



Investing in Charlotte's Future

Development of the Proposed FY 2025 Budget includes a thorough review of revenue and financial options to ensure that the use of available resources is maximized to serve the community while maintaining a good value to tax and rate payers and is consistent with Council priorities. The total Proposed FY 2025 Budget is \$4.17 billion, and is comprised of the annual operating budget and the FY 2025 – 2029 Capital Investment Plan (CIP). The annual operating budget reflects day-to-day operations, while the CIP represents large capital projects over a five-year time horizon. These components work together to provide city services and infrastructure needed to support the Charlotte community and advance opportunities for all.

City Council Strategic Priorities

Well-Managed Government, Equity, Engagement, and Environment;
Great Neighborhoods; Safe Communities; Transportation and Planning
Workforce and Business Development

“Charlotte is America’s Queen City, opening her arms to a diverse and inclusive community of residents, businesses, and visitors alike; a safe family-oriented city where people work together to help everyone thrive.”

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FY 2025 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

General Budget Highlights

Revenue and Expenditure Overview:

- \$4.17 billion budget net of transfers
- \$898.2 million or a 7.7 percent increase recommended to the General Fund
- Structurally Balanced Budget with a 2-year lens:
 - ⇒ 1.5¢ property tax increase to support city operations (0.9¢ primarily for public safety), capital investments (0.3¢ primarily for housing and mobility), and arts and culture (0.3¢)
 - ⇒ First property tax increase in 6 years
 - ⇒ Maintains the lowest tax rate of any North Carolina city with a population larger than 75,000 residents
 - ⇒ \$4.48/month impact to the median household
- Provides a 5 percent salary increase for all hourly employees (2.5 percent increases in both July and November) with a minimum increase of \$3,280, boosting the increase to 7 percent for the city’s lowest paid employees
- Provides a 4 percent merit pool for salaried employees
- Continues pay incentives – 2.5 percent Commercial Drivers License (CDL); 2.5 percent 2nd and 3rd shift (includes Police); All-Access Transit Pass
- Provides a Financial Support Coordinator for employees
- Establishes an employee Emergency Loan Program for hardships
- Enhances home ownership opportunities within House Charlotte Plus
- Provides a 5 to 7.5 percent pay increase (including step) to most Public Safety Pay Plan employees
 - ⇒ These actions complete a two-year plan that has raised the top pay of Police Officers by 16 percent, to \$104,801 (with a 4-year degree)
 - ⇒ Supports Fire Pay Plan employees with pay increases up to 7.5 percent (including step)
 - ⇒ Increases the top pay for Police Officers, Sergeants, Fire Engineers, and Fire Captains by a total of five percent
- Provides nearly 2.5x the planned increase in funding for the Firefighters’ Retirement System

INVESTING IN OPERATIONS

The Proposed FY 2025 Budget includes a 1.5 cent property tax increase. This would be the first property tax increase in six years. Despite the increase, the city property tax rate will remain significantly lower than every city/town over 75,000 people in the state.

Proposed 1.5c Property Tax Increase

- 0.9¢ – General Fund (Public Safety)
- 0.3¢ – Capital Investment Plan (CIP)
- 0.3¢ – Arts and Culture
- 1.5¢ - Total Increase

\$53.79/year, \$4.48/month increase for typical homeowner

On top of \$6.3 million for enhanced compensation in public safety, and \$2.9 million to increase the Charlotte Firefighters' Retirement System contribution, the General Fund increase also supports the following increased investments:

Similar to efforts in previous budgets, the city continues to evaluate services and streamline and reorganize city operations to enhance the delivery of external city services.

Supporting Fire

Supporting Fire Services is critical to the ability to meet the public safety needs of our growing population. 57 new firefighter positions are being programmed within the FY 2025 budget. These positions will provide staffing for:

- A ladder company within the new Firehouse 45 in Hidden Valley;
- A new Fire ladder company to serve Charlotte Douglas Airport (CLT Airport);
- A new ladder company at Firehouse 20 to serve southwest Charlotte and improve ladder coverage for the city; and
- Relief positions for service coverage across the city as needed.



Enhancing Police Operations

Civilian Crash Investigators

In the summer of 2023, the North Carolina General Assembly enacted a statute allowing cities to employ civilians to investigate minor traffic crashes. The proposed budget includes funding to implement such a program within CMPD beginning with 16 Civilian Crash Investigators.

