



GOSHEN COMMON COUNCIL

Minutes of the MARCH 14, 2025 Education/Work Session

Convened at the Goshen Chamber of Commerce, 232 South Main Street, Goshen, Indiana

(NOTE: Because this was a work session there were no official votes and no public testimony)

1) At 1:30 p.m., Mayor Gina Leichty called the work session to order and welcomed all. The Mayor then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Linda Gerber (At-Large) Phil Lederach (District 5) (attended via Zoom)
Doug Nisley (District 2) Megan Peel (District 4), Donald Riegsecker (District 1)
Matt Schrock (District 3) Council President Brett Weddell (At-Large)

City of Goshen staff present:

Deputy Mayor Mark Brinson	Police Chief José Miller
Behavioral Health Response Coordinator Officer James Ballard	
Fire Chief Anthony Powell	City Assistant Chief Phil Schrock
City Assistant Chief of EMS Shane McKerchie	EMS Supervisor Andrew Priem
City Attorney Bodie Stegelmann	City Building Commissioner Myron Grise
City Director of Public Works & Utilities Dustin Sailor	City Superintendent of Parks & Recreation Tanya Heyde
Utility Office Manager Kelly Saenz	Director of Administrative Affairs Michael Wanbaugh
Communications Manager Amanda Guzman	Technology Specialist Jen Oklak
Clerk-Treasurer Richard R. Aguirre	

2) Review & Approval of Meeting Agenda:

Mayor Leichty presented the agenda. Councilor Nisley moved to approve the agenda as presented. Councilor Peel seconded the motion. **Motion passed 7-0 on a voice vote.**

3) Mobile Integrated Health Program (Presenters: Assistant Chief of EMS Shane McKerchie, EMS Supervisor Andrew Priem and Behavioral Health Response Coordinator James Ballard)

Mayor Leichty gave an introduction to the new Mobile Integrated Health Program. She said she was grateful for the team members who have shown a willingness to help people in need. She also said the new team was a good example of the "better Goshen" approach to serving the community.

Fire Chief Anthony Powell provided a brief overview of the program, which is a collaboration of the Goshen Fire Department, the Goshen Police Department and Goshen Community stakeholders. He said the program aims to provide community-based healthcare, crisis intervention and support services to individuals in need.

Chief Powell said that by integrating healthcare and law enforcement efforts, the team aims to take a proactive approach, improve outcomes and reduce the emergency service burden on the City.

Chief Powell then introduced the team members to provide a comprehensive presentation:

- Assistant Chief of EMS Shane McKerchie
- EMS Supervisor Andrew Priem
- Behavioral Health Response Coordinator James Ballard



Team members then made a detailed presentation about the Mobile Integrated Health Program using a 12-page PowerPoint presentation (EXHIBIT #1). Using the PowerPoint, the team members provided the following information:

- **Overview of the program**, including goals;
- **Key personnel**, including a Licensed Clinical Social Worker who will be added;
- **Steering advisory board** composed of the Mayor, the Police Chief, the Fire Chief, the Assistant Police Chief and the EMS Chief;
- **Organizational structure of the team and program**, including clearly defined personnel;
- **Learning from other programs**; the MIH team is modeled after other successful Indiana programs, although Goshen's is the first to fully integrate EMS, law enforcement and social services;
- **Community partnerships**; the MIH program collaborates with key stakeholders, including Oaklawn, Maple City Health Care Center and Goshen Hospital which provide additional mental health, addiction recovery and medical support services;
- **Expected community impact**, including improved access to healthcare and crisis intervention, reduced cost to the City, enhanced collaboration between healthcare and law enforcement, better outcomes for people experiencing mental health crises and a strengthening of community trust and support;
- **Crisis Intervention Training**; 19 police officers and three paramedics have completed this specialized training and have successfully applied it in various incidents which has improved responses to crises, greater safety and more effective interactions with the community;
- **Funding and grants secured**; the City has secured \$200,000 in grants from the State and the Elkhart County Health Department which will support program development, training and operational costs;
- **Transport and reimbursement agreement with Goshen Hospital**; the hospital has agreed to reimburse the MIH for mental health transports even if the patient lacks insurance, Medicare and Medicaid for transports to facilities in Elkhart, Marshall and St. Joseph counties;
- **Next steps**, include filling the Licensed Clinical Social Worker position, implementing policies and procedures for MIH operations; continuing collaboration with local stakeholders, securing additional funding and resources and officially launching the MIH program and beginning community outreach.

Team members discussed people they've already assisted, including patients with mental health issues who are no longer in crisis. They also discussed their goal of assisting people who have "fallen between the cracks," such as shut-ins and elderly people who have repeatedly fallen at home and required assistance from paramedics.

In response to questions from the Mayor and Councilors, team members discussed:

- **Crisis Intervention Training**, including how widely it will be available to emergency personnel and how it will be provided;
- **The tracking of services and referrals** that will be provided to patients through use of new software the City has purchased;
- **How calls for service will be handled and the initial hours of operation** by the MIH unit
- **The expected outreach to schools**;
- **The status of efforts to hire the Licensed Clinical Social Worker**;
- **The MIH's outreach and service to the Latino community**.



Mayor Leichty thanked MIH team members for their work and for developing an approach that is unique in Indiana – a joint collaborative effort between the Fire and Police departments. She also thanked **Police Chief Miller** and **Fire Chief Powell** “for their willingness to say ‘Yes, this is important, and that our community and our teams can benefit by increased collaboration.’”

4) Break

The MIH team concluded its presentation at 2:34 p.m. and Mayor Leichty called for a brief break.

5) Potential impact of City revenue reductions likely to be approved by the Indiana Legislative Assembly and User Fee Study presentation (Presenters: Mayor Leichty and Shawn Gulec)

Mayor Leichty gave an overview and background of the **Goshen Comprehensive User Fee Study** that was then presented to Councilors. However, before doing so, the Mayor gave a detailed explanation of reductions of local revenue expected to be approved by the Indiana Legislative Assembly and the probable impacts on the City.

Mayor Leichty said she and the **City Attorney** asked **City Research Assistant Shawn Gulec** (a student at Indiana University Bloomington) to conduct this study last summer because the City of Goshen hadn't conducted a comparative analysis of City fees for several years. The goal was to gain a better understanding of the City's fees and how they stacked up against other municipalities in the area and throughout the State of Indiana.

The **Mayor** said the study took on greater importance this year because of looming financial challenges that the City of Goshen is facing due to pending state legislation to reduce revenue for public schools, cities and counties. She said the goal of the legislation is to provide property tax relief for residential homeowners who have experienced a significant escalation in their property taxes.

Mayor Leichty said, “As I talk to mayors around the state, you won't find a single mayor who doesn't say, ‘We want to provide relief for those people who are facing some kind of dire straits in being able to afford their property taxes. And it's completely appropriate to look at ways to try to provide for those folks and make sure that nobody loses their home because of paying property taxes.’”

However, the **Mayor** said “One of the big issues that I see is that the people who need the property tax relief are not likely to see it. Most of the folks in Goshen are already at the (property tax) caps, so it's really not going to provide relief to them. The people it (lower property taxes) would benefit are people with large land holdings and business owners. And business owners already experience one of the best tax rates anywhere in the nation.”

Mayor Leichty said that for years the City has struggled because of reductions of property tax revenue because of tax caps that have been imposed by the state. She said the City is now expected to lose millions of dollars in tax revenue. She said some of that revenue would be lost forever.

Mayor Leichty continued, “At the same time, we've all been paying attention to escalating costs, and everybody in this room has experienced inflation. Municipalities have experienced it in a way that has been almost mind boggling for me as a new mayor.”

“Just by way of example,” the **Mayor** said, “when I came into office, we started planning for equipment replacement and a fire truck when I came in was \$1 million dollars is now \$2.4 million dollars.” She said the estimated cost of developing new water wells on the north side of the City has increased from \$43 million to an estimated \$115 million. And the cost of new police cars has increased from about \$45,000 to almost \$85,000.



Mayor Leichty continued, "I've been here less than two years, and these costs are escalating for municipalities astronomically. So, even if we stayed the same (in terms of revenue), we're going backwards because we're not keeping up with the cost of inflation."

The **Mayor** said there have been accusations that some municipal officials are exaggerating the potential impact of state-approved local revenue reductions, but "this will impact, not just parks and quality of place initiatives, but there is the potential to impact public safety. And that's a very real concern in the City of Goshen. Already we are not at the recommended federal levels for police and fire service today. Our teams are doing a great job with the teams they have, but it's certainly a struggle, and we're already paying too much overtime (pay), because we have to mandate that people come in because we don't have enough staff to cover all of those positions."

Compounding these problems, **Mayor Leichty** said, is the fact that the City of Goshen is continuing to grow and that more funds will be needed to provide essential public services. "And so, with additional cuts coming, we are facing the very serious possibility that we will be in more and more dire circumstances."

Mayor Leichty said the City of Goshen is unique because it has a very large aging population which poses additional funding challenges. She said, "We love our retirement communities that have chosen to be here, but we also need to make sure that we're continuing to make those quality of place investments so that we can attract young families who want to live here ... so, we can't just ignore the benefits of having those quality of place investments that make our community attractive and sustainable over the long term."

Mayor Leichty also discussed another challenge – the proposed removal of a federal exemption that municipalities have had on municipal financing. As an example, she said if the City were to borrow \$115 million by issuing a bond it now would repay the bond at a discounted rate. However, she said that discount could be eliminated, forcing repayment at the full market rate and making infrastructure projects unaffordable for local communities.

Given these "very difficult challenges ahead of us," **Mayor Leichty** said the City must explore its budget options. She said, "When you don't have enough money, you have two choices. You either have to figure out how to reduce your expenses or increase your revenue. And we want to look at all of those options in a holistic manner to make sure that we're making careful strategic decisions that will benefit Goshen's growth and sustainability over the long term."

Mayor Leichty said she wanted the Council to begin discussion today about the potential impact of these revenue reductions so that Goshen "can continue to be the high-quality place that we've all come to appreciate." She added that the budget preparation process will begin earlier than usual this year and will include cost-cutting scenarios amid pressure to keep City employee wages competitive as well as make necessary infrastructure improvements.

Following her in-depth revenue and budget explanation, Mayor Leichty invited Shawn Gulec to make a presentation about his City of Goshen Comprehensive User Fee Study.

Before the meeting, Councilors were provided with a 7-page description of the City of Goshen Comprehensive User Fee Study, which summarized information in an accompanying 49-page PowerPoint presentation (**EXHIBIT #2**).

Shawn Gulec presented his study findings using a 49-page PowerPoint presentation titled "Goshen Comprehensive User Fee Study" (**EXHIBIT #3**).

Gulec said the City of Goshen conducted a comprehensive user fee study to evaluate 547 fees across 13 City departments "ensuring they align with service costs, legal requirements and peer city benchmarks." He said the analysis provided a foundation for informed budget planning and operational efficiency while maintaining affordability and competitiveness. **Gulec** said recommended adjustments consider inflation, prior financial studies and expert input, with implementation guided by state statutes.



In his written summary, **Gulec** indicated that this study “underscores the City’s responsibility to balance financial sustainability with community needs, ensuring fees remain equitable and justifiable within Goshen’s service capacity.”

Gulec said the objectives of the fee study were to:

- Compile user fees from all Goshen City departments;
- Compare current fee structures with peer cities;
- Review ordinances related to fees;
- And recommend adjustments to improve Goshen’s fee structures.

