



City Manager's Monthly Update
February 24, 2025

Staff Update:

Spark Grant/DNR/Council Michigan Foundations:

Abonmarche met with city staff (Roxann, Ricky, and Nicol) to have a site walk-through and facility assessment of Ely Park. Also, Stephanie and Patty met us at the park to discuss their electrical needs for the Strawberry Festival. We agreed that the city would receive a quote to repair the electrical services at the pump house. Stephanie stated she would present the cost to the Strawberry Festival committee to cover the cost. The quote was from Midway Electric for \$2,860. If Midway Electric repairs, IEP can connect to the light pole without a charge. The city did not budget for the repair because of the Ely Park grant, which included electrical upgrades.

Audit:

The city received the Financial Statement and the Single Audit from Hungerford. The city received three Findings from the audit. The city manager and treasurer worked together to present the corrective action plan to the Findings. The corrective action plan is attached. The Findings consisted of:

- Material Weakness in Internal Controls over Financial Reporting - Account reconciliations were not performed or were otherwise ineffective in correcting necessary misstatements in the financial records of the City during the fiscal year and as part of year-end closing. This led to a significant number of auditor-proposed adjustments during the audit.
- Noncompliance with Laws and Regulations - Late Audit Submission - The City failed to submit its annual financial audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, to the Michigan Department of Treasury (MDT) before the required deadline of December 31, 2024.
- Material Weakness in Internal Controls over Compliance - Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards - The City did not provide a Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Building Official:

A resolution to hire Randall Aldering is on the city commission's agenda for accepting Mr. Aldering as the Building Official. Mr. Aldering is working as an electrical and machinal inspector.

Police Department:

Acting Police Chief Lucas's last day is this Friday, February 21st. The background check for Brian Matthew is in process. As soon as the background check is completed, the contract to hire the police chief will be executed. The city manager received multiple applications from applicants to become police officers. One candidate is moving forward with the background check. If the background check comes back clear, my goal is to hire the applicant by mid-March.

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Project Compass Task Force:

The task force is meeting this week to continue working on the SMART goals. It is awaiting the resident survey results and an overview of the resident interviews conducted at the listening session. The task force is brainstorming possible solutions for the most important problems.

Aaron & Manuela Blaylock:

I met with Aaron and Manuela Blaylock in September 2024 to discuss opening a business in downtown Hartford, the State Farm building. They would like to open a tea shop. I referred the Blaylocks to Market One, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and Revitalize Inc. Revitalized Inc. is a consultant that works with small businesses downtown. Revitalized, LLC has experience seeking grants and loans from MEDC.

Hartford's Fire Budget:

I saw in the Fire department's packet that there is a special Fire Board meeting on February 18th to discuss the Fire budget. I was not notified of the special meeting. I will email the fire board chairman to request the budget process. RoxAnn brought it to my attention that the process has changed.

WWTP:

I have been spending a lot of time at the WWTP regarding the UV light and how we want to move forward with an operator. Andrew wants the city to start moving aggressively for a permanent operator.

Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM) Update:

Attached are Wightman's project updates.

Sewer Revolving Fund Wastewater Project Update:

Attached are Wightman's project updates.

60th Avenue Sidewalk Extension/Shared Streets and Spaces Project Update:

It is on the city commission agenda. Attached are Wightman's project updates.

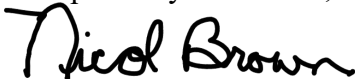
Drinking Water Sewer Revolving Fund Project (Lead Service Line Replacement & Water System Improvements) Update:

Attached are Wightman's project updates.

DWSRF Update:

Attached are Wightman's project updates.

Respectfully Submitted,



Nicol Brown
City Manager

City of Hartford
Project Updates
February 14, 2025

Project: Drinking Water Asset Management (DWAM)
Project Budget: \$375,000
Funding: EGLE DWAM grant - \$375,000
Contractor: Plummer's Environmental Services
Award Amount: \$210,200.00; modified to \$290,100
Scope: Investigate approximately 20% of the "unknown" (lead, galvanized, copper, plastic, other) water services. Investigation locations include in the building and two potholes on either side of the curb stop. Use the findings to estimate the number of needed water service replacements due to lead and update the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) within the City's Water Asset Management Plan (AMP). Then update the rate analysis to account for the needed lead service line replacements.

Schedule: The original 20% of service inspections has been completed. Plummers has completed 171 interior inspections and 169 exterior inspections. The City has continued to notify properties with discovered lead or galvanized services per EGLE requirements (about 67 out of 169 so far). EGLE has permitted the City to use the remaining funds for additional investigations and Plummer's plans to return November 18-29 to make progress on those. The grant agreement was extended to April 15, 2025 to allow for additional service inspections – approximately 150 (67 are completed) interior inspections (Point 1) and 150 (113 are completed) street side inspections (Point 3). Once this is completed, the update to the Water AMP must be completed prior to 04/15/25.

Wightman Project Manager: Brian Holleman, P.E., bholleman@gowightman.com, 616-890-4011

Project: Hartford Township Water Main Extension (PFAS)
Project Budget: \$2,970,800
Funding: EGLE C2R2 Grant - \$2,970,800
Contractor: Harris ConAg, LLC
Award Amount: \$2,137,854.00; Current Value with Change Orders: \$2,279,926.19
Schedule: The project is now substantially complete. The contractor has completed the punch list and we are working on finalizing quantities and project close out. The grant agreement has been extended to May 15, 2025.

Wightman Project Manager: Mickey Bittner, P.E., mbittner@gowightman.com, 269-266-2159

Project: SRF Wastewater Project
Project Budget: \$4,695,500
Funding: EGLE CWSRF – Loan: \$3.3755M + \$372,500 = \$3.748M at 2.125% for 30 years;
Grant: \$575,000 + \$372,500 = \$947,500

Contractors:

- A. WWTP – LD Dosca Associates: Construction of an equalization tank, installation of a ferric chloride day tank and piping, replacement of a polymer mixer, effluent launder covers, leveling equipment, lift station rehabilitation, pavement replacement.
- B. Force Main & Gravity Sewer – Pajay, Inc.: 8” and 10” force main replacement, 8” sewer siphon replacement, 8” and 10” gravity sewer replacement
- C. Sewer Lining – Insituform Technologies USA, LLC: Lining 8”, 15”, 16”, and 18” sewers.

Award Amounts:

- A. \$1,267,799.60; contract amendment to \$1,310,725.62 for WWTP additions
- B. \$1,749,790.00; contract amendment to \$1,693,641.60 for balancing items
- C. \$701,935.80; contract amendment to \$703,335.00 for additional manhole linings

Schedule:

- A. Complete. Final reimbursement request is being reviewed by EGLE.
- B. Complete. Final reimbursement request is being reviewed by EGLE.
- C. Complete. Final reimbursement request is being reviewed by EGLE.

Wightman Project Manager: Andrew Rudd, P.E., arudd@gowightman.com, 269-364-1664; Mary Nykamp, P.E. for the WWTP work, mnykamp@gowightman.com, 269-209-6406

Project: 60th Avenue Sidewalk Extension
Project Budget: \$276,800
Funding: MDOT Shared Streets Grant - \$200,000
Contractor: Krohn Excavating, LLC (Recommended for Award)
Award Amount: \$170,512.00 (Recommended for Award)
Scope: Construct approximately 1,800’ of concrete sidewalk from Center Street Apartments on S. Center Street south to 60th Avenue and then east along 60th Avenue to connect to the existing sidewalk at Woodside Drive. An alternative was added to include Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) at the S. Center Street crossing.