INVESTING IN OPERATIONS

Animal Care & Control

To expand CMPD’s capacity for addressing animal care and safety needs, the FY 2025 budget also includes the addition of ten positions to the Animal Care and Control Division, including another Veterinarian.



911 Investments

To ensure a continuation of reliable 911 services as the city grows, the FY 2025 Budget includes major investments in the city’s 911 infrastructure and staffing. The CIP includes \$9 million over two years for renovations at the Law Enforcement Center, 911 call center expansion at CMPD Headquarters, and improvements to the backup call center at the Police & Fire Training Academy.

Enhancing the Customer Experience

Enhancing CharMeck 311

Calling 311 is often the initial interaction members of the public have with city and county services. To enhance customer service capacity, the FY 2025 budget adds three new 311 Contact Center Representatives. These positions will enhance the public’s experience and reduce call hold times.

Solid Waste Services and Litter Reduction

The FY 2025 Solid Waste Fee is increasing for multi-family and single-family residences by approximately \$0.78 per month (\$9.41 annual increase). The Small Business Solid Waste fee remains the same as in FY 2024. In addition, the FY 2025 Budget includes \$250,000 for the partnership with the Center for Employment Opportunities, which helps previously incarcerated individuals build work experience. This contract promotes upward mobility opportunities and enhances quality of life for the community by expanding capacity for litter reduction.

Expediting Public Record Requests

As the city continues to grow, so do requests for copies of the city’s records. For FY 2025 a position is being added to Charlotte Communications and Marketing, that will assist all departments with fulfilling records requests. In addition, an administrative position is being added to the Fire department to help coordinate all Fire-related records requests.

BUILDING ON THE FOUNDATION

Special Initiatives

In FY 2025, a Special Initiatives group will be created to provide a heightened level of connection and executive level support. This group will incorporate the **Office of Sustainability**, the **Office of Workforce Development**, and the Special Assistant for **Mobility**. Realignment will provide for targeted resources in advancing these special initiatives and the results linked to City Council Priorities.

Succeeding With Sustainability

Charlotte will continue to prioritize analysis around electrification of existing buildings to complement Strategic Energy Action Plan goals. The Proposed FY 2025 Budget:

- ✓ Advances emissions reduction in city fleet with funding for 70 electric vehicles;
- ✓ Provides an Energy Coordinator to the city’s Sustainability team ; and
- ✓ Adds \$3.5 million in the CIP for installation of sustainable infrastructure in city facilities.



Enhanced Focus on Youth

In FY 2025, \$3.5 million in PAYGO funds is earmarked for City Council recommendations that help advance future efforts aimed at incorporating best practices into existing programs, increasing participation of at-risk youth in city programs, and advancing inter-governmental collaboration.



Continuing SAFE Charlotte

Investments continue with grant funds programmed for the city’s alternative response program, the Community Assistance: Respond, Engage, Support (CARES) Team. Created as a result of the 2020 SAFE Charlotte initiative, funding will continue efforts that reduce the need for Officers to respond to non-violent, non-emergency calls for service within **+ Adds one new CARES Team** certain geographies within the Charlotte community. **\$500,000** will support ongoing Alternatives To Violence initiatives and allow work to continue on Beatties Ford Road. Historic investments in the areas of



West Boulevard and Nations Ford/Arrowwood Road, driven by a leading framework, has drawn recognition nationally alongside nearly \$3 million in federal funds with the support of Representative Alma Adams.

ADVANCING MWSBE OPPORTUNITIES

Advancing Minority, Women, Small Business Enterprise (MWSBE) Programs and Policies

The city manages and/or supports many programs and initiatives that advance opportunities for small businesses. Several of these are highlighted below.

- The Boost Pad – minority and women entrepreneurs
- ASPIRE – financing for small business owners
- AMPUp – growth program for minority owners
- NXT|CLT – builds on AmpUp for minority owners
- ScaleUp CLT – access to Charlotte Regional Business Alliance network for minority business owners

The Proposed FY 2025 Budget includes funding to continue the many initiatives and programs that support Minority, Women, and Small Business Enterprises, and also launches the small business growth fund through public private partnership.

Charlotte Business INclusion

FY 2024 added a Business Inclusion Specialist Lead and Marketing Coordinator to work with liaisons in each of the city’s departments to support contract diversity, MWSBE participation, and the development of performance and risk mitigation strategies. A Management Analyst was also added to enhance project coordination between the city and vendors and ensure compliance with CBI policy.

