



Memorandum

Office of the Village Manager

TO: Council President Rutt and Village Council
FROM: Darwin D. P. McClary, Village Manager
DATE: March 5, 2026

RE: **REQUEST FROM COUNCIL MEMBER DANDALIDES FOR ALTERNATIVE BUDGET DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

Council Member Dandalides has requested placement of a Council meeting agenda item for Council's March 9, 2026, regular meeting that seeks to create an alternative budget development process by pre-emptively directing the Village Manager on the manner in which the Village Manager's proposed budget is developed and submitted to the Village Council. As I have stated at a previous Council meeting when this suggestion was presented, **I strongly oppose this request.**

Section 8.2 of the Village Charter grants the authority for initial budget preparation squarely with the Village Manager as the Chief Administrative Officer of the Village government. The provisions of the Village Charter comply with the statutory authority granted to Chief Administrative Officers for budget preparation under the Michigan Uniform Budgeting and Accounting Act, Public Act 2 of 1968, as amended. The role of the Council in the budget process is to review, modify, and hold a public hearing on the proposed budget prior to the budget's adoption. The Council may make any changes it desires to the Village Manager's proposed budget, **but only after the Village Manager's proposed budget is submitted to Council for review in accordance with Charter and State law.** The Council cannot usurp or pre-empt the clear Charter and statutory authority of the Village Manager to prepare the initial proposed budget.

Not only are there clear legal concerns regarding Council Member Dandalides' request, but an ethical consideration exists as well. The Village Manager must resist any encroachment on his authority and responsibilities. Failure to do so, or Council action to encroach, undermines the Village Manager position and the separation of legislative and administrative powers as voted upon and passed by the electors of the Village and places any successor to the office of Village Manager in a precarious and diminished office.

For these reasons, I request that Council take no action on the request for an alternative budget development process.