Schedule: The project was bid ahead of schedule on February 14, 2025 and favorable bids were received. The City should make a tentative award at the next Commission meeting.

Wightman Project Manager: Kyle Owen, P.E., kowen@gowightman.com, 269-312-4859

Project: Lead Service Line Replacements (LSLR) & Water System Improvements
Project Budget: Estimated \$11.76M
Funding: EGLE DWSRF – DWSRF Loan \$4,767,120 + BIL LSLR Loan \$2,288,880 = \$7,056,000 at 1.00%; BIL DWSRF PF \$4,324,880 + BIL LSLR & WM Grant \$379,120 = \$4,704,000 Grant
Contractors: TBD
Award Amount: TBD
Schedule: The goal of this project is to replace all of the lead service lines within the City’s system, replace select water main, and minor water plant improvements. The City is currently shown as receiving \$4,704,000 of grant/principal forgiveness and \$7,056,000 of loan at 1.00%, or 40% grant. Draft plans and specifications for the water main design were submitted to EGLE on February 10, 2025.

<u>Milestone</u>	<u>Approximate Date</u>
Authorized Design	09/23/24
Authorize Bond Counsel & Financial	10/28/24
Decide on Street Improvements	12/16/24
Authorize Bond Anticipation Note (BAN)	11/25/24
Submit Draft Plans & Specs to EGLE	02/10/25
Close on BAN	02/19/25
Submit Final Plans & Specs to EGLE	04/09/25
Advertise for Construction Bids	05/23/25
Open Construction Bids	06/25/25
City Award Contract(s)	07/07/25
MFA Closing	08/28/25
Construct the Project	09/15-25 – 06/04/27

The water main replacement will essentially reconstruct one lane of roadway in most street segments. The City could reconstruct the other lane or complete other utility work (sanitary sewer, storm sewer) in conjunction with the water project, but fund those improvements separately. A cost estimate of approximately \$1.9M was prepared for the reconstruction of Marion Avenue, Michigan Street, Hart Street, Washington Street, and Bernard Street. Each of these roadways includes storm sewer improvements as identified in the Storm Water CIP from the Asset Management Plan. Some of the storm sewer improvements may be included as a water main expense due to separation requirements and we are awaiting feedback from EGLE on that. This could ultimately decrease the City cost for roadway improvements if the water main improvements are bid under budget. The City should consider roadway improvements at a maximum cost \$1.5M at the next Commission meeting.

Wightman Project Manager: Paul Harvey, P.E., pharvey@gowightman.com, 269-760-5082; Mary Nykamp, P.E. for the IRP work, mnykamp@gowightman.com, 269-209-6406



City of Hartford * County of Van Buren * State of Michigan

Finding Number:

2024-01

Responsible Person:

Pam Shultz, City Treasurer

Management Views:

Management agrees with the finding of material weakness in internal controls over financial reporting. As recommended, the City of Hartford will implement internal controls, which include timely account reconciliation.

Corrective Action:

The city will update its accounting software and internal processes to ensure a more timely and accurate account reconciliation process. The new software will integrate more between the general ledger and the various subsidiary modules, such as accounts receivable, accounts payable, and capital assets. New processes will be created to reconcile these modules and bank accounts to ensure an updated and accurate general ledger and reduce the number of auditor-proposed adjustments during the audit.

Completion Date:

April 1, 2025

Finding Number:

2024-02

Responsible Person:

Nicol Brown, City Manager

Management Views:

Management agrees with the finding that the city failed to submit the annual financial audit report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, before the December 31, 2024 deadline. The City of Hartford is in the process of implementing internal controls to prevent a late submission.

Corrective Action:

The city manager and city treasurer will create a process for audit preparation.

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Completion Date:

April 1, 2025

Finding Number:

2024-03

Responsible Person:

Pam Shultz, City Treasurer

Management Views:

Management agrees with the finding of material weakness in internal control to provide a Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA). The City of Hartford will implement internal control procedures by completing the SEFA form before the audit.

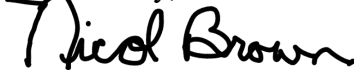
Corrective Action:

The city will seek an accountant to assist the treasurer in completing the Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (SEFA) form.

Completion Date:

April 1, 2025

Sincerely,



Nicol Brown
City Manager

**CITY MANAGER'S GOALS
JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025
NICOL BROWN**

GOALS	STEPS TO REACH GOAL	WHO IS INVOLVED	UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2024	UPDATE OCTOBER 2024	UPDATE NOVEMBER 2024	UPDATE DECEMBER 2024	UPDATE JANUARY 2025	UPDATE FEBRUARY 2025
1	RITE AID REDEVELOPMENT	Rite Aid Building - Investigate the ownership Seek a business Check to see if there is a deed restriction	Market One Van Buren County	Have not started	I have been calling a contact person from Rite Aid but have not received a return call.	I have made contact with the realtor company that owns the property. I'm requesting a zoom meeting for the week of Dec. 9th	I had my ZOOM meeting. They are actively looking for a tenant to go in the building. I will contact them for an update.	No Update
2	WATER/SEWER STUDY	Contact Baker Tilly Receive a quote Recommendation to City Commissioners	Baker Tilly	In the process of working with Bendzenski. Going before commission the water and sewer study	In Progress. City Commission approved at the October meeting.	In Progress. City Commission approved at the October meeting.	In Progress. City Commission approved at the October meeting.	In Progress. City Commission approved at the October meeting.
3	COMMISSIONERS WEEKLY REPORTS	Include invitations and informational flyers Include time sensitive information	Staff	Currently sending weekly reports.	Currently sending weekly reports.	Currently sending weekly reports.	Currently sending weekly reports.	Currently sending weekly reports when I have something to report.
4	ZONING	Research lot size to build Amend Zoning Ordinance Amend Rental Registration Ordinance	Wrightman & Assoc Safebuilt	Rental Registration Ordinance need to go before commission. Would like to apply for a MEDC grant for updating master plan and zoning ordinance.	Including the rental registration ordinance draft into the cm monthly report. Working on a MSHDA grant for updating master plan. Receiving comments from city commissioners on the draft blight ordinance.	Submitted the Housing Readiness Incentive grant Waiting on comments from city commissioners on the blight and rental registration ordinance.	Received \$50k grant from MSHDA for the Housing Readiness Incentive grant Waiting on comments from city commissioners on the blight and rental registration ordinance.	RoxAnn and I have a meeting with Donovan scheduled to discuss the next steps. Grant agreement was signed.
5	INFRASTRUCTURE	Capital Improvement Plan/Schedule of Maintenance Pavement and Surface Revaluation Rating/ Condition of Local & Major Roads Curve Painting Discussion Mileage on Roadways	Wrightman & Assoc & DPW Wrightman & Assoc & DPW	Road assest management/VBCRC	Have not started. Have not started. Curve painting complete	We will start the CIP process in Feb. 2025	We will start the CIP process in Feb. 2025	An updated CIP list was sent for my review
6	DEPARTMENT RESTRUCTURING Iron Removal Plant (IRP)	Contract Danny Staunton contract Recommendation to City Commission	Nick Curio	Working Part-time	Completed. Danny is working part-time as the Iron Removal Plant superintendent.	Completed. Danny is working part-time as the Iron Removal Plant superintendent.	Complete	Complete
	DPW	Write Job Description for DPW supervisor Make a Decision Hourly/Salary Recommendation to City Commissioners Promote Implement	Nick Curio	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete
	Code Enforcement Officer	Post Code Enforcement position Interviews Background check/physical Job Offer Hire	Nick Curio	In Progress	I stopped the process but will start it back again the first of December.	Met with McKenna Associates regarding Code Enforcement. Waiting on a proposal.	Waiting on Proposal. Would like to post the position in February.	No Update
	WWTP	Write Job Description for WWTP Supervisor Make a Decision Hourly/Salary Recommendation to City Commissioners Make Job Offer	Nick Curio	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete	Complete