[CBI University](#)

FY 2025 adds a Business Inclusion Specialist to centralize and coordinate educational programs offered by city departments and external partner organizations to MWSBEs in the city.



ADVANCING THE MOBILITY STRATEGY

A Different Approach to Capital Investment

In April of this year, the city provided an in-depth look at how the city is considering the future of capital investment in terms of Strategic Investment Areas (SIAs).

SIAs are the result of a new, data-driven approach to project identification that aligns the city’s mobility goals to mobility needs.

The foundation of this new approach is guided by the holistic vision of the Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan and refined by the Strategic Mobility Plan’s goals of expanding travel choices that are safe and equitable.

In the Proposed FY 2025 Budget, **\$55 million** in funding will be allocated to implement scalable projects across a range of project types, including projects that focus on pedestrians, cyclists, and cars.

The core components of this new approach are centered on projects that are:

- **Focused** – Program investment “bundled” to maximize impact
- **Scalable** – Big and small projects delivered based on funding and feasibility
- **Measurable** – Tracking performance toward policy goals
- **Adaptable** – Pivoting to better solutions, new technology, and innovation

The FY 2025 Budget programs **\$2 million** in funding to support mobility innovation pilots in the city to be used to test mobility strategies in regional activity centers. The goal of these pilots will be to expand safe and equitable travel choices for all by piloting:

- MicroTransit;
- Mobility hubs;
- Vehicle to infrastructure (V2I) communications;
- Expansion of data analytics and enhanced safety and capacity; and
- Transportation demand management strategies to reduce single-occupancy vehicle travel.



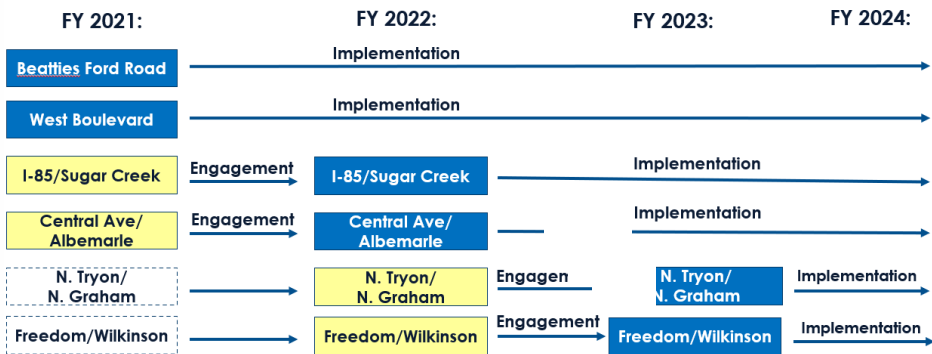
Image from: Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

CORRIDORS OF OPPORTUNITY

Following Through with Corridors of Opportunity

The Corridors of Opportunity program approaches investment and revitalization holistically and each corridor has projects and strategies tailored to the specific economic development, placemaking, and transportation needs of the corridor as determined by engagement and input of the residents.

Ready to Implement in all Six Corridors



Progress will continue within the Corridors of Opportunity in FY 2025 with a \$30 million allocation to advance projects within these areas.

Moving into the new fiscal year, \$25 million in bond funds to support capital projects that promote safety, mobility, and connectivity and \$5 million in PAYGO will be invested along with \$12 million in federal funding from the Sugar Creek RAISE Grant to support economic mobility, engagement, and safety.



Throughout FY 2025, the city will be implementing projects and plans developed with input from the community that are specific to the needs and priorities of each corridor.

LEADING THROUGH TEAM CHARLOTTE

Attracting and Retaining Employees

Employees are the city's greatest asset and over the course of the last several years they have truly stepped up to allow the city to face and conquer many challenges. In FY 2025, resources are dedicated to advancing the workforce and creating new programs and initiatives to give employees more comprehensive access to the tools and resources needed for them to thrive. The upcoming budget:



- + Provides a five percent increase for hourly employees
 - 2.5 percent in July and 2.5 percent in November
- + Provides salaried city employees a four percent merit pool

Over 1,100 of the lowest paid city employees will receive a six to seven percent salary increase

Proposed Minimum Salary for Full-Time Employees:

\$47,840

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\$23/hour*

*For 40-hour employees

All **current** hourly employees will earn at least \$49,480 by November, which is \$23.78 for 40 hour-per-week employees. This action means that minimum pay for the city's general hourly employees has been increased **70 percent over the past eight years, and 25 percent over the past three years.**



LEADING THROUGH TEAM CHARLOTTE

Supporting Opportunities for Career Growth within the City

In FY 2025, the city’s workforce development focus will be heightened with a team specifically dedicated to promoting workforce development opportunities for city staff and the community. This office will work to strengthen workforce development opportunities, initiatives, and results using tools already in place such as the city’s ACE Hub for employees and apprenticeship programs, while exploring new partnerships, programs, and tools to advance workforce development for all.

