

Press Release -Mayor Jay Ruais Presents FY 2025 Budget

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Press Release - Budget Address.pdf;



Office of Mayor Jay Ruais

NEWS RELEASE

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Mayor Jay Ruais Presents FY 2025 Budget

Manchester NH-This evening, Manchester Mayor Jay Ruais delivered his FY 2025 budget address before a special meeting of the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Ruais outlined the tough fiscal challenges our city faces this budget cycle and the difficult decisions made to address them while setting our city up for long term financial health and success. He stated, “As I was putting this together, I consulted with Chairman Levasseur, and Alderman Long, and we have agreed that this is a strong bipartisan framework that sets the stage for smooth enactment as it goes to the Board of Aldermen. I appreciate both of your efforts, and leadership in our city and thank you for your collaboration.”

Ruais went on to outline the fiscal realities presented in this budget. Including the need to last year’s use of \$1.7 million in one-time funds, closing a \$1.4 million gap in healthcare funding, a significant shift in new revenue from \$4.5 million last year to a \$166,373 this year and a historically high 4% Cost of Living Adjustment. When adding in the budget request from the school district and departmental asks, the city was facing an 8.25% spending increase. Ruais summarized the efforts to reduce spending by stating, “with a lot of hard work and tough decisions, we were able to cut that number down to 3.86%.”

Ruais then detailed several of the decisions made to reduce spending including a reduction in funded vacancies of \$600,000, elimination of \$792,957 from the Cash CIP project line, and did not allocate funding for \$1,839,748 in department requests. Additionally, he stated that, “the hiring freeze will continue for non-emergency personnel until our fiscal condition dictates otherwise.” To set our city up for long term financial health, Mayor Ruais proposed in this budget a reduction in bonding by 10%, “in order to keep our debt service low so as not to burden future generations of Manchester residents.”

Ruais declared that this budget prioritized that which is important. This includes providing for Cost-of-Living Adjustments, merits, longevities, and retirement benefits for our city workers.

Ruais highlighted the school budget, “we were able to invest an additional \$1 million into our School District. The \$227 million we are proposing to allocate this evening represents the most ever allocated by the City of Manchester.”

With regard to public safety and first responders, he listed the following, this budget will fund Fusus and ShotSpotter, mental health clinician for Manchester Police Department and 10 police officers previously funded by the federal government. This builds off the city already hiring 6 new police officers since Ruais’ swearing in. Ensuring those that protect us have the proper protective gear to do so this budget covers the \$100,000 request from the fire department to provide for this. Ruais stated, “the safety of our citizens is non-negotiable, you have our backs, and this budget has yours.”

Ruais discussed homelessness, “From prevention to case management, to sheltering, to transitional living, job placement, mental health and substance use disorder treatment our support runs the continuum.

This budget allocates money from the FY 2025 CDBG and ESG programs to end homelessness such as Families in Transition which will receive \$70,000 for family emergency housing, WayPoint will receive \$89,000 for their homeless youth shelter, YWCA will receive \$70,000 for Emily’s Place and 1269 Café will receive \$50,000 to double their residential room capacity.

He went on to state, “ARPA has fully funded the engagement center since its inception; and those funds run out on June 30th. I don’t believe cities should be in the shelter business, and we do not have the resources to fund this in the long term. We should take this opportunity to transition from a city run shelter, to that of a nonprofit.

What I am proposing today is that we take a portion of the ARPA money we have left to build a transitional bridge to the nonprofit that will take over. This is an important strategy allowing us to address these real challenges without having the taxpayer bear the full burden.”

Ruais outlined the need to plan for the future: “This budget is a governing document. And throughout its construction, I constantly asked, where do we want to see Manchester in 5-10-15 years and where can we make the investment today to get there.”

With that in mind, he highlighted the importance of infrastructure, roads, sidewalks, parks, youth sports and bringing the community together:

“We are investing \$5.3 million in road infrastructure and improvements around the city. Well-maintained roads not only improve commute times but also contribute to economic development.

We are allocating \$1 million towards sidewalk maintenance and upgrades promoting pedestrian safety and accessibility. Sidewalks are vital for creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

And we are investing \$1 million in park renovations, upgrades, and maintenance that benefits the community by providing recreational spaces for residents of all ages to enjoy. This includes significant playground renovations at Livingston, Wolfe and Howe Parks. Parks contribute to public health, social cohesion, and environmental sustainability, making them essential assets for any city.

Building off the theme of Manchester's next generation and using our parks as a catalyst to grow our civic pride, we have identified youth sports as an important function of this. I'm thrilled to announce that we are allocating \$200,000 for a league partnership program to further upgrade specific parks in which our youth sports are active."

Ruais concluded: "If I've said it once, I've said it a thousand times, ours is a city filled with undeniable and unquantifiable promise, and this budget responsibly funds our potential. Let us remember the core values that unite us as citizens of Manchester. Let us not falter in our commitment to investing in our community while ensuring every resident has the opportunity to thrive. Let us seize the opportunities that lie ahead, harnessing the collective strength of our diverse and vibrant city. And, as Bill Belichick would require of us- let us continue to do our jobs in service to the people of Manchester. I am confident that with prudent management and the dedication of our citizens, Manchester will continue to prosper and flourish. "

FY 2025 Budget Highlights

5.6% Allowable Tax Cap:

- Mayor's Budget-3.86%
- 1.77% under the allowable tax cap

Municipal Spending:

- Total City Spending- \$189,153, 835
- Covered a \$1.7 million surplus deficit from prior years' one-time fund use
- Covered \$1.4 million in increased Healthcare Costs over plan
- Eliminated \$600,000 in unfunded vacancies
- Eliminated \$792,957 from Cash CIP Project line
- Did not fund \$1,839,748 in department requests
- Continued the hiring freeze for all but emergency requests
- Reduced bonding by 10%
- No city employee layoffs
- Did not expand the city staff compliment
- Level funded city departments while providing for 4% COLAS, Merits, longevities and retirements

School District:

- Increased budget \$1 million from \$226,982,601 to \$227,982,601
- The most ever allocated by the city

Capital Improvements: Roads, Sidewalks, Parks and City Fleet:

- \$5.3 million in road infrastructure and improvements
- \$1 million towards sidewalk maintenance and upgrades
- \$1 million in park renovations, upgrades and maintenance
- \$3 million in upgrades to city fleet including MTA, Police, Fire and Highway Departments

Affordable Housing:

- Allocates \$1.65 million of federal funds to help construct 45 units of affordable housing on the Pearl Street parking lot.

CDBG and ESG Programs to End Homelessness:

- Families in Transition receives \$70,000 for family emergency housing

- WayPoint receives \$89,000 for their homeless youth shelter
- YWCA receives \$70,000 for Emily's Place
- 1269 Café receives \$50,000 to double their residential rooms

Community Improvement Program:

- Funding to a league partnership program to further upgrade specific parks in which our youth sports are active: \$200,000
- Funding to Manchester Police Athletic League CHOICES program: \$50,000
- Funding to Hillsborough County Child Advocacy: \$20,000
- Funding to Manchester Community Resource Center: \$110,000
- Funding to Meals on Wheels: \$42,000
- Funding to Fun in the Sun for summer camp for students in grades 1 to 7: \$100,000
- Funding for six agencies to provide youth services counseling: \$150,000

First Responders:

- Protected 10 police officer positions currently funded by expiring federal COPS grant program
- Hired 6 additional police officers since January 2nd
- Funding the mental health clinician for our police officers
- \$100,000 for much needed firefighter protective gear

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