**CITY MANAGER'S GOALS
JULY 1, 2024 - JUNE 30, 2025
NICOL BROWN**

GOALS	STEPS TO REACH GOAL	WHO IS INVOLVED	UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2024	UPDATE OCTOBER 2024	UPDATE NOVEMBER 2024	UPDATE DECEMBER 2024	UPDATE JANUARY 2025	UPDATE FEBRUARY 2025
	Promote Implement Police Dept.							
	Research of Police Mileage Recruitment of Police Chief Recommendation to City Commissioners Implement the contract Create Police Dept Committee Recommendation to City Commissioners Assist Interim Chief with recruitment of police officers	Sheriff's Dept Michigan State Police		In Progress	In Progress	In Progress	In Progress	Part-time Police chief hired contingent upon background check clearance
7	EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK Update Staff Review Changes @ Dept Head Meeting Send changes to Attorney Recommendation to City Commission Implement	Nick Curio Dept Head Staff		In Progress	In Progress. The Holiday and Personal day section has been revised.	I will have a draft amend policy for the Jan. board meeting	Working on draft. An amendment to the social media section is going before commission at Jan. meeting	Working on draft. An amendment to the weather inclinment and adding a uniform section. These items are going before commission at Feb. meeting
8	TREASURER & UTILITY SOFTWARE Request for quotes Review quotes with Joe Mangan (Lauterbach & Amen, LLP) & Pam Recommendation to City Commission	Pam Schultz		In Progress. I will bring before commission in November.	The item is on the city commission agenda for November's meeting	Reviewing the BS&S contract. Will sign this month	Go Live Date: August 18th	Working with BS&A team to start extracting data.



Half of Michigan local law enforcement agencies say they are underfunded, while most local governments are satisfied with their appropriations

By Debra Horner and Natalie Fitzpatrick

This report presents the views of Michigan's local government leaders, local chiefs of police, county sheriffs, and county prosecutors regarding funding for law enforcement agencies, including assessments of whether sheriff's offices and police departments receive the appropriate levels of funding, whether local officials would support pursuing new local millages or special assessments to fund law enforcement, and what each group's top priorities for potential new spending would be. These findings are based on statewide surveys of local government and law enforcement leaders in the spring 2024 wave of the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS), with some comparison to data collected on the fall 2015 MPPS wave.

The Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS) is an ongoing census survey of all 1,856 general purpose local governments in Michigan conducted since 2009 by the Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP). Respondents for the Spring 2024 wave of the MPPS include county administrators, board chairs, and clerks; city mayors, managers, and clerks; village presidents, managers, and clerks; and township supervisors, managers, and clerks from 1,307 local jurisdictions across the state, as well as responses from 54 county sheriffs, 234 chiefs of police or directors of public safety, and 55 county prosecutors.

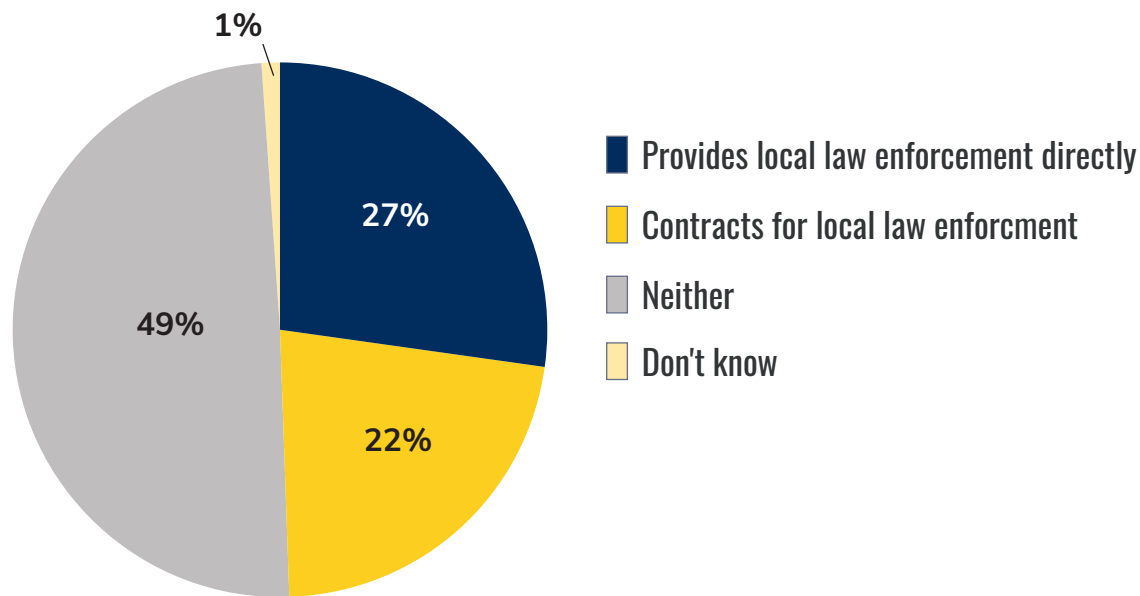
Key Findings

- Statewide, 59% of county sheriffs and 45% of local chiefs of police say that the local governments they serve (counties, townships, cities, and villages) do not appropriate sufficient funding for their agencies.
 - » Law enforcement leaders in smaller agencies, agencies in the Upper Peninsula, and higher crime communities are most likely to say they are underfunded.
- By contrast, just 19% of local government officials whose governments fund police departments or sheriffs' offices believe they appropriate too little (including 21% of governments that directly fund law enforcement and 16% that have an indirect role, i.e., contracting for law enforcement services to be provided by a special authority/district, by another municipality, or through a contract with their county sheriff). Meanwhile, a large majority (66%) of local officials say they spend about the right amount, and 11% say they currently appropriate too much for law enforcement.
- Statewide, 44% of local officials would support pursuing new local funding for law enforcement through either a new millage or special assessment, while 27% would oppose pursuing new local funding.
- When it comes to top priorities for allocating potential new spending on law enforcement, sheriffs, chiefs, and local government leaders all rank recruitment and retention efforts as among their highest priorities. However, sheriffs (71%) and police chiefs (68%) are significantly more likely to say increasing pay or benefits for current officers would be a "very high" priority, compared with 36% of local officials.