- Continuing Pre-paid Tuition Assistance and Career Coaching
~150 active participants across 15 departments enrolled at CPCC
~175 employees utilized Career Coach
- Almost 20 apprenticeships citywide
⇒ Launching four new roles in FY 2025

Healthcare and Benefits

Since FY 2021, on a per-employee basis the city’s employer contribution to employee medical, prescription, dental, and other benefits has increased by nearly 30 percent, including a \$7.6 million (10 percent) investment in the Proposed FY 2025 Budget. The FY 2025 employer investment equates to \$17 per employee per week while employee medical premiums will increase \$1-\$5 per week, similar to last year. The continued financial investment by the city has allowed employees to keep more of their paycheck and provides a strong complement to the city’s compensation strategy.

In addition to helping protect employees from inflationary cost increases, the Proposed FY 2025 Budget includes expanded access to support programs and services.

- Employees will have access to a **Financial Support Coordinator** to help employees better understand benefits and leverage resources available within the community;
- **Certified Financial Planner** through LearnLux Financial Wellness;
- **Emergency Loan Program** which provides up to \$1,000 in a zero-interest loan for hardships; and
- An **employee advocate** to support employees involved in workplace complaints or pre-termination processes.

TEAM CHARLOTTE—PUBLIC SAFETY

Supporting Public Safety

The City of Charlotte’s public safety employees are some of the most highly visible employees within the community. Their dedication to the city allows for around the clock services throughout the community.



Public Safety Pay Plan Employees (PSPPE)

The city took action to boost attraction and retention beginning in 2019. Over a three-year period from FY 2020-FY 2022, the top pay for a Police Officer was increased \$11,540. By January 2024, the city increased starting and top pay for a Police Officer in a historic manner. In total, both starting pay and top pay were increased 10.5 percent. Actions in FY 2025:

- ✓ Provides 5 to 7.5 percent pay increases (including step) to most PSPPE Employees,
 - These actions complete a two-year plan that has raised the Police Officer top pay by 16 percent, to \$104,801 (with a 4-year degree);
- ✓ Effective January, extra service-time restrictions will be removed to advance to the top Senior Police Officer step, allowing an extra 50 Police Officers to advance to top pay sooner; and
- ✓ Reduces the pay cycle for overtime from 28 to 14 days for Police Officers.

Fire Pay Plan Employees



On top of a 2.5 percent market adjustment for all Public Safety Pay Plan employees (entirely in July), the Proposed FY 2025 Budget lives up to the commitment outlined in FY 2024 by increasing the top pay for Fire Engineer and Fire Captain an additional 2.5 percent (above the market adjustment) in November.

- Supports Fire Pay Plan employees with pay increases up to 7.5 percent (including step); and
- Provides nearly 2.5x the planned increase in funding for the **Firefighters’ Retirement System**.

A SUSTAINABLE ARTS ECOSYSTEM

Funding Arts and Culture

Recognizing the importance of a thriving and diverse arts and culture ecosystem in Charlotte, the Proposed FY 2025 Budget includes \$11 million to support arts and culture, which represents more than three times the city's pre-Covid arts contribution (\$3.2 million in FY 2021).

- To provide the additional \$7 million in ongoing resources for supporting the Arts and Culture Ecosystem, the FY 2025 budget proposed a 0.3 cent property tax increase.

These funds will contribute to the city's vibrant, equitable, and thriving arts and culture ecosystem.

In collaboration with Mecklenburg County, the city will continue to be plugged in with the broader efforts on arts and culture, and in particular priorities 1 and 2 from the Comprehensive Arts and Culture plan:

- Priority 1:** Ensure sustainable and reliable funding for arts and culture in Charlotte-Mecklenburg through public-private planning, collaboration, and commitment.
- Priority 2:** The public sector must partner with an already active private sector to play a leadership role in building Charlotte-Mecklenburg's arts and culture ecosystem including governance and funds delivery.



