



BUSINESS OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

AB 5865
April 27, 2021
Planning Session

AGENDA BILL INFORMATION

TITLE:	AB 5865: Youth & Family Services (YFS) Levy Discussion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only
RECOMMENDED ACTION:	Provide feedback on programmatic elements to include in a potential levy for the Youth & Family Services Department.	<input type="checkbox"/> Action Needed: <input type="checkbox"/> Motion <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinance <input type="checkbox"/> Resolution

DEPARTMENT:	Youth and Family Services
STAFF:	Ali Spietz, Chief of Administration Tambi Cork, YFS Administrator
COUNCIL LIAISON:	n/a
EXHIBITS:	1. YFS Levy PowerPoint Presentation 2. Articulate, confirm, and communicate a vision for effective and efficient city services. Stabilize the organization, optimize resources, and develop a long-term plan for fiscal sustainability.
CITY COUNCIL PRIORITY:	

AMOUNT OF EXPENDITURE	\$ n/a
AMOUNT BUDGETED	\$ n/a
APPROPRIATION REQUIRED	\$ n/a

SUMMARY

The purpose of this agenda bill is to provide the City Council with information on potential programmatic elements of the Youth & Family Services (YFS) programs and services that could be included in a potential levy lid lift to stabilize and provide long-term funding for the YFS Department.

BACKGROUND

Following the closure of the Mercer Island Thrift Shop in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, YFS and Thrift shop staff were laid off and furloughed due to the lack of revenues and funding for the YFS Department. In May 2020, the City Council established the YFS Working Group, comprised of representatives from the MIYFS Foundation Board, the City Council, and staff, to evaluate short-term and long-term funding options to stabilize the YFS Department. Although the Group reviewed four levy scenarios for long-term funding, a formal recommendation was not made, and the Group concluded its work in January 2021.

At the February 2, 2021 City Council Meeting, the City Council directed the City Manager to research and provide additional information regarding a single year levy lid lift option for consideration on the November ballot and to prepare the financial modeling related to levy term.

This discussion will focus on the potential programmatic components of a future levy, a separate discussion will be scheduled regarding the financial modeling.

YFS SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

At the Planning Session, staff will present a brief overview of the current programs and services that the YFS Department provides to the Mercer Island community. This information is presented in order to inform the City Council about the current and future needs of clients and residents and help frame the discussion of the proposed programmatic elements of a potential levy. Detailed information about the following programs is included in Exhibit 1:

- Family Assistance
- Food Pantry
- Community-Based Counseling
- School-Based Counseling
- Senior Services
- Healthy Youth Initiative
- Mercer Island Thrift Shop

LEVY PROGRAMMATIC ELEMENTS

Exhibit 1 details the recommended base proposal for a YFS levy and a menu of optional programmatic elements that could also be included in a future levy. The recommended options and estimated costs are summarized in the table below.

PRIORITY	ACTION	OPTION	COST*
Base	STABILIZE	School-Based Counseling Program	\$685,000
Base	STABILIZE	Supervision for School-Based Counseling Program	\$50,000
1	RESTORE	Programs Assistant to Full-Time (0.5 FTE)	\$40,000
2	RESTORE	Second Middle School Counselor (0.83 FTE)	\$100,000
3	EXPAND	MIH Case Manager Position (0.5 FTE)	\$60,000
4	RESTORE	Geriatric Specialist to Full-Time (0.5 FTE)	\$60,000
5	RESTORE	Community-Based Counselor Position (0.5 FTE)	\$60,000
6	STABILIZE	Healthy Youth Initiative (2025 & Beyond)	\$175,000

**Costs are based on 2021 actuals*

NEXT STEPS

Staff is seeking the City Council's feedback at the Planning Session on which programmatic elements should be included in a potential levy lid lift for the Youth & Family Services Department. In June, staff will return to the City Council for a follow-up discussion on the:

- Pros and cons of a levy
- Timing of a ballot measure
- Levy length
- Detailed finances and modeling based on selected programmatic elements
- A "go" or "no go" decision on the levy.

RECOMMENDATION

Provide feedback on programmatic elements to include in a potential levy for the Youth & Family Services Department.