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TO: Bruce Simpson, Ombudsperson
Office of the Ombudsperson

FROM: David Whitaker, Director 
Legislative Policy Division Staff

DATE: March 27, 2025

RE: 2025-2026 Budget Analysis

Attached is our budget analysis regarding your agency's budget for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year.

Please be prepared to respond to the issues/questions raised in our analysis during your scheduled hearing on **Monday, March 31, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.** We would then appreciate a written response to the issues/questions at your earliest convenience before or after to your budget hearing. Please forward a copy of your responses to the Council Members, the City Clerk's Office, and the Legislative Policy Division.

Please contact us if you have any questions regarding our budget analysis.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

DW:vc:sj

Attachments:

Issues and Questions
OMP Budget Pages

CC: Councilmembers
Auditor General's Office
Jay Rising, Chief Financial Officer
Tanya Stoudemire, Chief Deputy CFO-Policy & Administration Director/Interim Budget Director
Donnie Johnson, Deputy Budget Director
Andre Blair, Agency CFO
Rachel Schafer, Budget Analyst
Malik Washington, City Council Liaison, Mayor's Office

Office of the Ombudsperson (53)

FY 2025-2026 Budget Analysis by the Legislative Policy Division

The Ombudsperson improves service delivery through departmental accountability. The City of Detroit Office of the Ombudsperson was established by Charter referendum on November 6, 1973, became operational in 1974 and was upheld by voters in 2011. The Detroit City Ombudsperson, an independent governmental official, is appointed by the Detroit City Council.

The Office is mandated by the City Charter to use its independence to receive, investigate, mediate and resolve citizen complaints against any action, decision, recommendation, practice or procedure of any agency. The City Charter authorizes review of investigations and hearings conducted by City departments, with subpoena power, to ensure truthful and fair outcomes; recommend changes where investigations warrant; establish complaint investigative procedures and maintain records to determine areas of failure; initiate investigations where data reveals problems; provide information, referrals, assistance, and recommendations for appropriate investigation when complaints are not within City jurisdiction. Annual statistical reports are presented to City Council and Mayor. The Office does not address issues pending legal considerations in courts, or under review by City Council.

Goals / Strategic Priorities

1. Provide efficient, quality, and user-friendly services to the public;
2. Restore citizen confidence where misunderstanding, error, and omission have decreased confidence in government;
3. Investigate and seek resolution to citizen complaints;
4. Advance innovative and practical policy recommendations to resolve recurring complaints;
5. Update technology and increase public awareness of services.

Office of the Ombudsperson Budget Summary

For FY 2026, the Mayor is recommending a 3.11% increase totaling \$51,882 in the overall budget (Total Expenditures) for the Office of the Ombudsperson, from \$1,666,595 in FY 2025 to \$1,718,477 in FY 2026. Additionally, the Mayor is recommending Total Revenues of \$12,000 in FY 2026, which remains unchanged from FY 2025.

Positions (by FTE)

	2/5/2025 Actual	FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Mayor Proposed	FY2027 Forecast	FY2028 Forecast	FY2029 Forecast
General Fund	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Non-General Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-
ARPA	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Positions	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00

(Page B53-3) As illustrated in the table above, as of February 5, 2025, the Office of the Ombudsperson filled 12 General Fund positions, which remains the same from the 12 General Fund positions adopted for FY 2025. The Mayor is recommending 12 General Fund positions for FY 2026, which remains the same from the General Fund positions adopted for FY 2025.

Issues and Questions:

1. Please briefly explain the Office of the Ombudsperson's new expenditure initiatives, new capital funding requests, operational reform and savings proposals, and new revenue initiative(s)/proposal(s) to be implemented in FY 2026. Please provide which appropriation/cost center the new initiative(s)/proposal(s) is impacting in FY 2026.
2. The FTE positions in FY 2026 remain unchanged from FY 2025. Is this level of staffing sufficient to carry out the daily demands of the office?
3. B53-6: Please describe what the \$30,000 in the **Professional & Contractual Services Appropriation Summary Category** is for.
4. B53-6: Operating Services decreases by \$7,186 or -6.9% in FY 2026. Please describe the impact this decrease has on operations.
5. B53-9: Please describe where the \$12,000 in Total Revenues in **Fund 3921-Other Special Revenue Fund, Appropriation 28530 – Community Engagement – Ombudsperson, Cost Center 530010 – Ombudsperson Administration & Operations** is coming from.
6. In reviewing the Ombudsperson's Report on Complaints Received by the Ombudsman's Office, February 2023 – February 2024¹, it appears that most of the complaints received are for a small number of City Departments. Is this the same trend every year or does it vary by year?
7. Does the Office of Ombudsperson monitor and follow up on the recommendations made to the Departments provided in the Ombudsperson's Report on Complaints Received by the Ombudsman's Office? If so, please explain the process.
8. How does the Office of Ombudsperson bring awareness to Detroit citizens about the Office of the Ombudsperson's webpage that includes features such as the 'Ombudsman Frequently Asked Questions'?
9. Does the Office of Ombudsperson bring awareness to Detroit citizens that complaints can be submitted online via the Office of the Ombudsperson's webpage? How does the Office of the Ombudsperson handle the complaints received online?