Approximately half of Michigan local governments directly or indirectly fund sheriff's offices and police departments

Local law enforcement services in Michigan are generally provided through a combination of state police, county sheriffs, and local police departments. All 83 Michigan county governments fund their own sheriff's office. Meanwhile, just over one quarter (27%) of all cities, townships, and villages report that they are directly involved in providing law enforcement services. This includes running their own police departments and/or participating in a joint police department with another jurisdiction (see *Figure 1*). Another 22% of local governments say they have an indirect role, contracting for law enforcement services to be provided by a special authority or district, by another municipality, or through a contract with their county sheriff. Finally, just under half of Michigan local governments (49%) report they have no real role in law enforcement, and they simply rely on the county sheriff or state police to respond when there is a public safety issue. These percentages are essentially unchanged from those reported on the Fall 2015 wave of the MPPS.¹

Figure 1
Percentage of cities, villages, and townships reporting how local law enforcement services are provided



County sheriffs and smaller law enforcement agencies more likely to express funding concerns

Statewide, almost half (47%) of Michigan chiefs of police and county sheriffs say the local governments (counties, townships, cities, and villages) they serve do not appropriate sufficient funding for their agencies. As shown in *Figure 2a*, 59% of county sheriffs say the county government appropriates too little to meet their office’s needs, while 41% say it appropriates about the right amount. Among local chiefs of police, 45% say the local governments they serve do not appropriate enough money, while 53% say they appropriate about the right amount. Unsurprisingly, almost no local law enforcement agencies say they are provided with too much money.

Concerns over law enforcement funding appear to be less of an issue among the largest agencies. As shown in *Figure 2b*, 29% of chiefs and sheriffs leading agencies with more than 80 full-time employees (FTE)—representing approximately 51 agencies statewide—say that the county and local governments they serve appropriate too little, compared to 47%-52% among smaller agencies.

Figure 2a
Law enforcement agency leaders' assessments of appropriations for their department or office, by public office

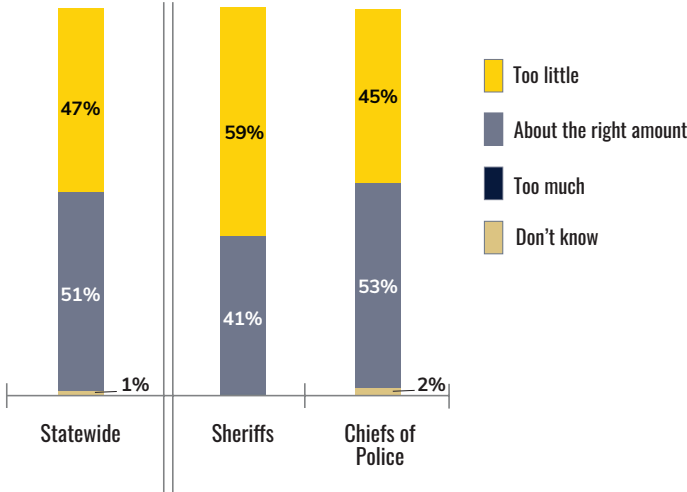
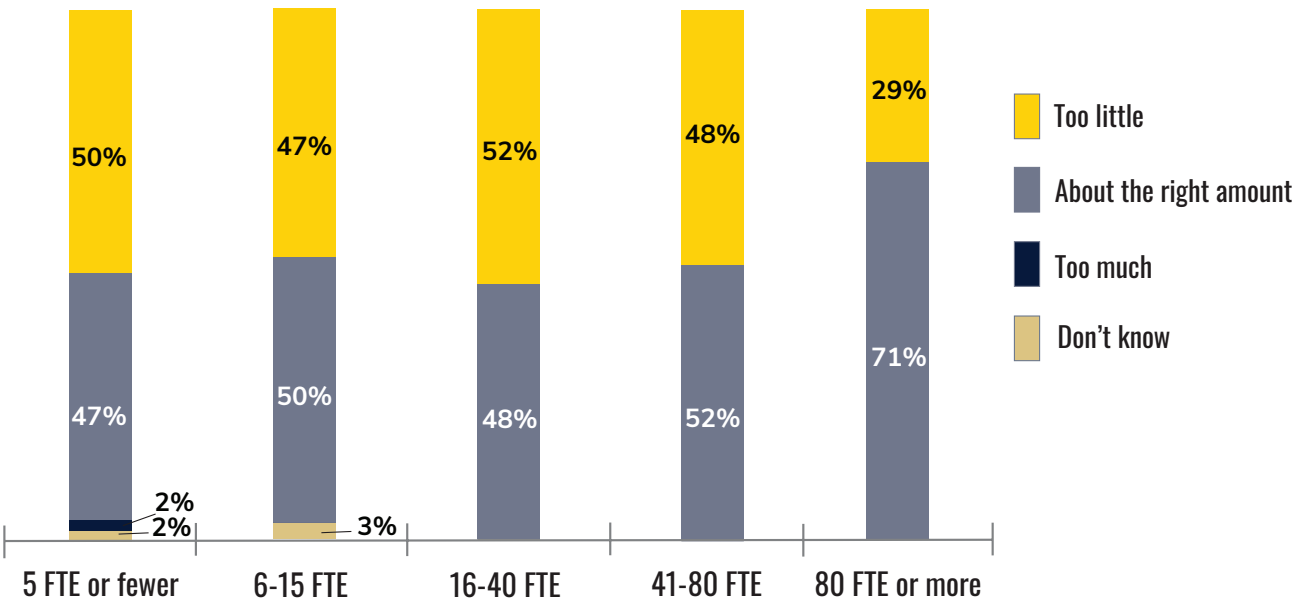
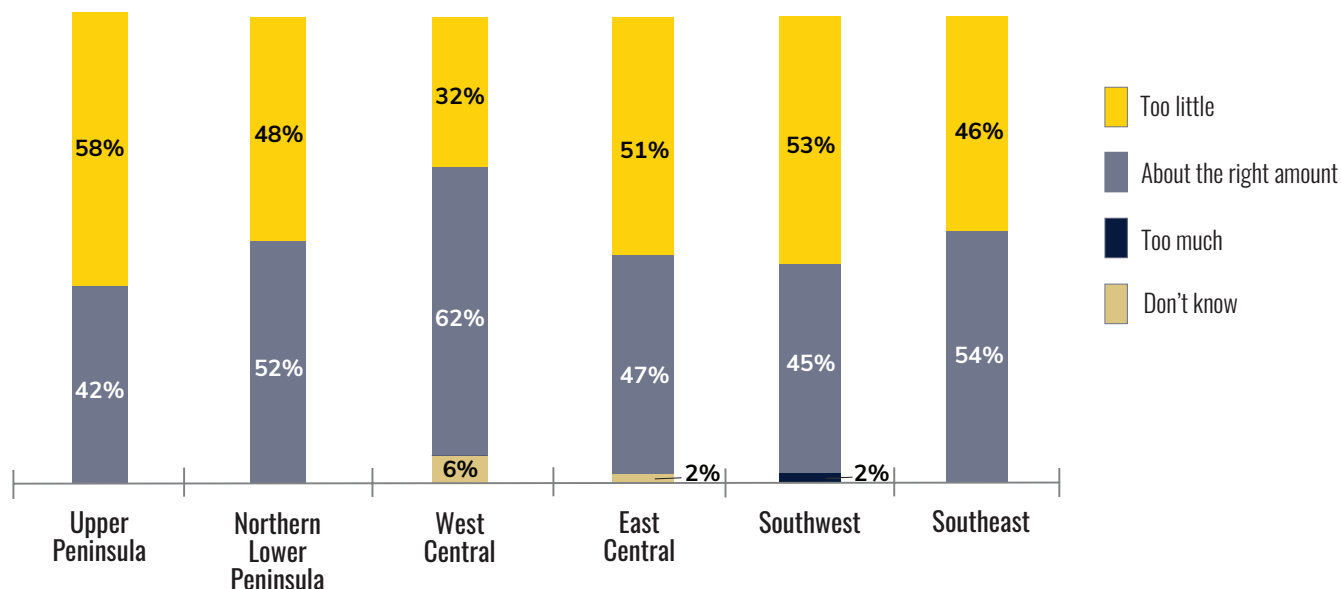