Gulec said fees charged by the following City Departments were evaluated: Airport, Building, Cemetery, Engineering, Environmental Resilience, EMS, Parks & Recreation, Planning & Zoning, Police, Stormwater, Street, Trash and Water, Sewer and Wastewater.

Gulec said peer municipalities whose fees were compared to those in Goshen were Elkhart, Elkhart County, Indianapolis, Kokomo, Mishawaka, South Bend, St. Joseph County, Valparaiso and Warsaw.

Gulec said fee adjustments were based on:

- Inflation;
- Previous studies;
- Peer review;
- Department consultation;
- And legal review.

Gulec also indicated the legal framework for the study included: Home Rule Authority, fee limitations by statutes, implementation requirements and implications for Goshen.

After providing this preliminary information, Gulec presented his Department-specific findings and recommendations, including proposed fee increases for the following Departments: Airport, Building, Cemetery, Engineering, Environmental Resilience, EMS, Parks & Recreation, Planning & Zoning, Police, Stormwater, Street, Trash and Water, Sewer and Wastewater.

NOTE: Gulec’s findings and recommendations, which were fully discussed with Councilors, were summarized in Exhibit #2 (7-page summary) and Exhibit #3 (49-page PowerPoint presentation).

Gulec said the next steps in the process were:

- A Fully Burdened Hourly Rate (FBHR) Analysis, which will determine true service costs;
- An impact assessment of proposed fee changes, which will evaluate revenue sustainability;
- Regular reviews and adjustments recommended to maintain financial balance;
- And modeling of different fee structures planned to analyze service demand and cost elasticity.

The summary of the study concluded with the following statement: “By aligning fees with actual costs, Goshen can improve transparency, operational efficiency and fiscal responsibility while ensuring fair and reasonable pricing for residents and businesses. Implementation of recommendations will be subject to further review and approval.”

During his presentation, Councilors asked questions or offered comments about a wide range of issues, including:

- The comparison cities and whether they should have been included in the study;
- The next steps in the process;
- The amount of federal reimbursement available for ambulance services;



- How Goshen's fees were compared with other communities;
- And the expectation other communities also will be increasing fees

Councilors thanked and praised Shawn Gulec for his meticulous work on the study.

6) Property Tax Change Impact for Goshen/Senate Bill 1 Update (Presenter: Amber Nielson, Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors)

Eric J. Walsh, CPA, a Principal with Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, provided a detailed overview and analysis of pending state legislation that would reduce property taxes for individuals and businesses and the resulting potential impact on the City of Goshen's revenue and its budgets.

During his presentation, Walsh discussed the following issues, often based on questions from Councilors:

- Three bills being considered by the Indiana Legislative Assembly that would provide property and business tax relief and reduce local revenue;
- Mounting pressure on state lawmakers to pass substantial property tax relief;
- How higher property values have prompted higher property tax bills;
- Pressure on lawmakers to reduce property taxes on businesses despite past tax relief;
- How state law has limited property tax revenue for Goshen and other cities;
- Why it is difficult to calculate how Goshen's revenues will be affected by any of the tax-cutting bills that might be approved by the Legislative Assembly;
- Although a good case can be made that growing cities, like Goshen, should receive more property tax revenue, the State Legislative Assembly has acted to limit that possibility;
- The Legislative Assembly appears likely to approve a property tax measure to help seniors and first-time home buyers;
- While impossible to calculate at this time, it's likely that Goshen will face revenue reductions of several million dollars if the proposed legislation becomes law;
- The Legislative Assembly may give cities the ability to impose Local Option Taxes, which could help offset the loss of property tax revenue;
- A decrease or elimination of business personal property taxes would further reduce local revenue;
- If property tax values decline, taxes will decline and cities will lose additional revenue;
- Hoosiers want lower property taxes, but they may be surprised by and not support the resulting decline of local services.

Mayor Leichty said the City has engaged Baker Tilly to help prepare for the uncertainty over revenue. She said, "We have to look at every available option to us. And so, I know that trash and environmental fees have been discussed before, and nobody has been very interested. I'm not very interested, but I want to make sure that we have the resources that we need to make sure that we can pave our roads, hire the firefighters and police officers that we need and to take care of our parks and quality of place (initiatives)."

Mayor Leichty said, "There's no joy looking at additional fees, but we have to do the responsible thing in making sure that we're carefully planning and being very strategic."

Councilor Riegsecker said the Council can't make decisions about such things as imposing new trash and recycling collection fees until the City knows the extent of the loss of local revenue.



Mayor Leichty said that's why the City will be starting the budget process earlier than in the past and doing scenario planning. She added, "That's why we're starting the conversations now."

7) Trash and Recycling Fee Analysis (Presenters: Eric Walsh and Gabe Hartzler, Baker Tilly)

Eric J. Walsh, CPA, a Principal with Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, said the uncertainty over the expected loss of local revenue has prompted the City of Goshen to consider imposing new trash and recycling collection fees.

When faced with revenue reductions, Walsh said the only available options are to cut costs or increase revenues.

Walsh said this is a difficult time for the City to be exploring the imposition of trash and recycling fees to maintain the status quo of spending because Goshen is coping with rising costs due to inflation and would still desire to hire more staff members to provide necessary City services.

Amid this uncertainty, **Walsh** said "the one thing you can control, though, and make local decisions on is your revenue generators." So, Walsh said it is prudent to consider shifting some municipal services from being supported by revenue to being supported by fees. And he said the biggest such option would be to impose trash and recycling collection fees.

Walsh said the City of Goshen is spending about \$2 million a year for residential solid waste and recyclable collections. He said the City could impose trash and recycling fees to offset some or all of those costs.

While fielding questions from Councilors, Walsh continued his discussion by using a 9-page PowerPoint presentation titled "City of Goshen, Indiana; Trash/Recycling Service Analysis" (EXHIBIT #4). This PowerPoint included detailed information on the City's historical trash/recycling costs, possible residential rates and the revenue that would be raised over three years, the impact of those fees on the City's General Fund, monthly residential trash fees in 10 other Indiana cities and other considerations.

Walsh said the City's current contract with Borden Waste-Away Holdings, Inc. is based on about 11,000 residences and the contract provides for increases based on increases in the Consumer Price Index. Walsh said the City would be entitled to offset the cost of reasonable administrative costs because additional staffing and a tracking system would likely be necessary to ensure quality service and customer compliance.

Although a few Indiana cities use their own employees to collect trash and recycling, **Walsh** said the majority of cities contract out these services as the City of Goshen has done. He added that some cities allow multiple companies to operate trash collection services, but this can lead to service issues and can increase repair costs for local roads.

Walsh said Goshen may be among 10 or fewer Indiana cities that fully pay for trash and recycling services. Most cities charge resident for these services.

Walsh said that calculating the proposed fees for residential trash and recycling collection is complicated, especially since this would be a new charge for residents that would not be popular. For that and other reasons, Walsh said it might be better to phase in trash/recycling fees over three years.

Under one approach that he presented, **Walsh** said the first-year monthly cost for residential trash and recycling could be \$17.20, rising to \$17.60 a month in the second year and then \$18.10 a month in the third year. Walsh said this approach would generate \$751,800 the first year, \$1,530,100 the second year and \$2,387,500 the third year. Besides discussing the positive impact of such fees on the City's General Fund, **Walsh** also provide a comparison of Goshen's possible monthly residential trash/recycling bill with the bills now paid in 10 Indiana cities. He said Goshen's possible bill would be higher than in Warsaw, Evansville and South Bend, but less than in Ligonier, Fort Wayne, Valparaiso, Chesterton, Mishawaka, Gary and Highland.



Walsh responded to a wide range of questions from Councilors about the possible imposition of trash and recycling fees. However, Walsh and Councilors emphasized that this was a preliminary discussion and there would need to be extensive study and discussion before the Council would seriously consider this idea.

Adjournment:

Mayor Leichty adjourned the meeting at 4:35 p.m.

EXHIBIT #1: A 12-page presentation about the Mobile Integrated Health Program, which was discussed by MIH team members during the work session.

EXHIBIT #2: A 7-page description of the City of Goshen Comprehensive User Fee Study, which summarized information in the accompanying 49-page PowerPoint presentation about the study.

EXHIBIT #3: A 49-page PowerPoint presentation, titled "Goshen Comprehensive User Fee Study," which was discussed by Shawn Gulec during the work session.

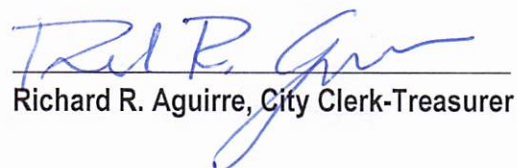
EXHIBIT #4: A 9-page PowerPoint presentation, titled "City of Goshen, Indiana; Trash/Recycling Service Analysis," which was presented by Eric Walsh, a Principal of Baker Tilly Municipal Advisors, during the work session.

APPROVED:

A blue ink signature of Gina Leichty, Mayor of Goshen, written over a horizontal line.

Gina Leichty, Mayor of Goshen

ATTEST:

A blue ink signature of Richard R. Aguirre, City Clerk-Treasurer, written over a horizontal line.

Richard R. Aguirre, City Clerk-Treasurer



City of Goshen Mobile Integrated Health Program

In Coordination with Goshen Fire and Police Departments

For the 'Good of Goshen'



Overview of the Program

- The Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) program is collaborative between
 - Goshen Fire Department
 - Goshen Police Department
 - Goshen Community Stake Holders
- This program aims to provide
 - community-based healthcare
 - crisis intervention
 - support services to individuals in need.
- By integrating healthcare and law enforcement efforts, the team aims to:
 - take a proactive approach
 - improve outcomes
 - reduce emergency service burden.



Key Personnel

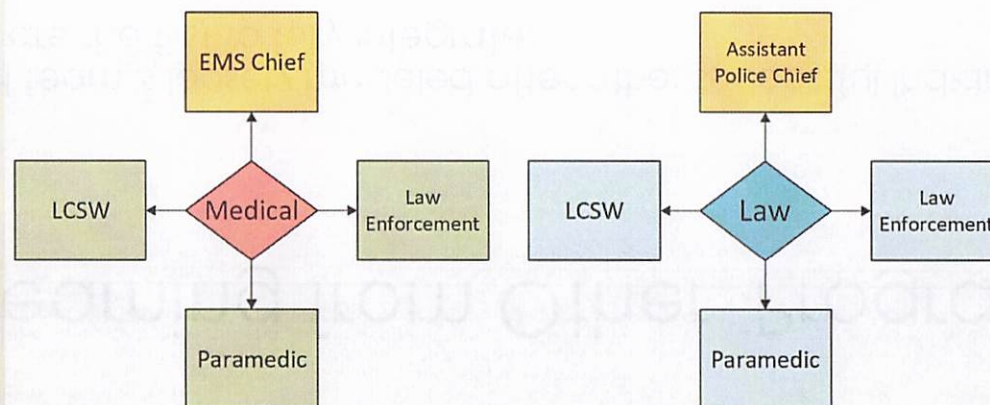
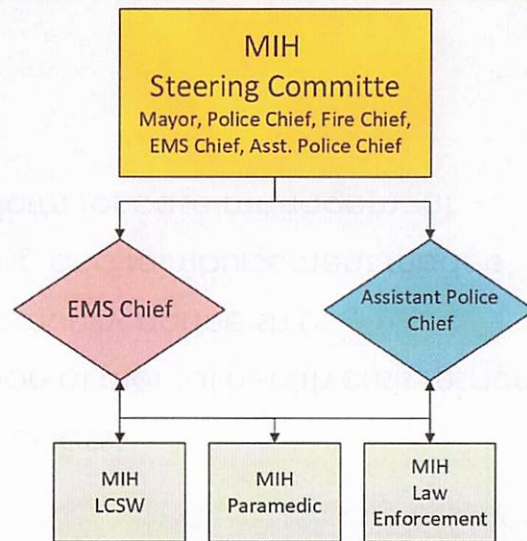
- - EMS Supervisor: Andrew Priem (Goshen Fire Dept.)
- - Behavioral Health Special Police Officer: Jim Ballard (Goshen Police Dept.)
- - Open Position: Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)
- - Direct Supervision:
 - Assistant Police Chief (Law Enforcement Matters)
 - EMS Chief (Healthcare Matters)



Steering Advisory Board

- The MIH program is guided by a dedicated advisory board comprised of:
 - Mayor of the City of Goshen
 - Police Chief
 - Fire Chief
 - Assistant Police Chief
 - EMS Chief

- This board provides:
 - Oversight
 - strategic direction
 - ensures program success.