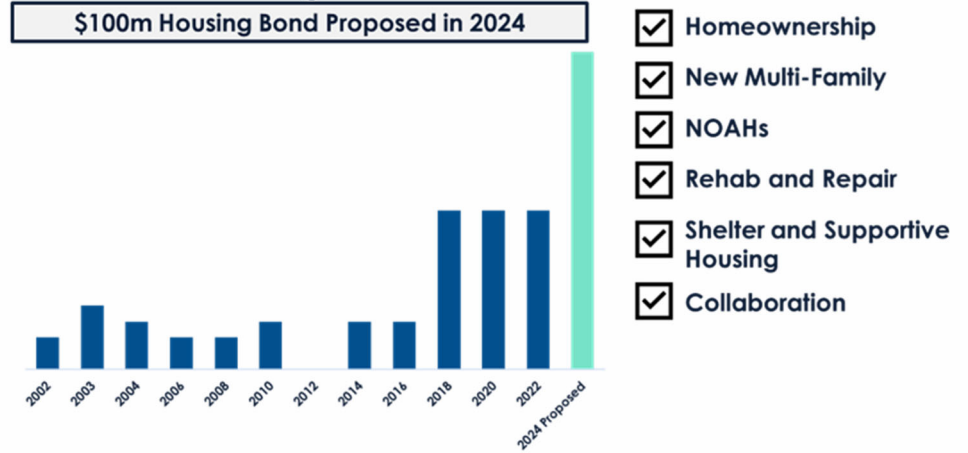
\$11m for Arts and Culture

- More than 3x pre-covid amount for arts and culture
- Support for Annually Funded Organizations, including organizations in City-owned Facilities
- Funds reserved for individual artists and arts organizations
- Collaboration with Mecklenburg County
- Continue participation in community-wide arts coordination

GENERATIONAL HOUSING INVESTMENTS

Providing opportunities for residents to have access to affordable housing remains an ongoing goal for the city. Working toward this goal, the **Proposed FY 2025 Budget includes a one-time increase from \$50 million to \$100 million in the 2024 Housing Trust Fund** to be dedicated to creating and preserving affordable housing. City Council is working to develop recommendations for creating investment goals across affordable housing categories to help direct this historic housing investment.

Generational Housing Investment



Additionally, \$2.58 million in funds is available in the PAYGO Fund to support programmatic efforts to end homelessness, provide urgent repair, and help with rental and energy assistance.

Affordable Housing Bonus Program

Another tool being used to advance housing is the Affordable Housing Development Bonus Program which allows developers to increase building heights if they agree to provide affordable housing on site or pay a fee-in-lieu to support future affordable housing communities. Goals of the program include incentivizing private construction of affordable units, achieving mixed income housing communities, and creating affordable housing units in areas of high opportunity.



GENERATIONAL HOUSING INVESTMENTS

House Charlotte

In addition to working to ensure our community has access to affordable housing, the city continues to offer access to the House Charlotte program to assist city employees and residents with homeownership opportunities. In FY 2025, the city is enhancing House Charlotte Plus based on recommendations that City Council accepted from the NEST Commission to promote housing opportunities within the city's Corridors of Opportunity.

- The House Charlotte program offers:
 - ⇒ \$30,000 in assistance for the purchase of a primary residence home
 - ⇒ Assistance funds can be used towards down payment, closing costs and/or interest rate buy-down
 - ⇒ Offered toward the purchase of any home within the City of Charlotte
- **House Charlotte Plus offers:**
 - ⇒ An additional \$50,000 in assistance, for \$80,000 in total assistance
 - ⇒ Home being purchased must be in the Corridors of Opportunity
 - ⇒ Set aside for City of Charlotte, CMS, and Mecklenburg County employees

House Charlotte Plus Funding

\$1m – CDBG
 \$2m – PAYGO
 \$1m – ARPA (NEST Recommendation)

\$4 MILLION AVAILABLE



CAPITAL PLANNING

Advancing Vision Zero



The Capital Investment Plan includes \$20 million in funding in the 2024 Bond to advance the global Vision Zero strategy to eliminate all traffic-related deaths and severe injuries, while increasing safety, health, and mobility for all. This allocation represents the largest funding commitment in program history, and five times the Planned 2024 Bond amount of \$4 million.