Figure 2b
Law enforcement agency leaders' assessments of appropriations for their department or office, by agency size



As shown in *Figure 2c*, there is significant regional variation in law enforcement leaders' assessments of appropriations to their agency. Police departments and sheriff's offices in the Upper Peninsula are the most likely to say that county and local governments do not appropriate enough for their agency (58%), while those in the West Central Lower Peninsula are the most likely to say that appropriations are about the right amount (62%).

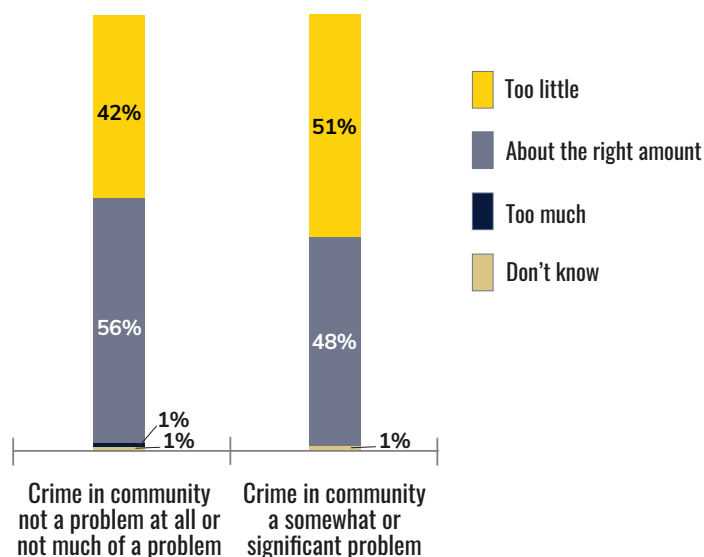
Figure 2c
Law enforcement agency leaders' assessments of appropriations for their department or office, by region of the state



The MPPS also asks respondents whether they consider their jurisdictions to be rural, mostly rural, mostly urban, or urban. More than half of sheriffs and police in communities described as urban (53%) or most rural (53%) say they receive too little funding. Meanwhile, those sheriffs and chiefs who describe their community as mostly urban are significantly more likely to say they are funded the right amount (69%).

When asked to assess local levels of crime, statewide, 62% of law enforcement leaders report that overall crime in the jurisdictions they serve is either "somewhat of a problem" (63% of county sheriffs and 49% of police chiefs) or "a significant problem" (23% of county sheriffs and 9% of police chiefs). However, assessments of funding are only loosely tied to these perceived levels of crime. Among leaders who are concerned about crime levels, 51% believe their agency receives too little funding, compared with 42% of leaders from communities where they say crime is "not much of a problem" or "not a problem at all" (see *Figure 2d*).

Figure 2d
Law enforcement agency leaders' assessments of appropriations for their department or office, by assessments of overall local levels of crime



Most local governments believe they appropriate the right amount for law enforcement

Among the half of Michigan local governments that are either directly or indirectly involved with the provision of law enforcement services in their jurisdiction (i.e., those that appropriate funding), two-thirds (66%) say they appropriate about the right amount for law enforcement, while 19% say they appropriate too little, and 11% say they appropriate too much (see *Figure 3a*). Notably, among jurisdictions that currently are not spending money on law enforcement services (not shown), 18% think their jurisdiction should start spending money (i.e., they currently appropriate “too little” funding).

When looking by region, local officials from the Upper Peninsula (57%) are least likely to say their jurisdiction is appropriating the right amount for the law enforcement services they fund (see *Figure 3b*). Around one in five (21%) of U.P. leaders believe they are spending too little, but 22% say they are spending *too much*, significantly higher than officials from any other region. Local officials from the Northern Lower Peninsula (69%) and Southeast Michigan (70%) are the most likely to believe they are funding law enforcement at the correct level.

Figure 3a
Local officials' assessments of whether their jurisdiction appropriates sufficient funding to meet current law enforcement needs (among local governments that provide law enforcement services directly or indirectly) by service provision method

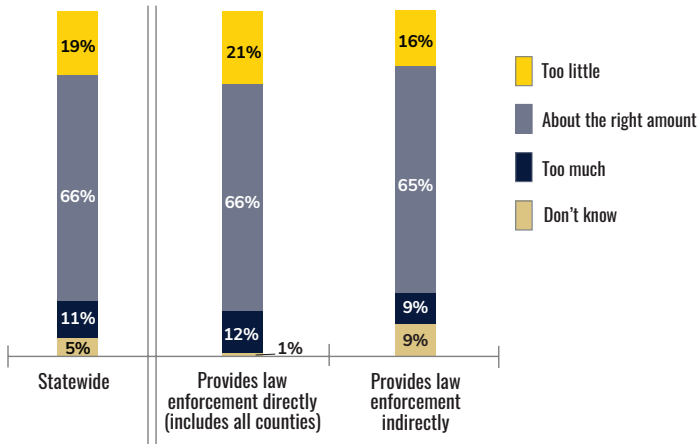
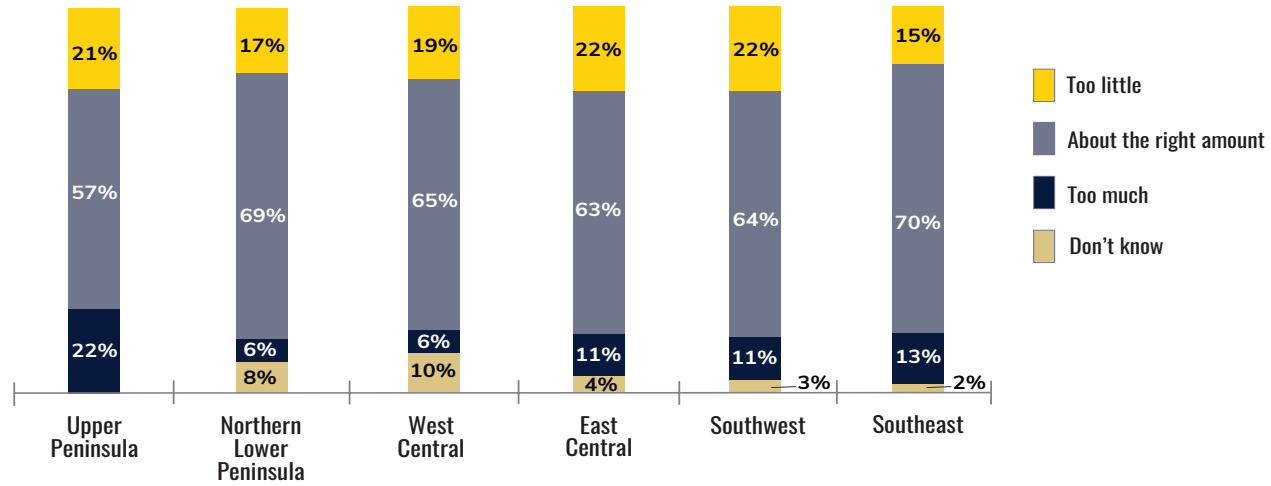