Learning from Other Programs

- The MIH team is loosely modeled after other successful Indiana programs, but we are the first to fully integrate:
 - EMS
 - Law Enforcement
 - Social Services
- - Key features for success:
 - Effective integration of mental health crisis response
 - Strategies for community partnerships
 - Sustainable funding and reimbursement models
 - Shared work platform for case management



Community Partnerships

- The MIH program collaborates with several key stakeholders, including:
 - Oaklawn
 - Maple City Health Care Center
 - Goshen Hospital

- These partnerships help provide:
 - additional mental health
 - addiction recovery
 - medical support services to the community



Expected Community Impact

- Improved access to healthcare and crisis intervention
- Reduced cost to the city, emergency room visits and 911 calls
 - Approximately \$500 per BLS EMS calls for non-payers
- Enhanced collaboration between healthcare and law enforcement
 - Multiple cases per week currently
- Better outcomes for individuals experiencing mental health crises
 - Care-in-place and follow up are key needs
- Strengthening of community trust and support



Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)

- Several Fire and Police personnel have completed CIT training.
 - 19 police officers and 3 paramedics
- They have successfully applied this training in various incidents.
 - Medical
 - Behavioral
 - Mental health
- This training improves:
 - responses to crises
 - ensuring safer
 - more effective interactions with the community.



Funding and Grants Secured

- We have secured grants totaling \$200,000 from:
 - The State of Indiana
 - Elkhart County Health Department

- These funds will help
 - Support program development
 - Training
 - Operational costs



Transport and Reimbursement Agreement

- Goshen Hospital has agreed to reimburse MIH for mental health transports even if the patient lacks:
 - Insurance
 - Medicare
 - Medicaid.
- Covers transports to facilities in:
 - Elkhart County
 - St. Joseph County
 - Marshall County
- This ensures financial sustainability for patient care.



Next Steps

- 1. Fill the Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) position.
- 2. Implement policies and procedures for MIH operations.
- 3. Continue collaboration with local stakeholders.
- 4. Secure additional funding and resources.
- 5. Officially launch the MIH program and begin community outreach.

City of Goshen:

Comprehensive User Fee Study Summary

March 14, 2025 | Goshen City Council

Prepared and presented by: Shawn Gulec, Research Assistant – Legal Department & Mayor's Office

Introduction

The City of Goshen conducted a comprehensive user fee study to evaluate 547 fees across 13 departments, ensuring they align with service costs, legal requirements, and peer city benchmarks. The analysis provides a foundation for informed budget planning and operational efficiency while maintaining affordability and competitiveness. Recommended fee adjustments consider inflation, prior financial studies, and expert input, with implementation guided by state statutes. This study underscores the City's responsibility to balance financial sustainability with community needs, ensuring fees remain equitable and justifiable within Goshen's service capacity.

Fee Study Objectives (Slide 2)

The fee study aimed to:

- Compile user fees from all Goshen city departments.
- Compare current fee structures with peer cities.
- Review ordinances related to fees.
- Recommend adjustments to improve Goshen's fee structures.

Departments Evaluated (Slide 3)

- Airport, Building, Cemetery, Engineering, Environmental Resilience, EMS, Parks & Recreation, Planning & Zoning, Police, Stormwater, Street, Trash and Water, Sewer & Wastewater

Peer Municipalities (Slide 4)

- Indiana: Elkhart, Elkhart County, Indianapolis, Kokomo, Mishawaka, South Bend, St. Joseph County, Valparaiso, Warsaw

Methodology (Slide 5)

Fee adjustments were based on:

- **Inflation:** Adjusting for cost increases.
- **Previous Studies:** Implementing findings from prior financial reviews.
- **Peer Review:** Aligning fees with similar municipalities.
- **Department Consultation:** Working with department experts.
- **Legal Review:** Ensuring compliance with ordinances and state law.

Legal Framework (Slide 6)

- **Home Rule Authority (IC 36-1-3-2 & 3):** Local governments have broad power to regulate fees.
- **Fee Limitations (IC 36-1-3-8):** Fees must be reasonable and tied to service costs.
- **Implementation Requirements (IC 36-1-3-6):** Fees must be established via ordinance or resolution.
- **Implications for Goshen:** Fees must be justified based on actual costs and legally compliant.

Department-Specific Findings and Recommendations

Aviation (Slides 7–9)

The City evaluated 25 aviation fees, comparing them to peer cities Warsaw, Elkhart, and Auburn (DeKalb). While most facility, cargo, and call-out fees remain aligned with regional standards, adjustments are recommended in key areas to improve cost recovery and competitiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Increasing hangar rental fees** from **\$300 to \$500 per month** is recommended to align with market conditions.
- **Introducing tie-down fees** for aircraft parking is proposed, with rates of **\$10 for singles, \$20 for twins, \$25 for turboprops, and \$75 for jets.**
- **Adjusting special service fees** (de-icing, power cart, and lavatory cart services) is suggested to improve cost recovery.

Building Department (Slides 10–19)

The City evaluated 49 building permit fees, comparing them to peer cities Elkhart, Mishawaka, Kokomo, Valparaiso, South Bend/St. Joseph County, and Warsaw. While Goshen primarily uses fixed fees, some peer cities base fees on project value or square footage. Adjustments are recommended to improve cost recovery while maintaining competitive pricing.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Increasing residential and commercial construction fees** is proposed to bring them in line with peer city benchmarks.
- **Adjusting new commercial construction fees** is recommended to better reflect actual costs.
- **Updating demolition and garage permit fees** is advised based on peer city comparisons.
- **Maintaining the current \$213 fee for commercial remodeling projects**, as it aligns with peer city averages.

Cemetery (Slides 20–21)

The City evaluated 30 cemetery fees, comparing them to peer cities in Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Ohio. Current fees align with regional public averages, with planned incremental increases ensuring affordability while maintaining cost recovery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Implementing annual 3% fee increases through 2035** is recommended to adjust for inflation and operational costs.
- **Discontinuing the baby section cremation interment fee** is under consideration due to low demand.
- **Five-year reviews recommended** to maintain competitiveness.

Engineering (Slides 22–23)

The City evaluated 39 engineering fees, but direct peer city comparisons were not conducted due to significant variations in fee structures and service overlaps with other departments. Given the complexity of engineering services, a fully burdened hourly rate analysis is recommended for future fee adjustments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conducting a Fully Burdened Hourly Rate (FBHR) analysis** is recommended to ensure fees accurately reflect service costs.

- **Structured fee schedule development proposed** to ensure equitable cost distribution.
- **Assessing cost recovery levels** to determine whether current fees meet service costs.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) (Slides 24–27)

The City evaluated 17 EMS fees, comparing them to Valparaiso, Elkhart, South Bend, and Mishawaka. Warsaw and Kokomo were excluded due to differing EMS service models.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Current EMS fee structure maintained**, with monitoring of new state reimbursement laws.
- **Future adjustments under consideration** based on reimbursement changes in 2025.
- **Alternative reimbursement models** assessed at 250%, 300%, 350%, and 400% of CMS base rates.
 - **250%** – \$656.80
 - **300%** – \$788.16
 - **350%** – \$919.52
 - **400%** – \$1,050.88

Environmental Resilience (Slides 28–30)

The City evaluated three fees related to environmental sustainability, including the Tree Program (a cost-share initiative) and educational field trips. Peer city comparisons with Elkhart and South Bend show Goshen is the only city using a 50% cost-share model for tree planting and maintenance, while peer cities fully subsidize tree programs through grants and municipal funding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **No immediate fee adjustments recommended** for the Tree Program or field trips.
- Grant funding explored for potential full subsidization of tree services.
- Evaluating long-term transition to a fully funded model.

Parks & Recreation (Slides 31–33)

The City evaluated 154 fees related to venue rentals, park shelters, and cabins, comparing them to Valparaiso, Kokomo, South Bend, and Warsaw. Pavilion rental fees remain competitive, but cabin rentals, such as Abshire Cabin, are slightly higher than comparable options in Warsaw.

NEXT STEPS: CALCULATING FULL COST AND BUDGET IMPACT

- **Fully Burdened Hourly Rate (FBHR) analysis** will determine true service costs.
- **Impact assessment of proposed fee changes** will evaluate revenue sustainability.
- **Regular reviews and adjustments recommended** to maintain financial balance.
- **Modeling of different fee structures planned** to analyze service demand and cost elasticity.

By aligning fees with actual costs, Goshen can improve **transparency, operational efficiency, and fiscal responsibility** while ensuring fair and reasonable pricing for residents and businesses. Implementation of recommendations will be subject to further review and approval.

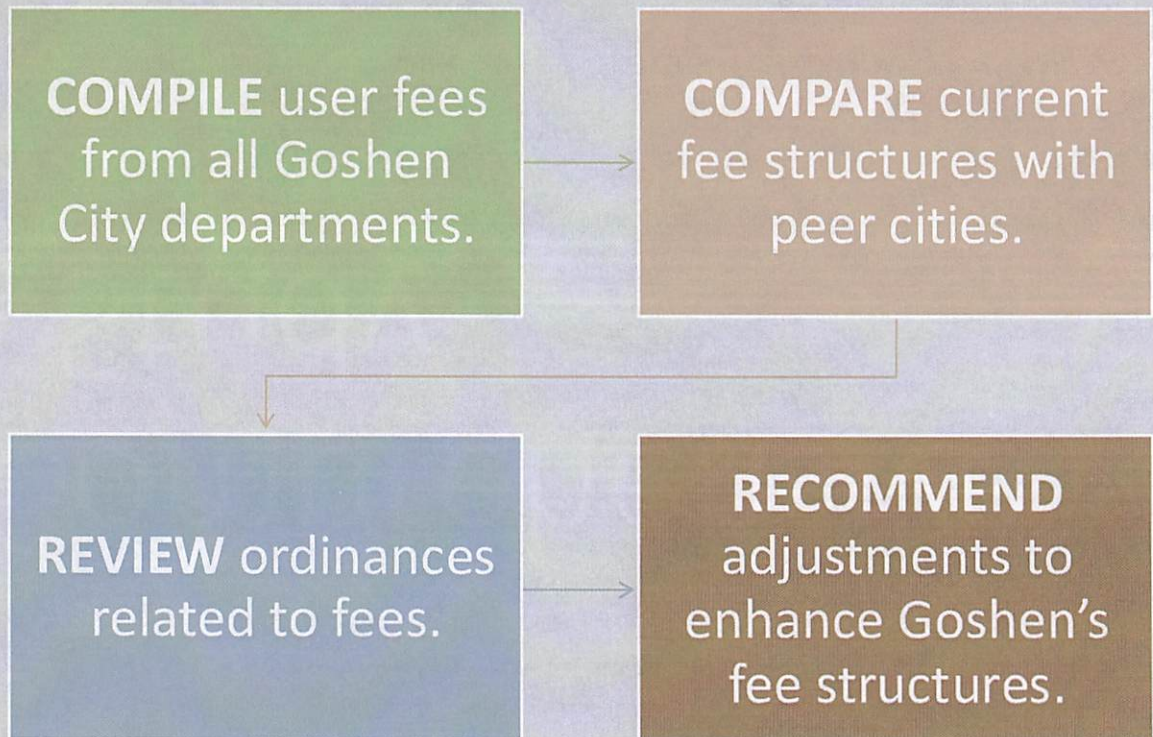
A photograph of the Goshen Public Library building, a two-story stone structure with arched windows and a central entrance. An American flag flies on a tall pole to the left. The building's facade features the inscription "A.D. GOSHEN PUBLIC LIBRARY 1901".