¹ [Report on Complaints Received by the Ombudsman's Office February 2023 - February 2024](#)

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON (53)

Mission

The Ombudsperson improves service delivery through departmental accountability. The City of Detroit Office of the Ombudsperson was established by Charter referendum on November 6, 1973, became operational in 1974 and was upheld by voters in 2011. The Detroit City Ombudsperson, an independent governmental official, is appointed by the Detroit City Council.

The Office is mandated by the City Charter to use its independence to receive, investigate, mediate and resolve citizen complaints against any action, decision, recommendation, practice or procedure of any agency. The City Charter authorizes review of investigations and hearings conducted by City departments, with subpoena power, to ensure truthful and fair outcomes; recommend changes where investigations warrant; establish complaint investigative procedures and maintain records to determine areas of failure; initiate investigations where data reveals problems; provide information, referrals, assistance, and recommendations for appropriate investigation when complaints are not within City jurisdiction. Annual statistical reports are presented to City Council and Mayor. The Office does not address issues pending legal considerations in courts, or under review by City Council.

Operating Programs and Services

- **Complaint Intake and Analysis** investigates and seeks resolution to citizen complaints, and restores citizen confidence where misunderstanding, error and omission have decreased confidence in government.
- **Community Engagement** increases public awareness of services.
- **Policy Advocacy** advances innovative and practical policy recommendations to resolve recurring complaints.

OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON (53)

Goals, Strategic Priorities and Related City Outcomes

Goals / Strategic Priorities	Timeframe	Related City Outcome
1. Provide efficient, quality, and user-friendly services to the public	July 2025 – June 2029	Effective Governance
2. Restore citizen confidence where misunderstanding, error, and omission have decreased confidence in government	July 2025 – June 2029	Effective Governance
3. Investigate and seek resolution to citizen complaints	July 2025 – June 2029	Effective Governance
4. Advance innovative and practical policy recommendations to resolve recurring complaints	July 2025 – June 2029	Effective Governance
5. Update technology and increase public awareness of services	July 2025 – June 2029	Effective Governance

Budget By Service

Services	FY 2026 Mayor Proposed	FY 2026 Mayor Proposed FTE
Complaint Intake and Analysis	\$1,707,172	12.0
Community Engagement	\$12,000	-
Policy Advocacy	-	-
Total:	\$1,718,477	12.0

Metrics and Data

Metrics	Data	Related Goal #
Number of complaints received	To be collected	3
Number of events held per year	To be collected	5
Number of recommendations adopted	To be collected	4

Department 53 - Office of the Ombudsperson

Budget Summary

	FY2024 Actual		FY2025 Adopted		FY2026 Mayor Proposed	
	General Fund	All Funds	General Fund	All Funds	General Fund	All Funds
Total Revenues	(65)	11,935	-	12,000	-	12,000
Total Expenditures	1,230,517	1,238,341	1,654,595	1,666,595	1,706,477	1,718,477
Net Tax Cost	1,230,582	1,226,406	1,654,595	1,654,595	1,706,477	1,706,477

	FY2027 Forecast		FY2028 Forecast		FY2029 Forecast	
	General Fund	All Funds	General Fund	All Funds	General Fund	All Funds
Total Revenues	-	12,000	-	12,000	-	12,000
Total Expenditures	1,737,191	1,749,191	1,768,499	1,780,499	1,800,419	1,812,419
Net Tax Cost	1,737,191	1,737,191	1,768,499	1,768,499	1,800,419	1,800,419

General Fund Recurring vs One-Time Expenditures

	FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Mayor Proposed
Recurring Expenditures	1,654,595	1,706,477
One-Time Expenditures	-	-
Total Expenditures	1,654,595	1,706,477

Positions (by FTE)

	2/5/2025 Actual	FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Mayor Proposed	FY2027 Forecast	FY2028 Forecast	FY2029 Forecast
General Fund	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Non-General Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-
ARPA	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Positions	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00

**CITY OF DETROIT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
EXPENDITURES BY SUMMARY CATEGORY - ALL FUNDS
DEPARTMENT 53 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

Department # - Department Name Summary Category	FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Mayor Proposed	FY2027 Forecast	FY2028 Forecast	FY2029 Forecast
53 - Office of the Ombudsperson	1,666,595	1,718,477	1,749,191	1,780,499	1,812,419
Salaries & Wages	1,116,305	1,158,928	1,182,107	1,205,749	1,229,864
Employee Benefits	354,760	373,059	378,849	384,755	390,780
Professional & Contractual Services	30,000	30,000	30,300	30,603	30,909
Operating Supplies	40,854	41,000	41,410	41,824	42,242
Operating Services	116,176	108,990	109,960	110,937	111,927
Other Expenses	8,500	6,500	6,565	6,631	6,697
Grand Total	1,666,595	1,718,477	1,749,191	1,780,499	1,812,419