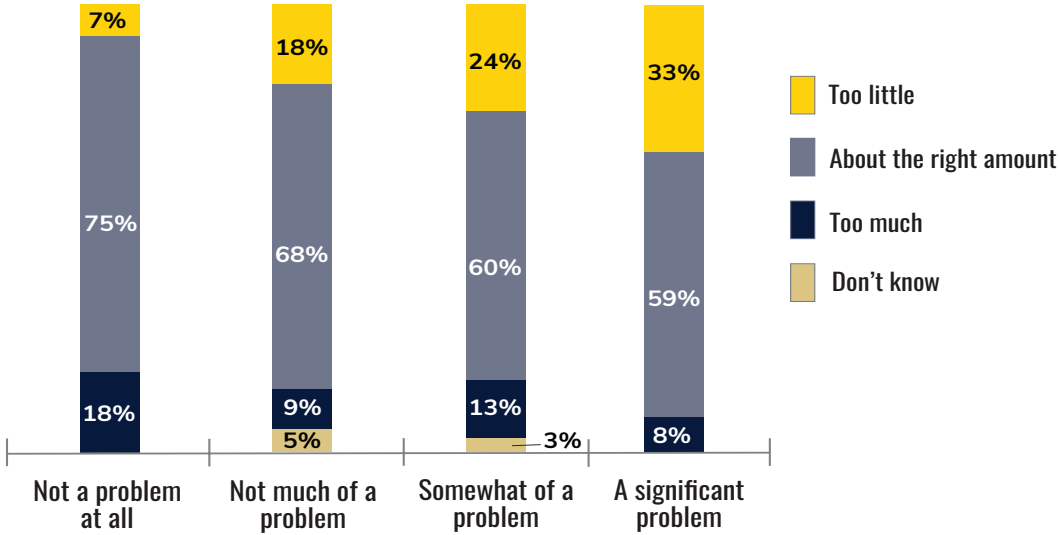
Figure 3b
Local officials' assessments of whether their jurisdiction appropriates sufficient funding to meet current law enforcement needs (among local governments that provide law enforcement services directly or indirectly), by region



Local leaders are less likely than law enforcement to see crime in their jurisdiction as a problem. For example, while 58% of police chiefs statewide say crime is either somewhat or a significant problem in their jurisdiction, only around 30% of city, village, or township officials statewide say the same. County assessments are slightly closer, with 86% of sheriffs saying crime is a somewhat or a significant problem in their county and 70% of county officials agree.

Nevertheless, local officials are generally sensitive to the need for more law enforcement funding as perceptions of crime rise. Among officials who say crime is not a local problem at all, 7% say they appropriate too little, compared to 18% in jurisdictions that say it is not much of a problem, 24% in jurisdictions that say it is somewhat of a problem, and 33% in jurisdictions that say crime is a significant problem (see *Figure 3c*). That said, across all levels of perceived crime, over a majority of local officials believe they spend “about the right amount.” Even in places where the local leader believes crime is “a significant problem,” more than half (59%) say their government appropriates about the right amount for policing, and 8% think they’re paying too much.

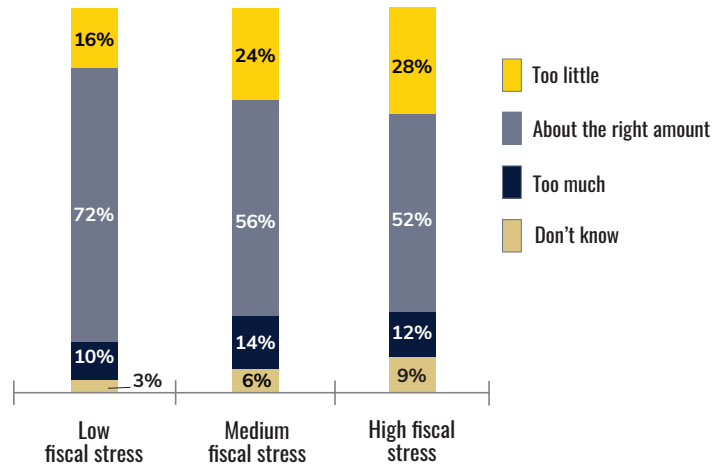
Figure 3c
Local officials’ assessments of whether their jurisdiction appropriates sufficient funding to meet current law enforcement needs (among local governments that provide law enforcement services directly or indirectly), by assessments of overall local levels of crime



A government’s lack of financial resources does not necessarily explain their reluctance to spend more on law enforcement. Indeed, jurisdictions experiencing medium or high levels of fiscal stress are more likely to say they appropriate too little funding for their primary law enforcement agency. As shown in *Figure 3d*, among jurisdictions reporting low fiscal stress, 72% say they appropriate the right amount, while 10% say they appropriate too much, and 16% say they appropriate too little. However, among jurisdictions experiencing medium levels of fiscal stress, 14% say they appropriate too much, and 24% say they appropriate too little. In jurisdictions experiencing high levels of fiscal stress, 12% say they appropriate too much, while 28% say they appropriate too little.

Prior MPPS surveys have consistently shown increasing public safety needs for jurisdictions across the state, but local officials have also reported that local government spending often fails to keep up with those growing needs.²

Figure 3d
Local officials’ assessments of whether their jurisdiction appropriates sufficient funding to meet current law enforcement needs (among local governments that provide law enforcement services directly or indirectly), by self-reported fiscal stress



Gap in perceptions on funding also exists between county prosecutors and county government leaders

The 2024 MPPS also asked the state’s 83 county prosecutors about funding for their office. Among prosecutors, 88% say too little funding is appropriated to their office and 12% say about the right amount.

Sheriffs and police chiefs generally agree, with 40% of sheriffs and 49% of police chiefs saying their county’s prosecutor’s office receives too little funding (however, note that nearly a quarter of both groups indicate they don’t know if their prosecutor’s office is underfunded or not).

In contrast to these assessments, just 22% of county leaders (board chairs and administrators) believe their county currently appropriates too little funding for their prosecutor’s office, 63% say they allocate about the right amount, and 15% of counties believe they appropriate too much for their prosecutor’s office.

