grant funds for homelessness prevention for families and for securing housing for families experiencing homelessness Sept. 10.

The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MN Housing) recently awarded Washington County an additional \$116,100 in Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Program (FHPAP) funds. Washington County applied for FHPAP funds for the 2023-2025 biennium and was awarded \$1,500,000 for a two-year period beginning Oct. 1, 2023, through Sept. 30, 2025. The purpose of the FHPAP program is to provide supportive services and/or financial assistance to families, youth, and single adults that are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

The county has applied for and received FHPAP grant funding since 2007. It has contracted with community providers to utilize the funds to stabilize families in their existing homes, shorten the amount of time that families spend in emergency shelters, and assist families with securing transitional or permanent affordable housing. Agencies that will receive funds from the second round of FHPAP funding are Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services, Solid Ground, and Valley Outreach.

Contact: Sarah Tripple, Community Services Division Manager, 651-430-6480

County Board continues review of 2025 budget

The Washington County Board of Commissioners continued its review of the county's 2025 recommended budget Sept. 10.

The initial budget workshop, available in the County Board livestream archives, was Aug. 6 and provided an overview of a recommended budget for 2025.

The board heard presentations from each county department between Aug. 6 and Sept. 10. The Sept. 10 presentation was from the County Attorney's Office.

The overall county budget recommended by the Office of Administration includes a 5.9% levy increase to \$139.3 million. If the recommended levy is adopted, a median-valued home, worth \$412,000, would see a 3.2% increase in county property taxes, totaling about \$30 more for 2025. The county has the second-lowest tax rate and the third-lowest property tax levy per capita in the seven-county metro area.

The Attorney's Office promotes justice and public safety through vigorously prosecuting crime, protecting those in need, and providing quality legal representation for Washington County. In the Attorney's Office, key factors impacting the 2025 budget are the costs of eLitigation and technology, improving office wellness, and adapting to court and legislative changes. The Attorney Office's initiatives for 2025 include continuing to innovate to enhance productivity and efficiency and building the office community by supporting our staff and department partners.

All budget presentations can be found on the county website. Archived livestreamed meetings may be found on the county website at washingtoncountymn.gov/countyboard. Budget documents presented at the workshops may be found at washingtoncountymn.gov/budget.

The board will follow a budget calendar through early December, which will include:

- Sept. 24: Set a preliminary levy.
- Oct. 1: Review the county's five-year capital improvement plan.
- Nov. 19: Conduct a public hearing on the five-year capital improvement plan.
- Nov. 26: Conduct a public hearing on the proposed 2024 budget and levy; the public hearing will occur after 6 p.m.
- Dec. 17: Adopt a budget and property tax levy for 2024, and the capital improvement plan.

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County recognized with award for opioid settlement planning

Washington County Public Health and Environment received a national award for Excellence in the Application of the Opioid Litigation Principles. The county is the first jurisdiction in Minnesota selected for this award. The Principles were developed by a coalition of organizations across the substance use field as well as faculty and staff from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to guide states and localities in spending opioid settlement funds.

This recognition, awarded quarterly beginning in 2023, is given to jurisdictions that demonstrate distinction in how their decision-making process to utilize the National Opioid Settlement funds reflects the [Opioid Litigation Principles](#). Washington County's efforts, including its 2023 Community Input Survey and the establishment of the Opioid Settlement Council, have reflected a strong focus on racial equity as well as the development of a fair and transparent process for deciding where to spend the funding.

The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized staff for the award on Sept. 10.

Contact: David Brummel, Public Health and Environment Director, 651-430-6662

Photo Cutline 001: The Washington County Board of Commissioners recognized Public Health and Environment staff Sean Young-Stephens (second from left), Director David Brummel (fourth from left), and Rolando Vera, Jr. (fourth from right) for receiving the Excellence in the Application of the Opioid Litigation Principles Award.

Drainage improvement project approved for Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park

The Washington Board of Commissioners approved a contract for \$281,598.80 with Nadeau Companies, Inc. to improve drainage issues along the entrance road in Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park Sept. 10.

The park's access road experiences erosion when it rains, which has created maintenance challenges. This project will add curbs, gutters, and storm sewer structures to eliminate the erosion issues along the park entrance road.

This project was awarded \$87,500 through the South Washington Watershed District Coordinated Capital Improvements Plan Grant to help fund this project.

Bids were opened on Aug. 27 and Nadeau Companies, Inc. was the lowest bidder of six bids received.

Contact: Mike Kline, Engineer I, 651-430-4304