**CITY OF DETROIT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
REVENUES BY SUMMARY CATEGORY - ALL FUNDS
DEPARTMENT 53 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

Department # - Department Name Summary Category	FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Mayor Proposed	FY2027 Forecast	FY2028 Forecast	FY2029 Forecast
53 - Office of the Ombudsperson	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Grants, Shared Taxes, & Revenues	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Grand Total	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000

**CITY OF DETROIT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
EXPENDITURES BY SUMMARY CATEGORY - FUND DETAIL
DEPARTMENT 53 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

Department # - Department Name Fund # - Fund Name Summary Category	FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Mayor Proposed	FY2027 Forecast	FY2028 Forecast	FY2029 Forecast
53 - Office of the Ombudsperson	1,666,595	1,718,477	1,749,191	1,780,499	1,812,419
1000 - General Fund	1,654,595	1,706,477	1,737,191	1,768,499	1,800,419
Salaries & Wages	1,116,305	1,158,928	1,182,107	1,205,749	1,229,864
Employee Benefits	354,760	373,059	378,849	384,755	390,780
Professional & Contractual Services	30,000	30,000	30,300	30,603	30,909
Operating Supplies	40,854	41,000	41,410	41,824	42,242
Operating Services	104,176	96,990	97,960	98,937	99,927
Other Expenses	8,500	6,500	6,565	6,631	6,697
3921 - Other Special Revenue Fund	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Operating Services	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Grand Total	1,666,595	1,718,477	1,749,191	1,780,499	1,812,419

**CITY OF DETROIT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
REVENUES BY SUMMARY CATEGORY - FUND DETAIL
DEPARTMENT 53 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

Department # - Department Name Fund # - Fund Name Summary Category	FY2025 Adopted	FY2026 Mayor Proposed	FY2027 Forecast	FY2028 Forecast	FY2029 Forecast
53 - Office of the Ombudsperson	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
3921 - Other Special Revenue Fund	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Grants, Shared Taxes, & Revenues	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Grand Total	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000

**CITY OF DETROIT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
FINANCIAL DETAIL BY DEPARTMENT, FUND, APPROPRIATION, & COST CENTER - EXPENDITURES
DEPARTMENT 53 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

Department # - Department Name					
Fund # - Fund Name	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029
Appropriation # - Appropriation Name	Adopted	Mayor Proposed	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Cost Center # - Cost Center Name					
53 - Office of the Ombudsperson	1,666,595	1,718,477	1,749,191	1,780,499	1,812,419
1000 - General Fund	1,654,595	1,706,477	1,737,191	1,768,499	1,800,419
28530 - Community Engagement - Ombudsperson	1,654,595	1,706,477	1,737,191	1,768,499	1,800,419
530010 - Ombudsperson Administration & Operations	1,654,595	1,706,477	1,737,191	1,768,499	1,800,419
3921 - Other Special Revenue Fund	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
28530 - Community Engagement - Ombudsperson	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
530010 - Ombudsperson Administration & Operations	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Grand Total	1,666,595	1,718,477	1,749,191	1,780,499	1,812,419

**CITY OF DETROIT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
FINANCIAL DETAIL BY DEPARTMENT, FUND, APPROPRIATION, & COST CENTER - REVENUES
DEPARTMENT 53 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

Department # - Department Name					
Fund # - Fund Name	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029
Appropriation # - Appropriation Name	Adopted	Mayor Proposed	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Cost Center # - Cost Center Name					
53 - Office of the Ombudsperson	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
3921 - Other Special Revenue Fund	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
28530 - Community Engagement - Ombudsperson	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
530010 - Ombudsperson Administration & Operations	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000
Grand Total	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000	12,000

**CITY OF DETROIT
BUDGET DEVELOPMENT
POSITION DETAIL BY DEPARTMENT, FUND, APPROPRIATION, & COST CENTER
DEPARTMENT 53 - OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

Department # - Department Name					
Fund # - Fund Name					
Appropriation # - Appropriation Name	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029
Cost Center # - Cost Center Name	Adopted	Mayor Proposed	Forecast	Forecast	Forecast
Job Code - Job Title					
53 - Office of the Ombudsperson	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
1000 - General Fund	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
28530 - Community Engagement - Ombudsperson	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
530010 - Ombudsperson Administration & Operations	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
010190 - City Ombudsman	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
010191 - Deputy City Ombudsman	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
011501 - Assistant Ombudsman Grade 4	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
011502 - Assistant Ombudsman Grade 3	6.00	4.00	4.00	4.00	4.00
011503 - Assistant Ombudsman Grade 2	2.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Grand Total	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00