Goshen Comprehensive User Fee Study

MARCH 2025 • GOSHEN CITY COUNCIL 03/14/25 •
SHAWN GULEC, RESEARCH ASSISTANT LEGAL DEPARTMENT &
MAYORS OFFICE

Exhibit
#3

FEE STUDY OBJECTIVES IN PHASE 1



DEPARTMENTS EVALUATED

Airport

Building

Cemetery

Engineering

Env.
Resilience

EMS

Parks and
Rec

Planning
and Zoning

Police

Stormwater

Street

Trash

Water
Sewer

Wastewater

PEER MUNICIPALITIES

Elkhart

Elkhart County

Indianapolis

Kokomo

Mishawaka

South Bend

St. Joseph County

Valparaiso

Warsaw

METHODOLOGY



INFLATION: ADJUSTING FOR
INFLATION



PREVIOUS STUDIES:
IMPLEMENTING FINDINGS
FROM PREVIOUS FINANCIAL
STUDIES



PEER REVIEW: ALIGNING
WITH PEER CITY AVERAGES
AND PUBLIC HIGH-ENDS



DEPARTMENT CONSULT:
CONSULTING WITH
DEPARTMENTAL EXPERTS



LEGAL REVIEW: ADHERING
TO ORDINANCE OR STATUTE
LIMITATIONS

Legal Framework

Home Rule Authority (IC 36-1-3-2 & 3)

Local governments regulate fees.

Law favors local authority.

Fee Limitations (IC 36-1-3-8)

Fees must be reasonable

Within cost recovery

No taxation without state approval.

Implementation Requirements (IC 36-1-3-6)

Established via **ordinance or resolution**.

Must follow **state-mandated processes**.

Implications for Goshen

Justify fees based on **actual costs**.

Legal compliance with state regulations.

Ordinances to enact fee adjustments.

Aviation

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS: NUMBER OF FEES: 25

Fee Category	Fee Detail	Unit	Goshen	Auburn	Elkhart	Warsaw
HANGAR RENTAL FEES	Larger block hangars	Month	\$ 300	\$ 500		
TIE-DOWN FEE	Singles	Visit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10	
	Twins	Visit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20	
	Turboprop	Visit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25	
	Jets	Visit	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 75	
SPECIAL FEES	Power Cart/GPU (Ground Power Unit) per hour	Hour	\$ 50			\$ 125
	Lavatory Cart Service	Visit	\$ 100			\$ 150
	Deicing (Type 1) per gallon	Gallon	\$ 5			\$ 30

AVIATION PEER COMPARISONS

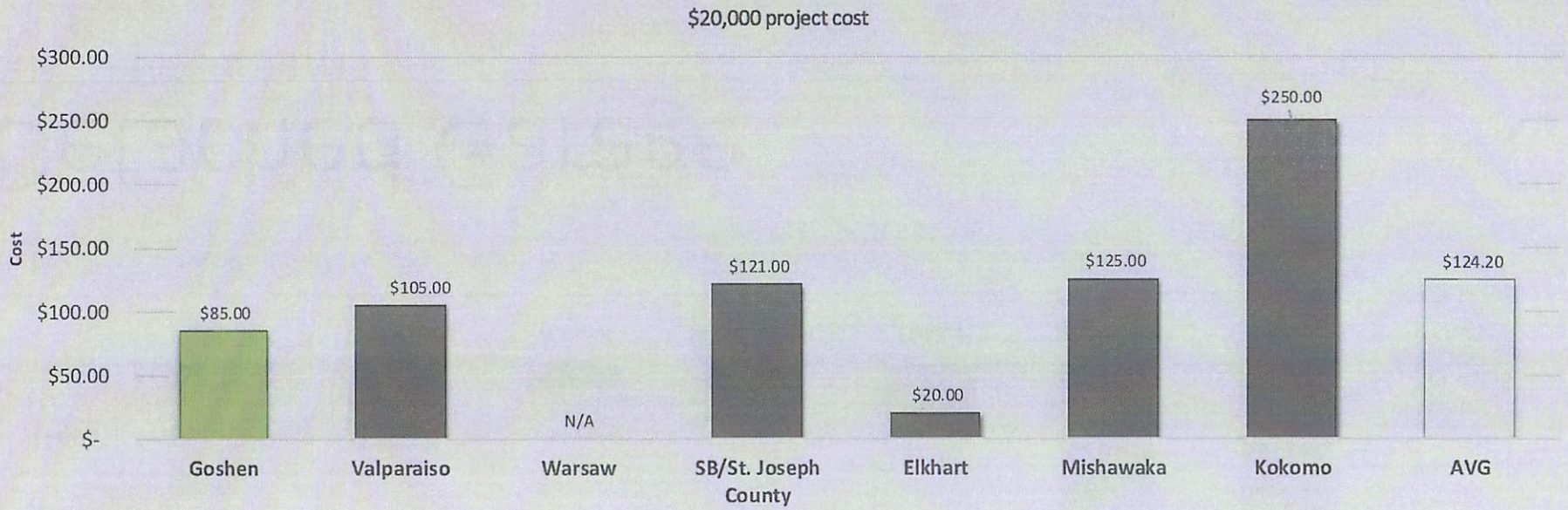
	Fee Type	Current Charge	Proposed Fee
Hangar Rental	Large Hangars	\$300/month	\$500/month
Tie Down Fees	Singles	\$0	\$10
	Twins	\$0	\$20
	Turboprop	\$0	\$25
	Jets	\$0	\$75
Special Fees	De-Icing	\$5/gallon	\$30/gallon (150 minimum)
	Power Cart	\$50/hr	\$50/hr + \$75 initial fee
	Lavatory Cart Service	\$100	\$150

AVIATION

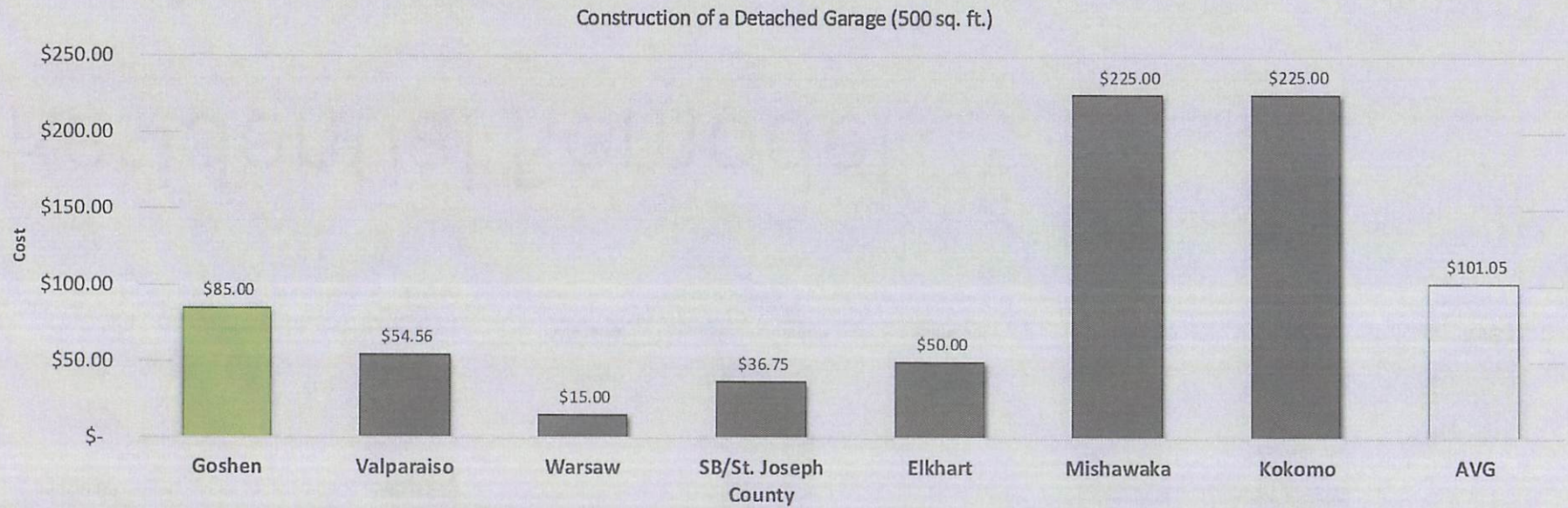
PRELIMINARY
CONSIDERATIONS

Building Department

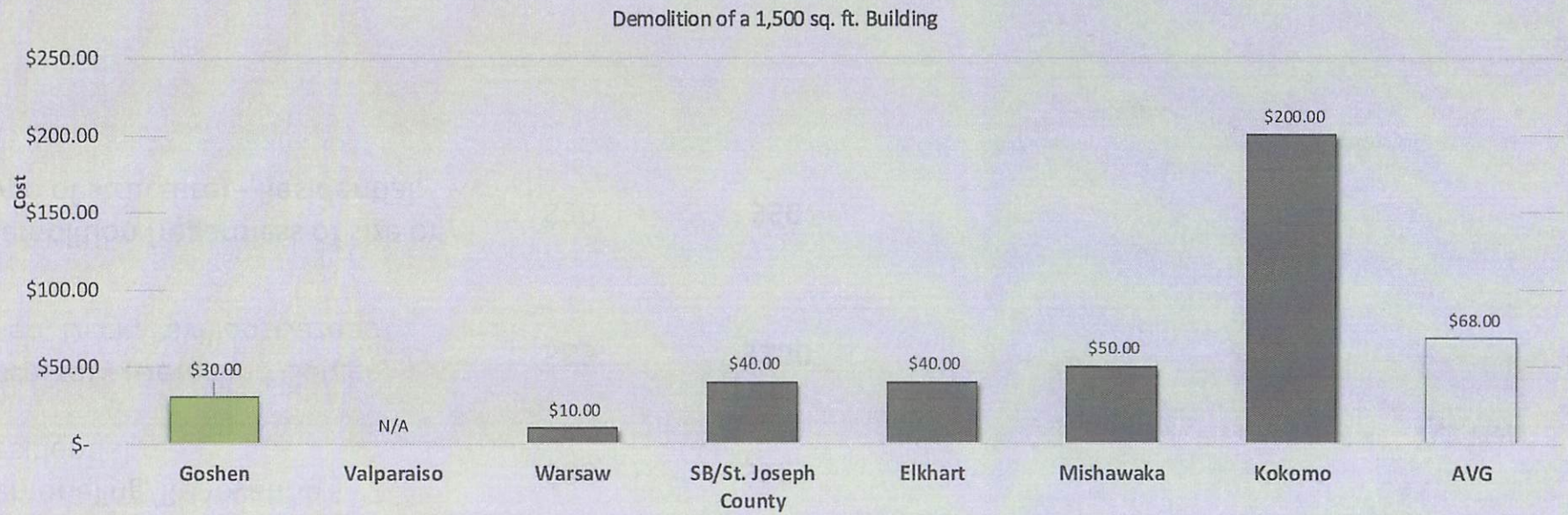
COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES 49