Most local governments leaders support pursuing new local funding for law enforcement

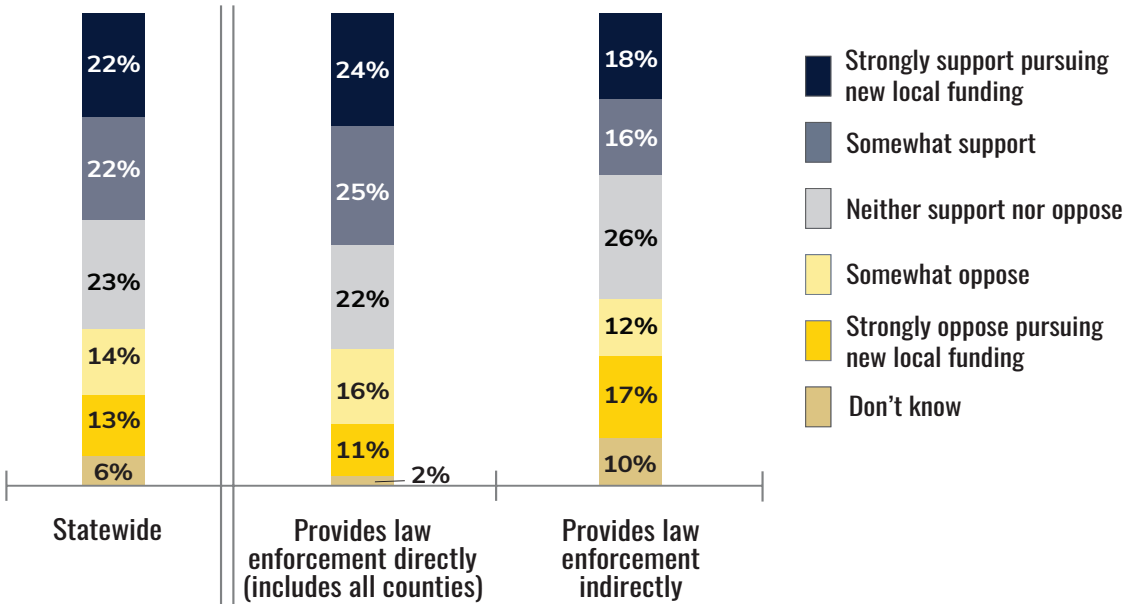
Even though most local leaders say they’re currently funding their law enforcement agencies at appropriate levels, they also tend to be open to seeking new local funding. In 2024, among jurisdictions involved in providing local law enforcement services, 44% of officials would either somewhat (22%) or strongly (22%) support pursuing new local funding for law enforcement through either a new millage or special assessment, while 27% would oppose pursuing new local funding (see *Figure 4*).

Nearly half (49%) of local officials in jurisdictions that provide law enforcement services directly would support a new local millage or special assessment for law enforcement (49%). Opinions among jurisdictions that simply contract for law enforcement services are more mixed, with 34% supporting pursuit of new local funding for law enforcement, but 29% saying they would oppose it.

Currently, support for pursuing new local millages or special assessments is highest in jurisdictions where leaders say they appropriate too little funding to law enforcement (68%), where local leaders report higher levels of problems due to crime (52%), and in communities experiencing medium (52%) or high (54%) levels of fiscal stress.

Compared with a similar MPPS survey question asked in 2015 where 32% reported that they “neither support nor oppose” pursuing new funding,³ statewide, local officials have moved away from neutral opinions, with some increase in opposition to pursuing new local funds, but also a slight increase in support in 2024.

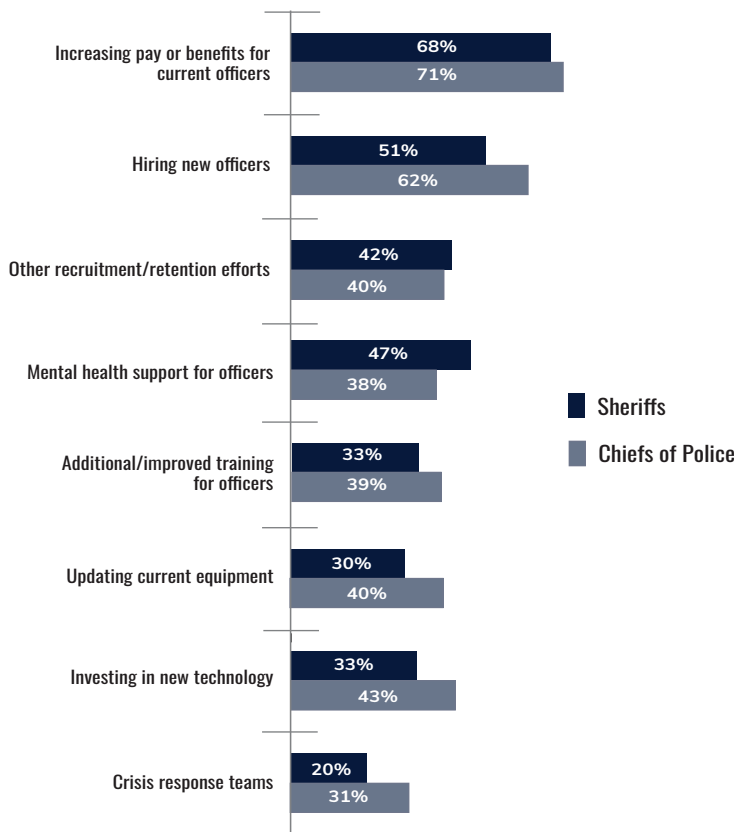
Figure 4
Local officials’ support for or opposition to pursuing additional local funding for law enforcement services (among local governments that provide law enforcement services directly or indirectly) by service provision method



Sheriffs and police chiefs much more likely than local officials to say increasing pay and benefits for current officers is a top priority for new funding

Beyond appropriations from local governments or new local millages, another potential source of revenue for law enforcement agencies could be through state or federal funding opportunities. For example, in 2023, 27% of local governments said they planned to spend money from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) on public safety.⁴

Figure 5a
Percentage of law enforcement agency leaders who say issues are a “very high” priority for new spending, by public office



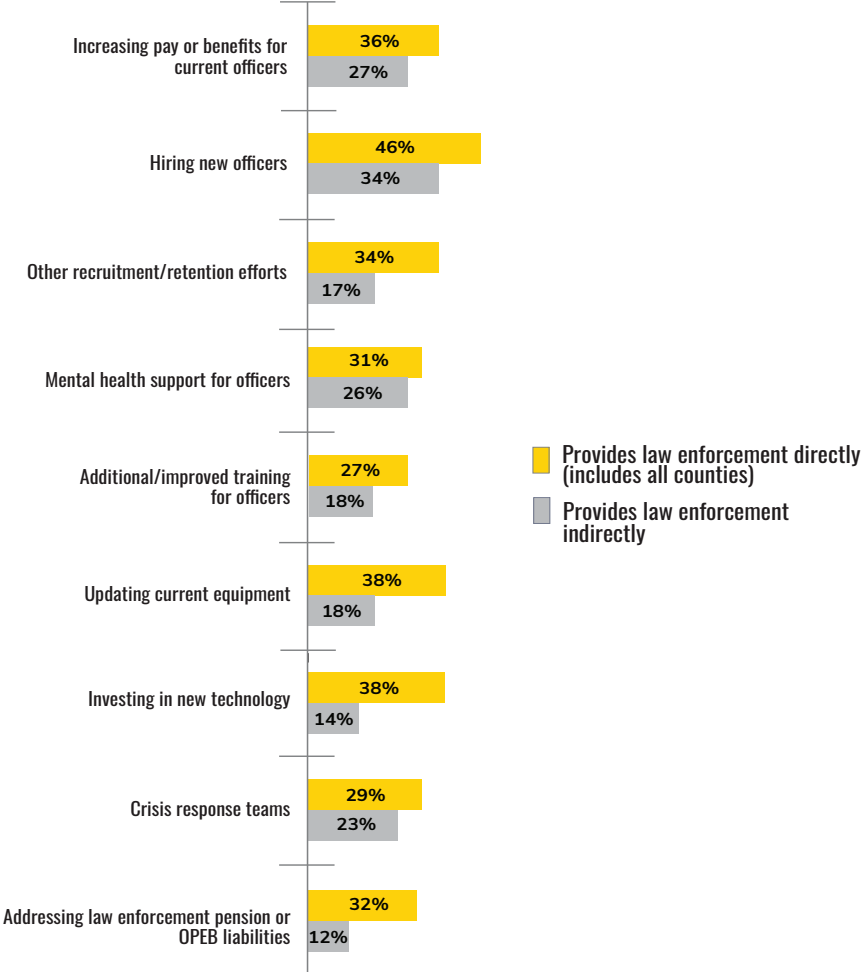
The Spring 2024 MPPS asked sheriffs, police chiefs, and local officials from governments that have a role in funding local law enforcement (directly or indirectly) what their priorities for allocating funds would be if new state or federal money became available to their jurisdiction.