Street Resurfacing

The city's multi-modal transportation system infrastructure includes more than 5,500 lane miles of streets. Increased funding for street resurfacing in the 2024 Bond is programmed to resurface streets based on condition and schedule of prior paving.

In FY 2025, a total of \$40.54 million is allocated for resurfacing including funds from the FY 2025 CIP, PAYGO, and Powell Bill funds.

Sidewalks



The Sidewalk Program aims to make Charlotte a more walkable city by creating a pedestrian experience that is safe and equitable. The Capital Investment Plan includes **\$50 million** for the Sidewalks program, which **matches the largest investment in program history.**

Constructing Fire Facilities

The Fire Facilities Master Plan supports the construction of five firehouses, renovations, and purchase of the necessary firetrucks needed to support service expansion, with a total allocation of \$107 million (\$48.5 million from prior year appropriations and an additional \$58.5 million planned over the next three fiscal years).



- Additionally, the FY 2025 Budget advances equity renovations for Americans with Disabilities Act compliance and women's locker rooms in Fire Houses.

CAPITAL PLANNING

Acquiring Land for Operations

In FY 2025, the Solid Waste transfer station will be added to the Advanced Planning and Design program. A transfer station is critical to the long-term planning of future disposal needs. Benefits of new Solid Waste infrastructure include more efficient transportation of waste to further distances, increased flexibility in selecting disposal sites and/or providing access to multiple sites, and the ability to continue managing the community's waste.



Transfer Station example in King County, WA

FY 2025 will program \$12.5 million in capital funding dedicated toward advancing capital needs essential to city operations. Acquisition efforts may include land for a Solid Waste transfer station, a CMPD helicopter hangar, and/or relocating the city's asset recovery and disposal facility.

Continuous Advancements in Equity

In FY 2024, \$2.5 million was allocated toward reviewing and updating Firehouse facilities to ensure the facilities are accessible and usable for all Firefighters. For FY 2025, an additional \$1.5 million in Capital Investment Funds is being allocated to this work. Furthermore, \$3 million is being invested for review and to retrofit locker room facilities at Solid Waste Services to provide equitable access for all.



Public Private Partnerships (P3s)

Public Private Partnerships (P3s) serve as catalysts for transformative real estate developments that make the city more dynamic and provide new job opportunities, housing, and amenities for our residents and businesses. For FY 2025, funding is allocated for existing and future P3s. Current partnership areas include the **Innovation District**, **Ballantyne Reimagined**, and **Garrison Road North (River District)**.

SERVING THE REGION

Aviation



Aviation accounts for five percent of North Carolina's gross domestic product with an annual impact of \$32 billion to the surrounding region. Aviation is projected to serve 60.5 million passengers in FY 2025, with the lowest cost per enplaned passenger of any US Large Hub Airport (~\$3.22/passenger).

For FY 2025, CLT's total operating and capital budget equates to \$1.221 billion with major projects underway such as the Terminal Lobby Expansion and Construction of a 4th parallel runway.

Charlotte Area Transit System

The FY 2025 CATS operating and capital budget equates to \$326.5 million. CATS moves over 12 million people annually, serves a five-county area, and runs the state's only light rail system. Total ridership has increased by 50 percent on bus operations and more than doubled on rail operations since return to work. Improved reliability has been a major focus of CATS' recent investments as well, with **missed trips** falling from a rate of ten percent to **less than one percent**.



Additionally, a focus on employee investments has resulted in improved retention and recruitment efforts within CATS. New security contracts, enhanced pay, and improved and new communication tools have helped cut vacancy rates in half over the previous fiscal year.

The Proposed FY 2025 Budget for CATS does not include any increases in fare costs.

Solid Waste Services

The FY 2025 Solid Waste Fee is increasing by \$0.78 per month (\$9.41 annual increase). The increase will generate additional revenue to cover FY 2025 increases in Solid Waste operations, including contractual obligations and waste disposal fees.



SERVING THE REGION

One Water

Charlotte Water

Charlotte Water’s operating and capital budget equates to \$785.5 million. The FY 2025 Water and Sewer Fee is proposed to increase by 5.75 percent which equates to a \$4.37 per month increase for the typical home owner.



Charlotte Water remains focused on maintaining high-quality drinking water and wastewater systems, while ensuring operational efficiency and compliance. In January 2024, Charlotte Water launched a new community engagement and financial support program the Helping Hands Outreach (H2O), with the mission to provide financial support to Charlotte Water customers for water, wastewater, and stormwater bills.