Residential Remodel



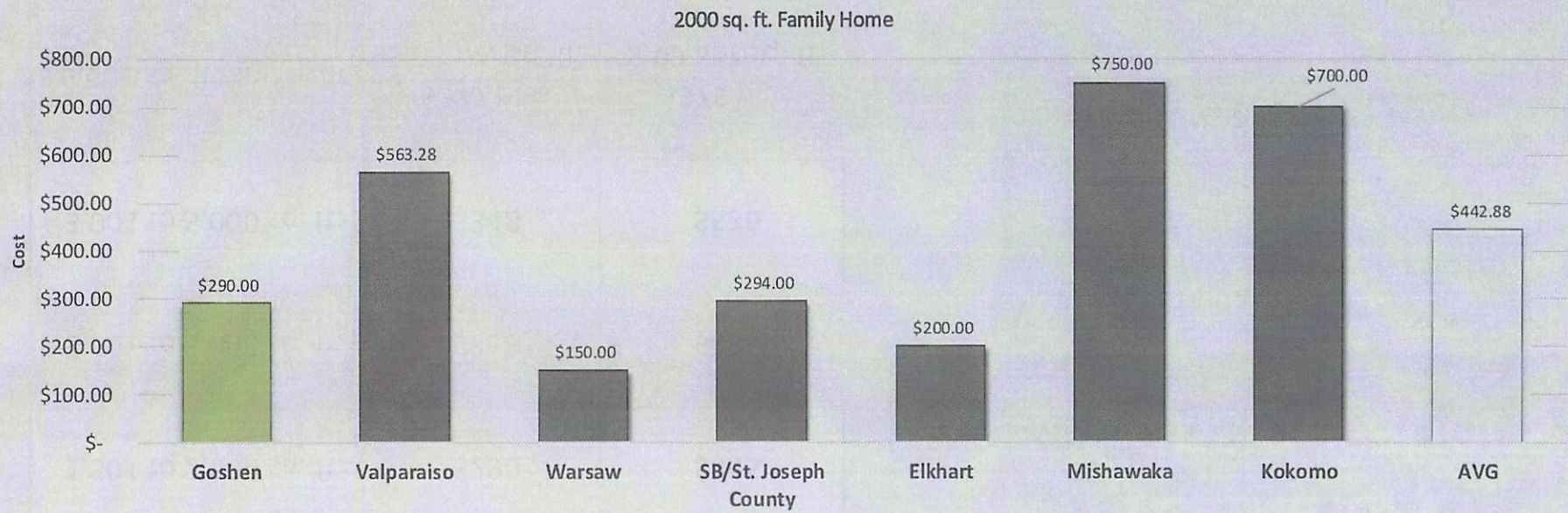
Detached Garage



Residential Demolition

Fee Type	Current Charge	Proposed Fee
Remodeling/Renovation - Residential	\$85	\$125
Accessory (Detached Garage, Shed, Deck, Pavilion/Gazebo)	\$85	\$100
Demolition (regardless of size or type of structure) - Residential	\$30	\$50

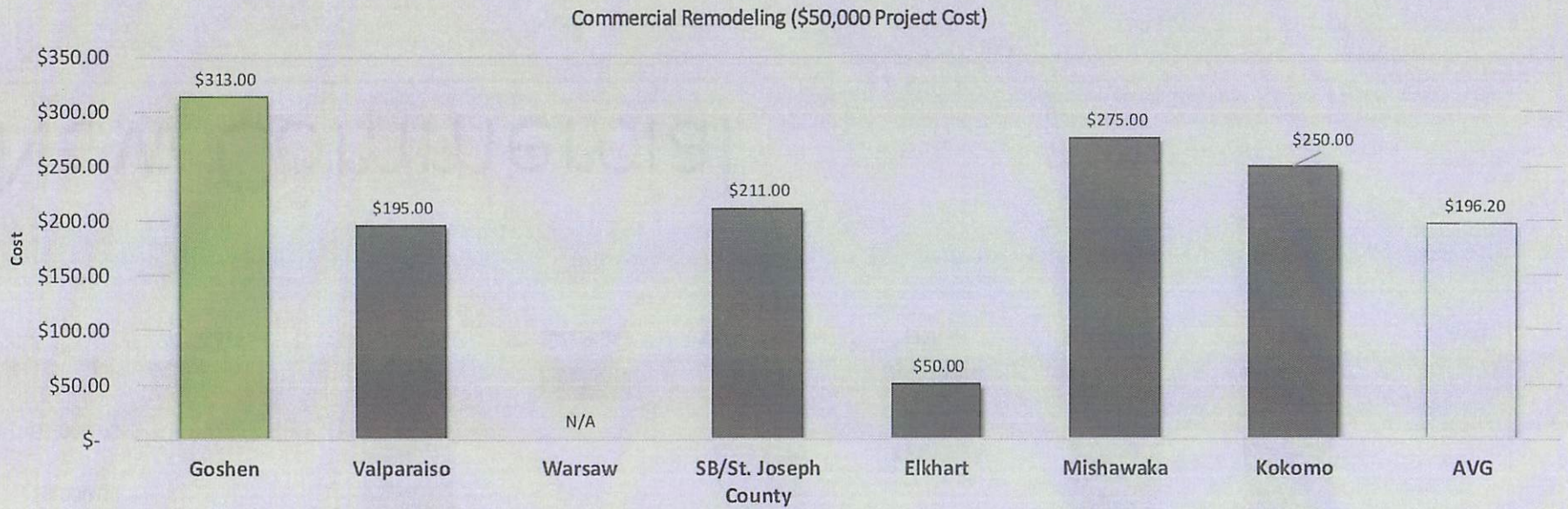
Remodel,
Accessory, Demo
Fees
Preliminary
Considerations



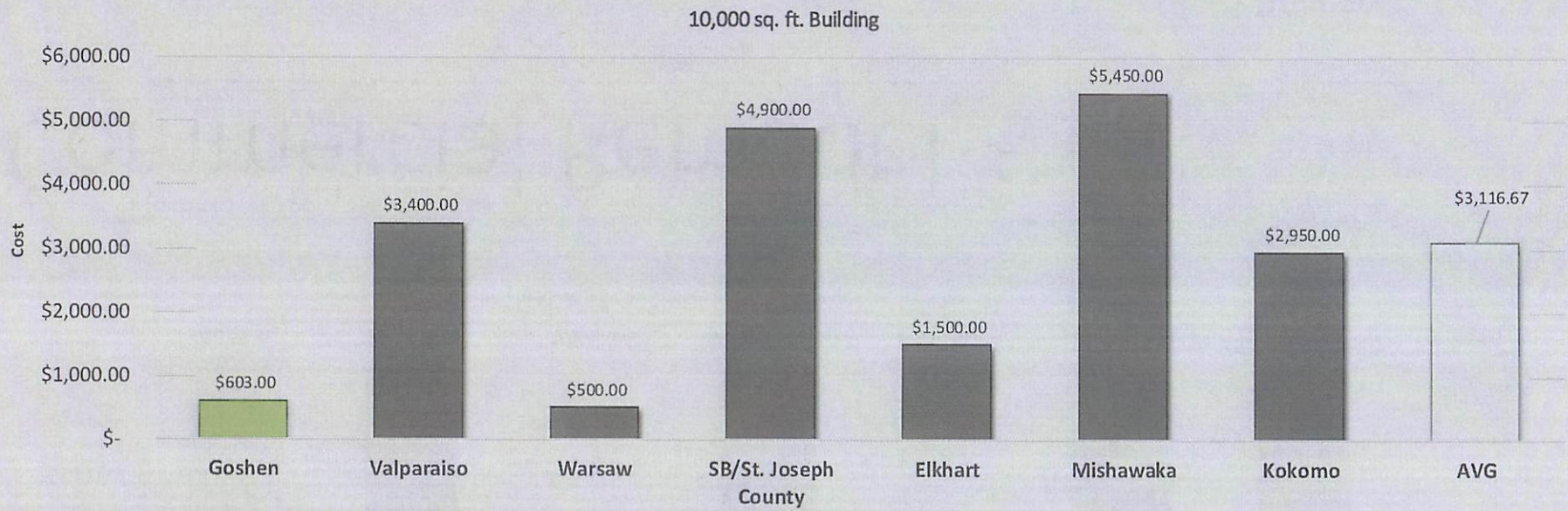
New Residential

Fee Type	Current Charge	Proposed Fee
Up to 900 sq. ft.	\$233	\$355
901 to 1,500 sq. ft.	\$261	\$400
1,501 to 2,500 sq. ft.	\$290	\$445
2,501 to 3,000 sq. ft.	\$318	\$485
3,001 to 5,000 sq. ft.	\$348	\$530
5,001 sq. ft. and over	\$377 plus \$.03 per sq. ft.	\$575 plus \$.03 per sq. ft.