If new funding became available, law enforcement leaders’ most common top priorities focus on recruitment and retention efforts, unsurprising given the widespread personnel challenges facing local law enforcement agencies.⁵

Statewide, approximately 70% of sheriffs and chiefs of police say increasing pay or benefits for current officers would be a “very high” priority if additional funding was available (see *Figure 5a*). Furthermore, 62% of police chiefs and 51% of sheriffs say hiring new officers would be a very high priority. Beyond recruitment and retention, sheriffs most often cited mental health support for officers as a very high priority (47%), while police chiefs were more likely to say that investing in new technology (43%) and updating current equipment (40%) was a very high priority.

Among local government officials, although the order of their priorities is similar, they are less likely to say various items are a very high priority. For example, while 68-71% of law enforcement officials consider increasing pay or benefits for current officers a top priority, only 36% of local government officials funding services directly and 27% of local officials funding services indirectly say it is a top priority (see *Figure 5b*). It's important to note that a high percentage of local government officials indicate uncertainty about these priorities, though, particularly among local governments that provide services indirectly. In places that contract for law enforcement, 20-30% of local officials choose “don’t know” for each priority on the survey (not shown).

Figure 5b
 Percentage of local officials who say issue is a “very high” priority for new spending (among local governments that provide law enforcement services directly or indirectly) by service provision method



Conclusion

Among Michigan law enforcement agency leaders, concerns about funding levels are widespread. Almost half (47%) of Michigan chiefs of police and county sheriffs say the local governments (counties, townships, cities, and villages) they serve do not appropriate sufficient funding for their agencies. However, these concerns are not always shared by local leaders from the general-purpose local governments contributing funding, where only one in five (19%) say they appropriate too little and a majority (66%) say they appropriate about the right amount. Nevertheless, local leaders tend to be open to seeking new community funding through a new millage or special assessment.

When asked about prioritizing spending for potential funding increases from federal or state grants, law enforcement leaders have many priorities, but spending related to employee recruitment and retention are widely considered a top priority. Local officials generally share these priorities, but some are also more uncertain about the urgency of needs identified by law enforcement leaders.

Notes

1. Horner, D. and Ivacko, T. (2016, April). *Most local officials are satisfied with law enforcement services, but almost half from largest jurisdictions say their funding is insufficient*. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan. Retrieved from <https://closup.umich.edu/michigan-public-policy-survey/52/most-local-officials-are-satisfied-with-law-enforcement-services-but-almost-half-from-largest-jurisdictions-say-their-funding-is-insufficient>
2. Horner, D. and Ivacko, T. (2021, December). *Michigan local government officials report improved fiscal health after a year of COVID-19, but not yet back to pre-pandemic levels*. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan. Retrieved from <https://closup.umich.edu/michigan-public-policy-survey/96/michigan-local-government-officials-report-improved-fiscal-health-after-year-covid-19>
3. Horner, D. and Ivacko, T. (2016, April).
4. Horner, D., Fitzpatrick, N. and Ivacko, T. (2023, June). *Challenges for Michigan local governments with ARPA spending continue, particularly in project costs and procurement*. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan. Retrieved from <https://closup.umich.edu/michigan-public-policy-survey/114/mpps-policy-brief-challenges-michigan-local-governments-arpa-spending-continue-particularly-in-project-costs-and-procurement>
5. Fitzpatrick, N. and Horner, D. (2024, September). *Michigan local governments report increased challenges with law enforcement recruitment and retention*. Ann Arbor, MI: Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy at the Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan. Retrieved from <https://closup.umich.edu/michigan-public-policy-survey/126/michigan-local-governments-report-increased-challenges-law-enforcement-recruitment-retention>

Survey Background and Methodology

The MPPS is an ongoing survey program, interviewing the leaders of Michigan’s 1,856 units of general-purpose local government, conducted by the Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP) at the University of Michigan in partnership with the Michigan Municipal League, Michigan Townships Association, and Michigan Association of Counties. Surveys are conducted each spring (and prior to 2018, were also conducted each fall). The program has covered a wide range of policy topics and includes longitudinal tracking data on “core” fiscal, budgetary and operational policy questions and is designed to build up a multi-year time series.

In the Spring 2024 iteration, surveys were sent by the Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP) via email and hardcopy to top elected and appointed officials (including county administrators and board chairs; city mayors and managers; village presidents, clerks, and managers; and township supervisors, clerks, and managers) from all 83 counties, 280 cities, 253 villages, and 1,240 townships in the state of Michigan. In addition, surveys were sent to all 83 county sheriffs and county prosecutors, as well as 430 local police departments and public safety departments. More information is available at <https://closup.umich.edu/michigan-public-policy-survey/mpps-2024-spring>.

The Spring 2024 wave was conducted from April 1– June 10, 2024. A total of 1,307 local jurisdictions returned valid surveys (67 counties, 216 cities, 171 villages, and 853 townships), resulting in a 70% response rate by unit. A total of 343 law enforcement leaders returned valid surveys (54 sheriffs, 234 police chiefs, and 55 county prosecutors) for a 58% response rate across various agencies. Quantitative data are weighted to account for non-response. Missing responses are not included in the tabulations unless otherwise specified. Some report figures may not add to 100% due to rounding within response categories. “Voices Across Michigan” verbatim responses, when included, may have been edited for grammar and brevity.

See CLOSUP’s website for the full question text on the survey questionnaires. Detailed tables of the data in this report, including breakdowns by various jurisdiction characteristics such as community population size, region, and jurisdiction type, will be available at <http://mpps.umich.edu>.

Acknowledgement and Disclaimer

This material is based upon work supported by a grant from The Joyce Foundation. The survey responses presented here are those of local Michigan officials, while further analysis represents the views of the authors. Neither necessarily reflects the views of The Joyce Foundation, the University of Michigan, or of other partners in the MPPS.

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The Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP), housed at the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, conducts and supports applied policy research designed to inform state, local, and urban policy issues. Through integrated research, teaching, and outreach involving academic researchers, students, policymakers and practitioners, CLOSUP seeks to foster understanding of today's state and local policy problems, and to find effective solutions to those problems.

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