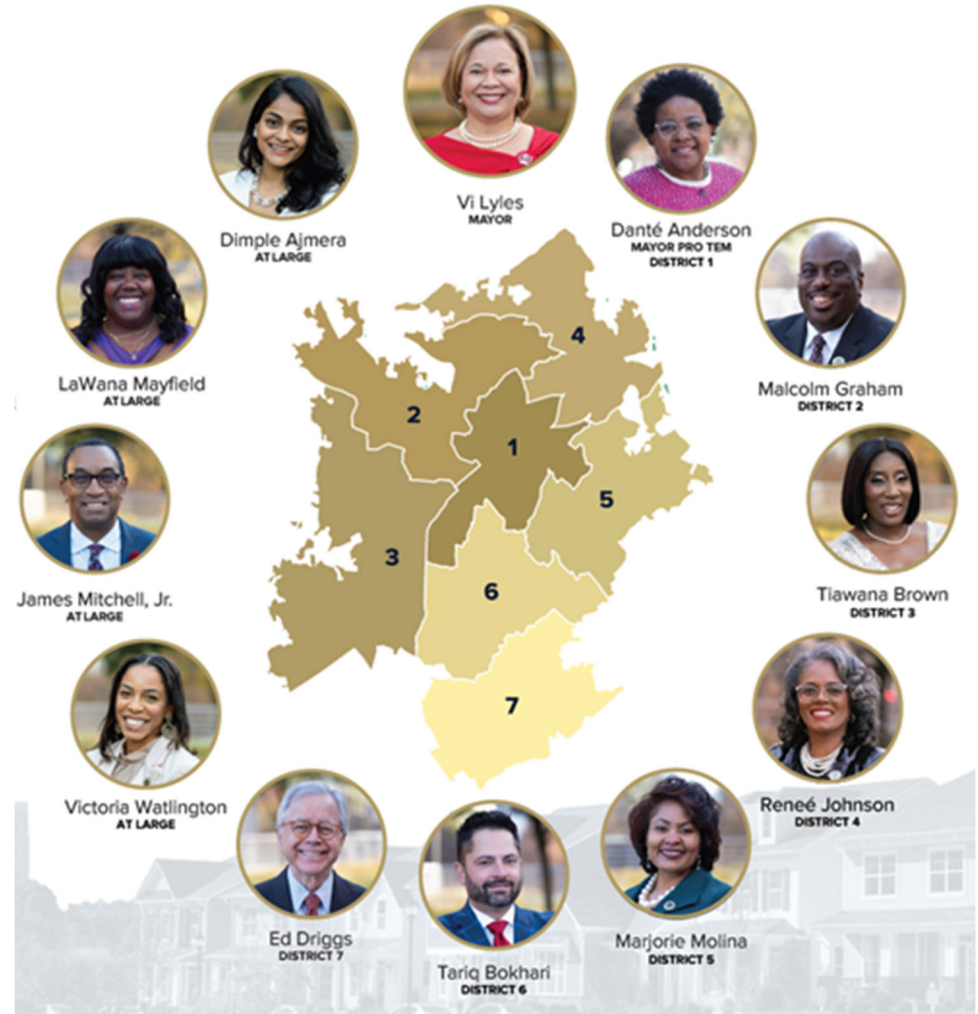


Storm Water

The FY 2025 Stormwater Services Fee is proposed to increase by 4.9 percent, which equates to a \$0.47 per month increase for the typical home owner. The Proposed FY 2025 Storm Water operating and capital budget equates to \$122.5 million. These funds will resource Storm Water to mitigate floods, maintain and construct drainage systems, meet federal regulatory requirements, and prepare for potential storm events.

User Fees

	Typical User Monthly Fee	Monthly Increase
Solid Waste	\$8.67	\$0.78
Water	\$80.35	\$4.37
Storm Water	\$10.15	\$0.47
Total	\$99.17	\$5.62



FY 2025 Budget Calendar

City Manager’s Proposed Budget	May 6, 2024, 6:00 p.m.
Council Budget Public Hearing	May 13, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
Council Budget Adjustments	May 20, 2024, 1:30 p.m.
Council Straw Votes	May 30, 2024, 1:30 p.m.
Council Budget Adoption	June 10, 2024, 6:30 p.m.

This Budget in Brief includes the highlights of the FY 2025 Budget. For additional details, please visit the city’s website www.charlottenc.gov to view information about the budget or to read the budget document.