New Residential Preliminary Considerations



Commercial Remodel



New Commercial

New
Commercial
Preliminary
Considerations

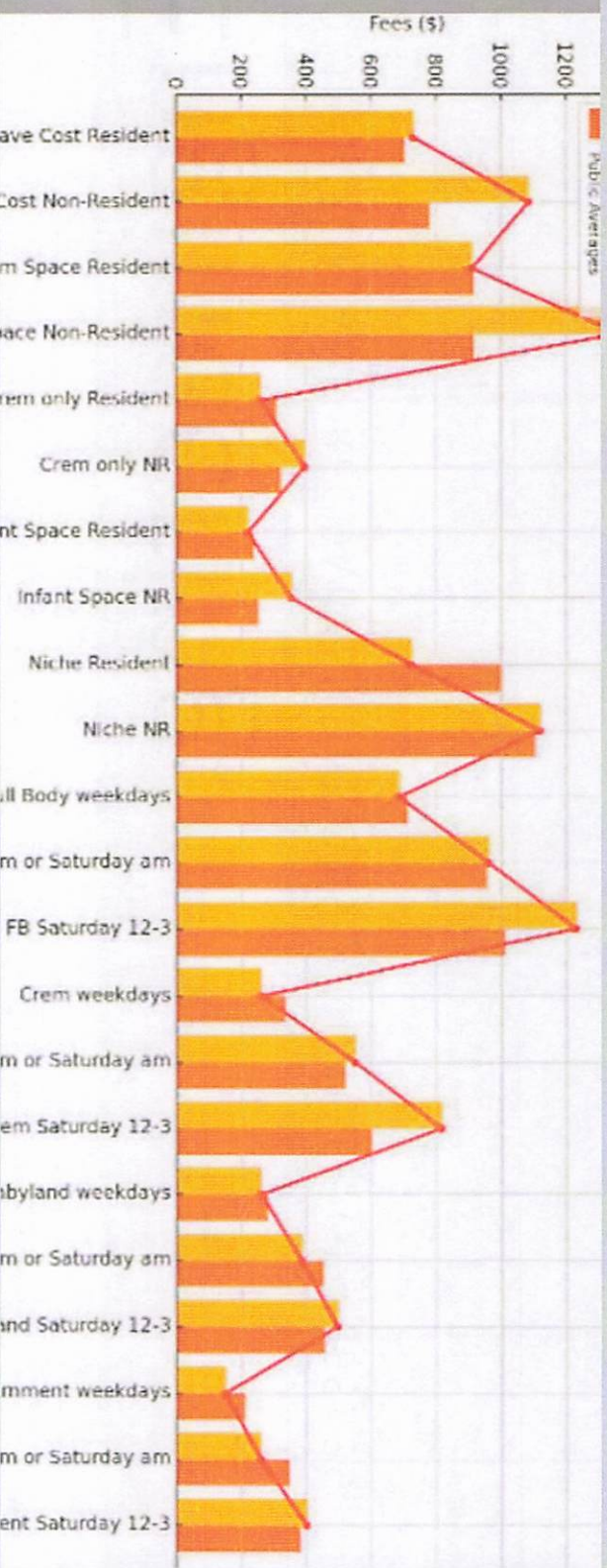
Fee Type	Current Charge	Proposed Fee
Foundation	\$290	\$1,500
Up to 25,000 sq. ft	\$313	\$1,600
25,001 to 50,000 sq. ft.	\$579	\$2,960
50,001 to 100,000 sq. ft.	\$730	\$3,735
100,001 sq. ft.	\$794 plus \$.03 per sq. ft.	\$4,060 plus \$.03 per sq. ft.

Cemeteries

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 30

CEMETERY PEEER COMPARISONS

NO CHANGE IS RECOMMENDED. INFLATIONARY INCREASE ONLY.



Engineering

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 39

ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT

COMPARISON CHALLENGES

Goshen fee types differ from peer cities

Direct comparisons not feasible

Fee structures vary significantly

Service overlaps with other departments

HOW TO ADJUST FEES IN THE FUTURE

Use fully burdened hourly rate

Ensure fees reflect true costs

Include labor, overhead, administration

Create an equitable, sustainable fee structure

Environmental Resilience

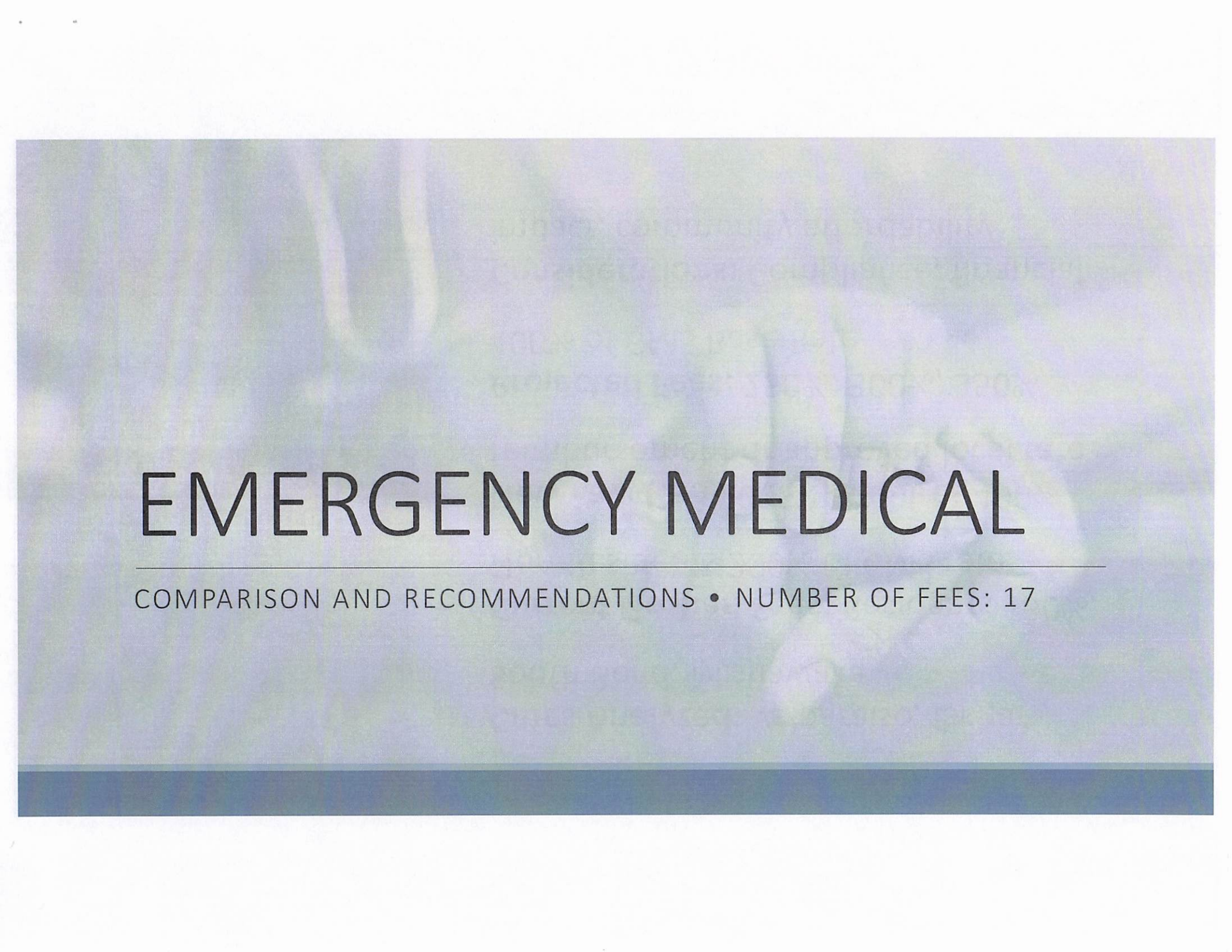
COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 3

PROGRAM	FEE
Tree Program	
Planting, Removal, & Maintenance	50% assessed cost share to user
Field Trips	
Field Trip – 1 activity	\$2
Field Trip – 2 activities	\$3

CURRENT
ENVIRONMENTAL
RESILIENCE FEES

Environmental Resilience Urban Tree Programs Comparison

City	Program	Resident Cost	Funding
Goshen	Cost-Share Planting	50% of costs	City Budget, Grants
South Bend	Urban Canopy Program	Free	City Budget, \$1.87M U.S. Forest Service Grant
Elkhart	Trees for the Hart	Free (Private trees maintained by owners)	\$1M Urban Forestry Grant



EMERGENCY MEDICAL

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 17

EMS Ambulance Fee Analysis – Key Points

Cities Analyzed: Valparaiso, Elkhart,
South Bend, Mishawaka

Current Goshen Fees: Residents 150%,
Non-Residents 200% of CMS rate

New Law (Jan 2025): Requires 400%
reimbursement or approved local rate

Projected Fees: 250%, 300%, 350%,
400% of CMS Base Rate

Considerations: Compliance, financial
impact, community affordability

EMS Key Takeaways



Affordability remains a priority.



Goshen can legally increase ambulance fees.



Higher fees raise out-of-pocket costs for all.



Greatest impact on advanced emergency care.



City must balance fees, reimbursements, and affordability.

Parks and Recreation

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 154



PARKS CONSIDERATIONS

Challenges in Direct Comparison

1. Wide variation in fee structures
2. Differences in how cities allocate parks-related costs
3. Inconsistent assessment and categorization of fees

Standardized Approach to Fee Analysis

Facility rental fees analyzed by converting reservations to an hourly rate and dividing by maximum capacity for per-person cost



PARKS RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Finding: Goshen's rental fees are comparable to or higher than peer cities

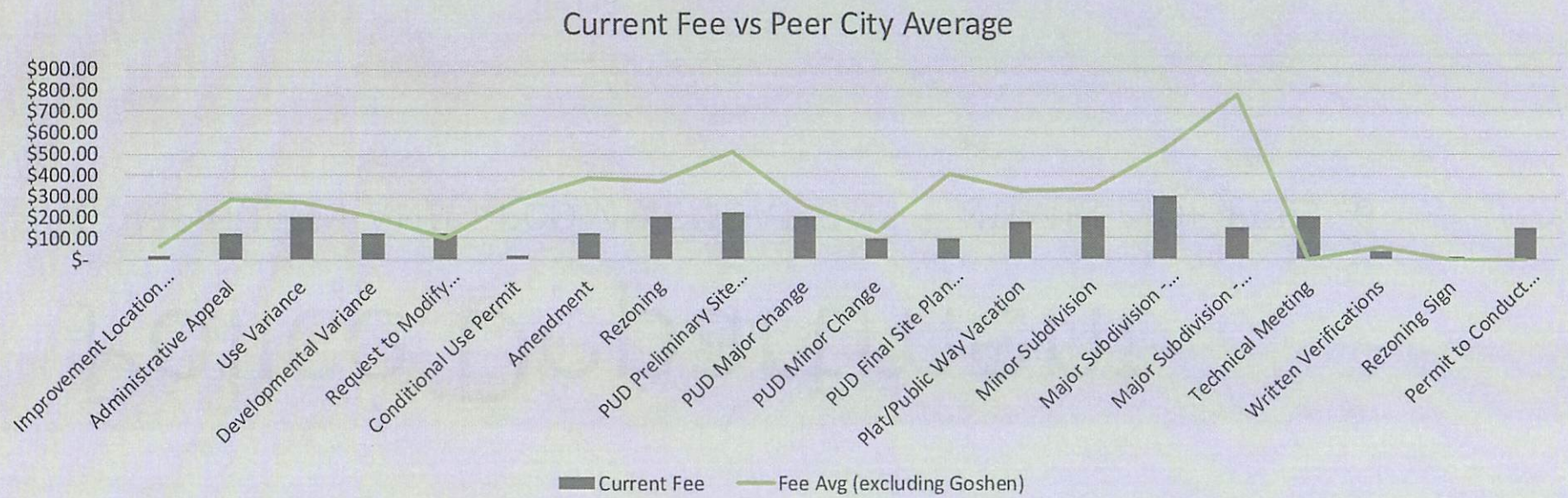
1. Maintain Current Pavilion Rental Fees
2. Consider Flexible Hourly Rentals
3. Optional Service Add-ons

Planning and Zoning

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 20

Fee Type	Current Charge		Proposed Fee	
Improvement Location Permit for Primary Buildings	\$	20.00	\$	65.00
Administrative Appeal	\$	125.00	\$	290.00
Use Variance	\$	200.00	\$	270.00
Developmental Variance	\$	125.00	\$	200.00
Conditional Use Permit	\$	20.00	\$	280.00
Amendment	\$	125.00	\$	385.00
Rezoning	\$	200.00	\$	370.00
PUD Preliminary Site Plan Approval	\$	225.00	\$	510.00
PUD Major Change	\$	200.00	\$	250.00
PUD Minor Change	\$	100.00	\$	125.00
PUD Final Site Plan Approval	\$	100.00	\$	400.00
Plat/Public Way Vacation	\$	175.00	\$	325.00
Minor Subdivision	\$	200.00	\$	330.00
Major Subdivision - Primary	\$	300.00	\$	520.00
Major Subdivision - Secondary	\$	150.00	\$	775.00
Written Verifications	\$	40.00	\$	55.00

Planning and Zoning Fees

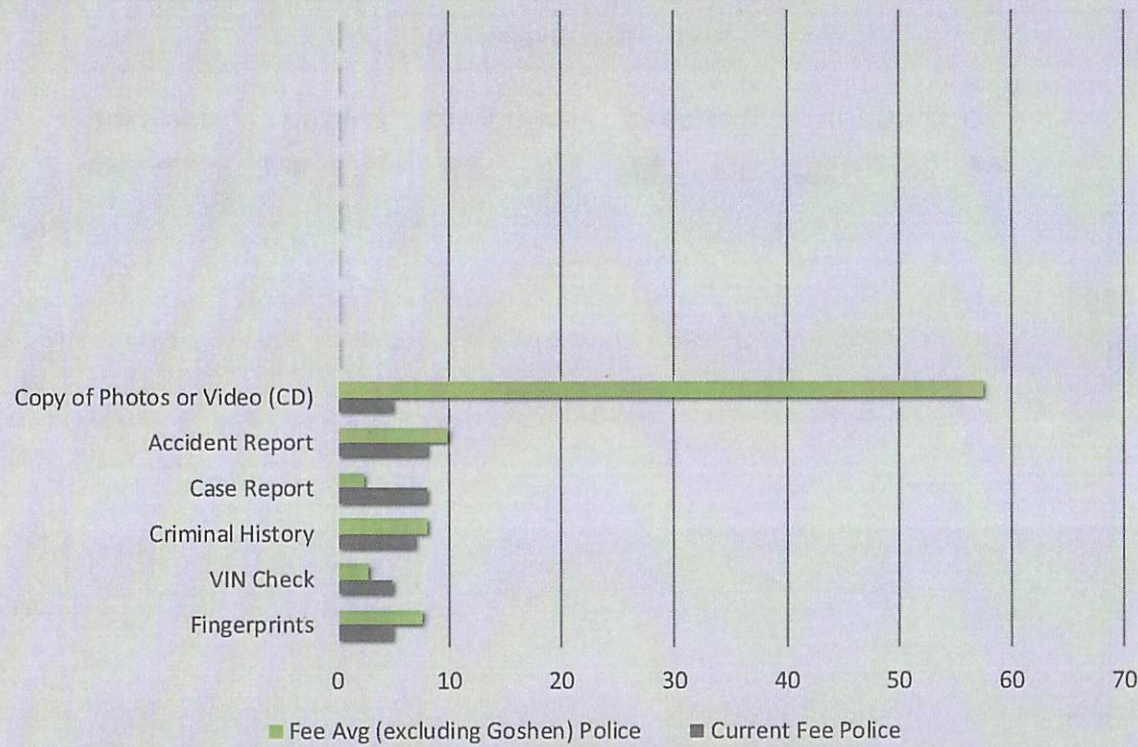


PLANNING AND ZONING FEE COMPARISONS

Police Department

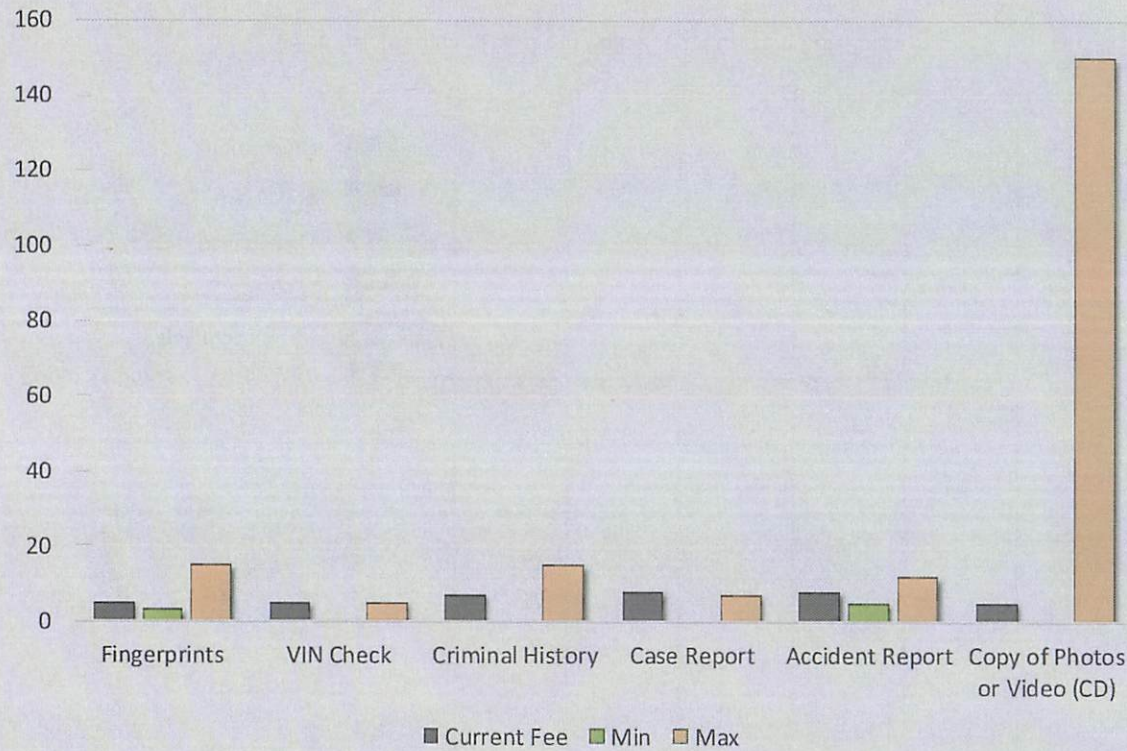
COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 6

Goshen's Fees vs Peer City Average



PD Fees vs Peers

Goshen Fee vs Min & Max Peer City



PD Fees
vs. Peers

PD Preliminary
Considerations

Fee Type	Current Charge	Proposed Fee
Accident Report	\$8	\$10
Criminal History	\$7	\$8
Fingerprints	\$5	\$8
Bodycam Footage	\$5	\$150

Stormwater

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS • NUMBER OF FEES: 5

GREATER ELKHART COUNTY (INDIANA) STORMWATER PARTNERSHIP

PRO FORMA ANNUAL REVENUE REQUIREMENTS
AND ANNUAL OPERATING RECEIPTS - AFTER ANNEXATION
 (Amounts rounded to the nearest \$100)

	Individual Revenue Requirements				Combined Revenue Requirements
	Bristol	Goshen	Elkhart City	Elkhart County	
<u>Revenue Requirements:</u>					
Operation and maintenance disbursements (pages 8 - 11)	\$53,100	\$736,300	\$745,900	\$1,229,300	\$2,764,600
Allowance for replacements and improvements	80,000 (1)	1,250,000 (2)	1,600,000 (1)	809,100 (3)	3,739,100
Total Annual Revenue Requirements	133,100	1,986,300	2,345,900	2,038,400	6,503,700
Less miscellaneous receipts	-	(137,500) (4)	-	-	(137,500)
Net Annual Revenue Requirements	\$133,100	\$1,848,800	\$2,345,900	\$2,038,400	\$6,366,200
<u>Annual Receipts:</u>					
Stormwater fees current (5)	\$72,600	\$543,000	\$1,000,600	\$1,032,100	\$2,648,300
Additional stormwater fees from proposed rate increase (6)	101,900	762,300	1,404,700	1,449,000	3,717,900
Approximate Annexed property receipt adjustments (7)	-	200	40,000	(40,200)	-
Total estimated stormwater receipts after rate increase and annexation	\$174,500	\$1,305,500	\$2,445,300	\$2,440,900	\$6,366,200

Stormwater Peer Comparisons

Street Department

COMPARISON AND RECOMMENDATIONS: NUMBER OF FEES 1
(DIAL-A-TRUCK)

Dial-a-Truck

Dial-A-Truck Program	Fee
Solid Waste Disposal	-
Residential Projects	\$150
CBDG-Funded Projects	\$75
Neighborhood Association and Non-Profit Organization Projects	\$75
Vegetative Waste Disposal	No Fee



NEXT STEPS

CALCULATING FULL COST AND BUDGET IMPACT

PHASE 2: CALCULATING FULL COST AND BUDGET IMPACT



The next phase of the fee study will focus on calculating the total cost of providing city services, including direct labor and other expenses like equipment, supplies, and administrative support. This will help ensure that the fees people pay accurately cover the full cost of the service.



At the same time, the study will analyze how any recommended changes to fees would impact the city's budget and revenue. This means checking whether the city is collecting enough money to sustain its services or if adjustments are needed to maintain financial stability.



FULLY BURDENED HOURLY RATE CALCULATION AND BUDGET IMPACT ASSESSMENT



Data Collection and Cost Identification



Calculating the Fully Burdened Hourly Rate



Fee Structure Adjustments



Revenue and Budget Impact Analysis



Q&A

2024 Fees

BUSINESS LICENCE/PERMIT	96,090
COURT DOCKET FEES	188,350
CULTURE AND RECREATION (PARKS)	262,880
FINES	18,120
GENERAL GOVERNMENT	19,700
HEALTH (EMS)	1,341,960
HIGHWAYS AND STREETS	15,580
LICENSES AND PERMITS	3,400
NON-BUSINESS LICENSES	340,960
OTHER	1,646,990
PUBLIC SAFETY	5,390
RENTAL OF PROPERTY	170,370
SALE OF INVESTMENTS	13,200
SANITATION	656,330
Grand Total	4,779,370

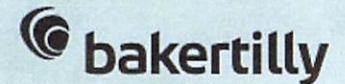
City of Goshen, Indiana

Trash/Recycling Service Analysis

Evaluation of costs and funding options for residential trash/recycling service

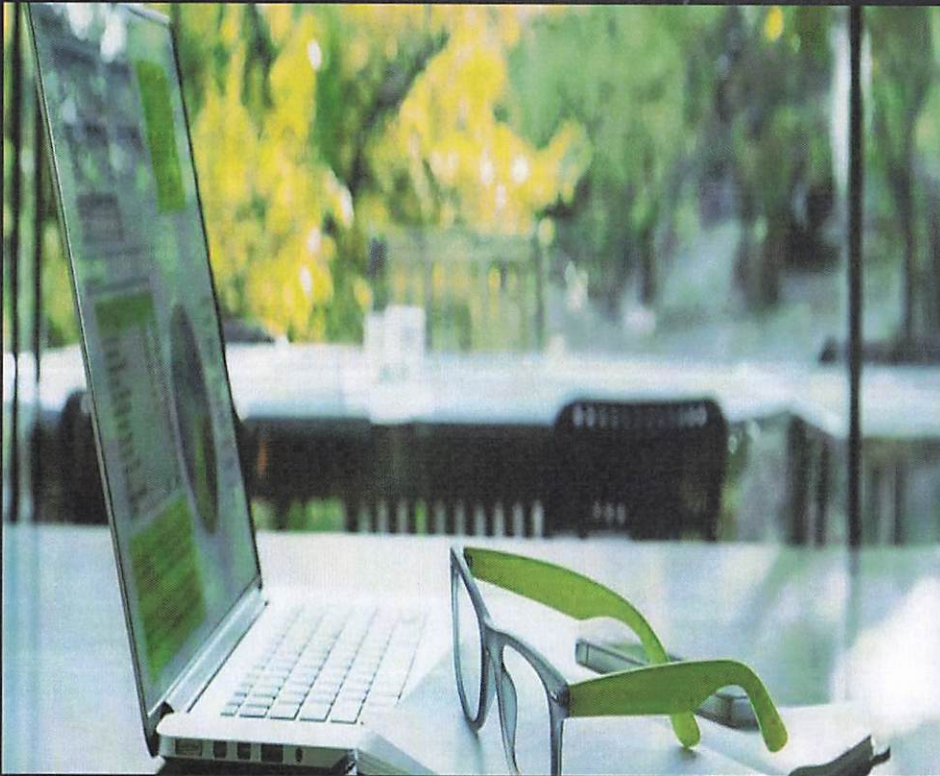


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*Exhibit
#4*

ANALYSIS CONTEXT



- Anticipated financial pressures from state legislative changes
 - Current SB1 estimated impact for Goshen from MLGQ method of \$9.6 million by 2030
 - Beginning in 2026, the MLGQ methodology begins impacting property tax monies
- Continued pressures to shift municipal services from tax supported to fee supported

HISTORICAL DATA

HISTORICAL TRASH/RECYCLING COSTS



Note: This graph only shows costs associated with “Waste Away Holdings, Inc.” for residential solid waste and recyclable materials collection and disposal. There are approximately \$60-\$80k in other costs for separate City waste services with various other vendors for services related to City Projects, E-waste events, confidential document disposal, etc.



TRASH/RECYCLING SERVICE ANALYSIS

ILLUSTRATIVE RESIDENTIAL RATES

Trash/Recycling Fee Rate Calculation

	2026	2027	2028
Trash/Recycling Residential Contract Costs (1)	\$2,152,700	\$2,210,700	\$2,270,100
Allowance for Administrative Costs (5%)	107,600	110,500	113,500
Total Annual Revenue Requirements	2,260,300	2,321,200	2,383,600
Divided by: Number of Eligible Customers (2)	10,992	10,992	10,992
Example Annual Fee Required to Support Trash/Recycling Service 100%	205.63	211.17	216.85
Divided by: 12 Months	12	12	12
Example Monthly Fee Required to Support Trash/Recycling Service 100%	<u>\$17.20</u>	<u>\$17.60</u>	<u>\$18.10</u>

(1) Based on the original contract entered into on September 6, 2022, and 10,992 eligible residences. Assumes a 2.7% contract cost increase annually based on the CPI percentage of 2024 as allowed in the agreement.

(2) Assumes no growth in current eligible customers of 10,992 per Amendment No. 2 entered into on May 23, 2024, based on the original contract from September 6, 2022.



TRASH/RECYCLING SERVICE ANALYSIS

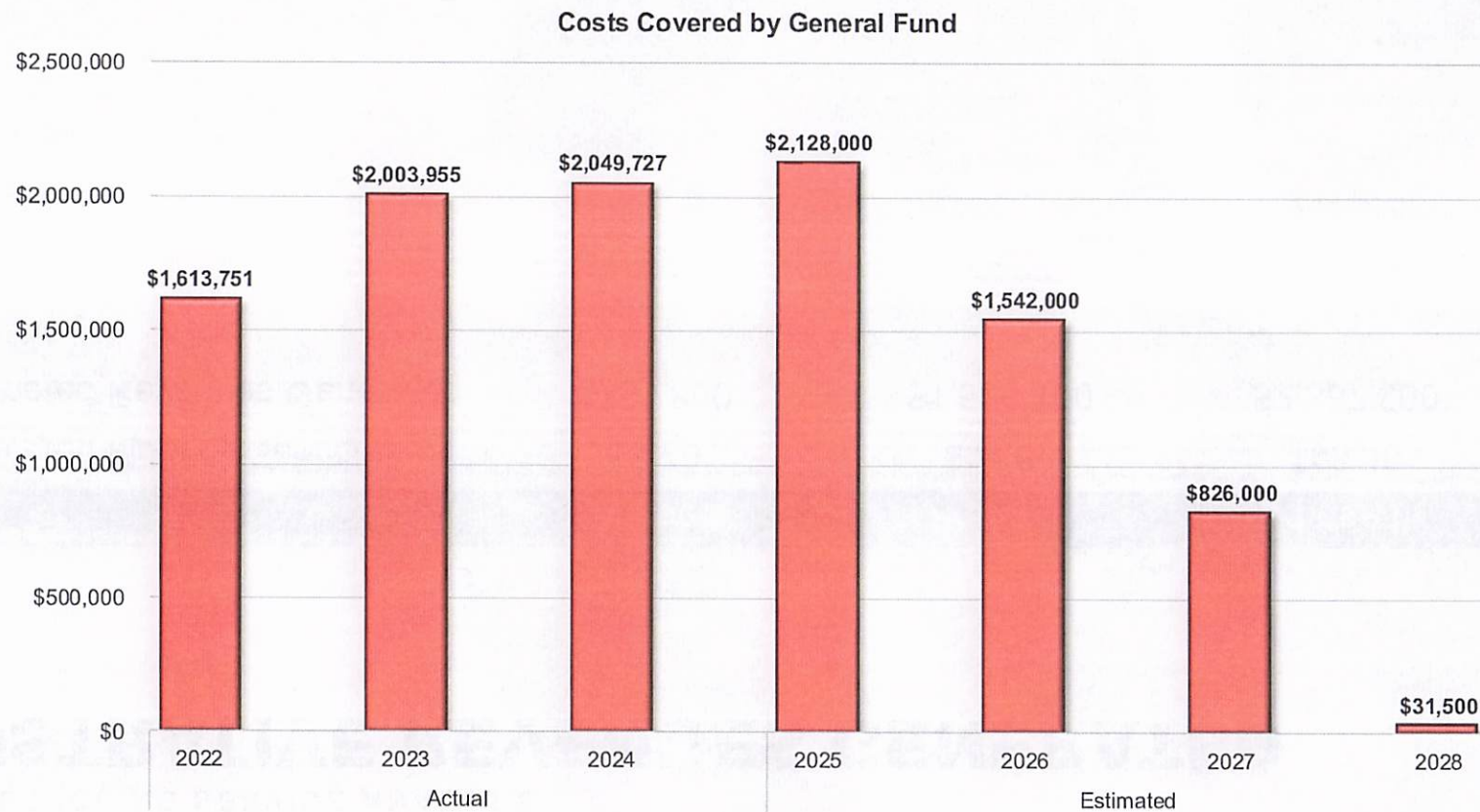
ILLUSTRATIVE REVENUES GENERATED

	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Estimated Monthly Service Fee	\$5.70	\$11.60	\$18.10
Estimated Revenues Generated	\$751,800	\$1,530,100	\$2,387,500



TRASH/RECYCLING SERVICE ANALYSIS

GENERAL FUND IMPACT



TRASH/RECYCLING SERVICE ANALYSIS

COMPARISON OF MONTHLY RESIDENTIAL BILLS

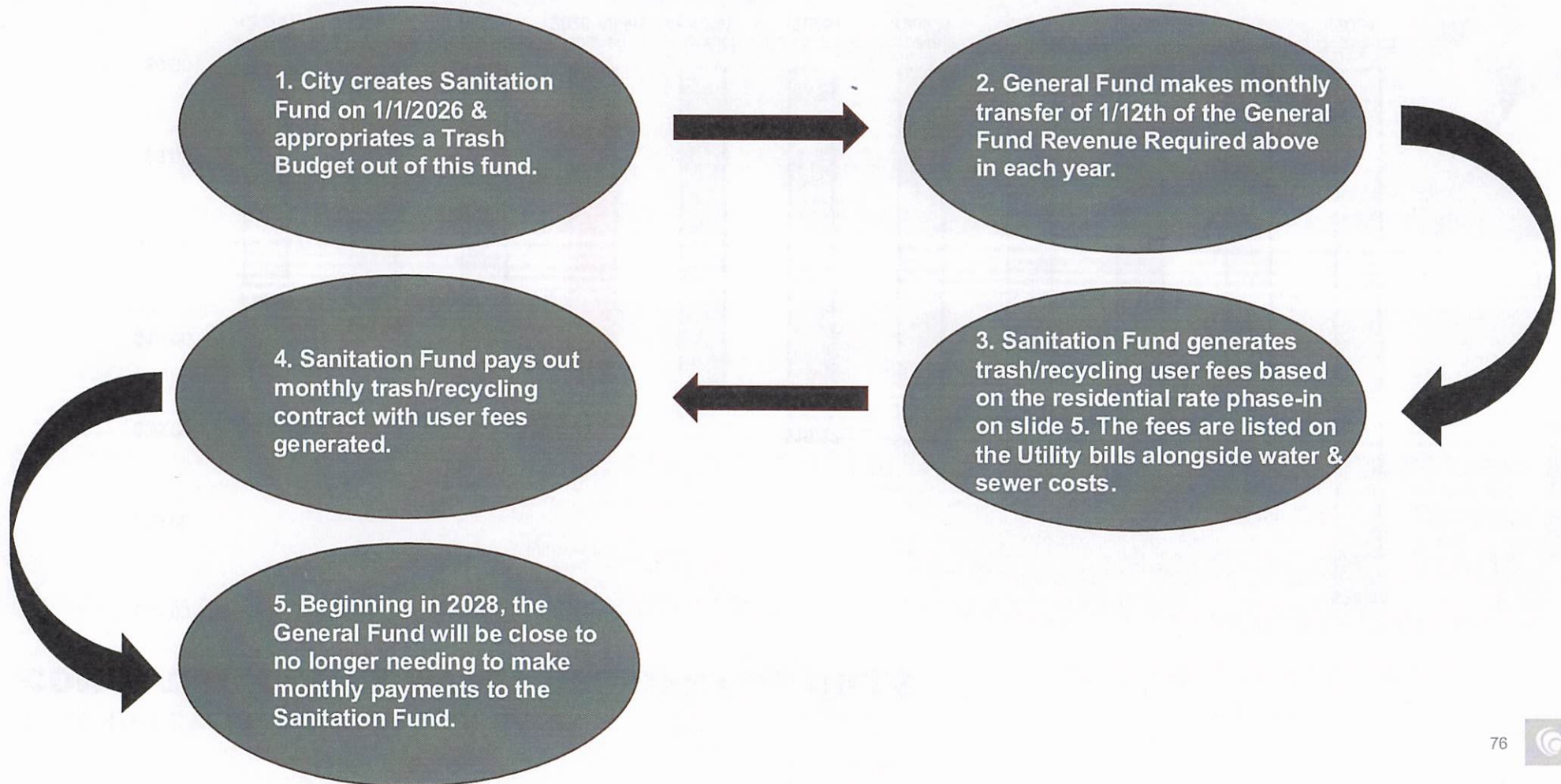


*Does not include recycling charges, which are variable based on specific factors.



NEW INTERNAL PROCESSES

FUNDING MECHANICS



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- How to bill?
- Application of the payments on combined utility bill
- Structure of phase-in of rates



QUESTIONS?





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