



TO: Members of the Common Council
FROM: Mayor John Hamilton
RE: New Revenue Package
DATE: March 16, 2022

Introduction

The City of Bloomington faces a pivotal moment. Coming out of the pandemic we can meet that moment and lead our community forward. If we don't, we risk shortchanging programs and services on which our residents rely.

Since 2016, together we have made great progress in our City in providing excellent essential services and improving opportunities for our residents. We are the only city in Indiana with a nationally accredited police force and a top-ranked fire department (ISO 1). We have seen unprecedented private investment and public infrastructure progress. Our jobs and wage rates are increasing. We've made real progress toward more affordable housing and climate action.

For the 2023 City budget and beyond, the City needs additional revenue to appropriately fund continued progress, specifically for investments in:

- **Public safety**, including newly-negotiated Police salaries, future Fire Department salary negotiations, continued innovation of service delivery, and building replacements and upgrades
- **Climate change preparedness and mitigation** to enhance public transit and advance goals set in the Climate Action Plan (CAP)
- **Equity and quality of life for all**, including access to housing, good jobs, local food, the arts, and economic stability
- **Essential city services**, to maintain assets and assure ongoing excellence

This memo outlines a range and scope of critical investments needed to move Bloomington ahead – sustainably, inclusively, and efficiently. These investments embody the values of our community and help ensure that City government can address the challenges of our time. We offer this proposal for discussion and consideration by Council and look forward to working together to finalize it.

Local Revenue Options

Difficult times persist for many in our community, who are managing ongoing impacts of the pandemic and who face availability and cost pressures with housing, health care, child care, transportation, education, and other basic needs. The climate emergency has not abated during

the past two years and looms ever larger in our lives. City government has an essential role to play in helping address these challenges and opportunities locally, and it takes revenue to deliver services. The Administration first highlighted the need for new revenue in January 2020. Recent one-time federal pandemic recovery funding has been essential to bridging our gaps, but it is not ongoing, and we cannot rely on federal or state funding to meet key ongoing local challenges.

As discussed with Council during the 2022 budget cycle, the Administration is proposing an increase to the Monroe County Local Income Tax (LIT) rate and the issuance of two \$5 million general obligation (G.O.) bonds on a five-year cycle. This combination offers practical, complementary tools: a LIT increase supports annual funding for ongoing programs and initiatives, including personnel; G.O. bonds efficiently fund infrastructure improvements project by project.

We would use these tools to fund proposed investments that emerged from consultations with members of the City Council and city residents, other partners and local institutions, members of the Monroe County Council and Commissioners, Ellettsville Town Council, and other interested parties. The proposed investments also reflect the priorities and goals of Bloomington embodied in many plans and documents, including the Climate Action Plan, Transportation Plan, Parks Master Plan, Sustainability Action Plan, Comprehensive Plan, Housing Study, Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Wage Growth Taskforce, City Surveys, and more. We look forward to continued refinements of this proposal through discussions with all interested parties, and robust public feedback, in the coming weeks.

The Administration will continue rigorous efforts to reduce expenses and contain costs through innovation and reform. Recent examples include:

- Major solar installations that reduce energy costs: Parks saving \$50,000 annually
- Using smaller, quick response vehicles instead of large engines: Fire saving \$1,200,000 in vehicle replacement costs
- Sanitation system reform and automation:
 - Eliminates the need to fill one position: the total savings of leaving the position unfilled fluctuates yearly based on other variables such as landfill fees and recycling processing costs
 - From 2020 to 2021, workers compensation costs at the City decreased a total 28%
- Street crews adjusting work shifts to improve paving efficiencies
- Innovations in the leaf collection system: saving \$200,000 annually thus far

The list of needed investments demands additional revenue. Two questions pertain: what does it cost to do it? And what does it cost NOT to do it? Our needs are urgent and fundamental. Appropriate investments will continue Bloomington on a positive trajectory and offer true opportunity for all. Lack of investment would diminish our future and shortchange our residents. Indeed, not raising revenue would mean we could not meet negotiated salaries for our police

officers or planned investments in climate mitigation. It would mean significant reductions in existing programs and personnel resources.

On the question of whether we have the capacity to raise additional local revenue responsibly, the answer is yes: We are at present a very low-tax city. Indiana is a relatively low-tax state, and among Indiana's 20 largest cities (excluding Indianapolis/Marion County), Bloomington is in the lowest quartile of both property and local income tax rates. Considering combined rates, we are nearly at the very bottom (*See Appendix A.1*). We have the lowest LIT rate among our seven contiguous counties, and we sit in the bottom quartile statewide (*See Appendix A.2*).

We are also low comparatively when it comes to government expenditures, revealing the capacity for responsible growth. Looking at per-capita annual spending from city general funds, Bloomington ranks 14th among Indiana's 20 largest cities (excluding Indianapolis/Marion County). Our \$624 per capita annual spending is 16% below the median of \$742 (*See Appendix A.3*).

In addition, recent trends suggest that Bloomington wages have accelerated over the past several years, surpassing several comparable Indiana cities and growing more in line with national wage growth trends. We have caught up to the state average, and are one of only 11 counties in the state with average weekly wages above \$1,000 (*See Appendix A.4*).

Finally, our capacity to issue general obligation bonds is also strong. Reviewing our per capita debt levels with peer communities. We retain a bonding capacity of \$18,000,000 from the overall level of \$28,000,000 or 65% of our total capacity. If the Council approves the current bond proposal the City would have over 50% of its total remaining for future needs. (*See Appendix A.5*).

Proposed LIT Annual Investments

See Appendix B: LIT Details for more detailed information about the proposed public safety items to be funded with a LIT increase.

Public Safety - \$4,500,000

The City needs major additional annual investments in public safety in several areas:

- To support sworn police officer personnel costs, for retention and recruitment, following the direction of City Council and as included in our contingent four-year labor agreement with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP)
- To continue investments in public safety reforms, including alternatives to 911 responses with non-sworn police and fire personnel, enhanced community-based public safety, and ongoing support for programs like the STRIDE Center

- To replace or upgrade essential buildings, some damaged by flood and some outdated, including a police HQ, a fire HQ, and four of five current fire stations. None of these costs are included in the 10-year Public Safety LIT capital plan

Climate Change Preparedness and Mitigation - \$6,345,000

Our community needs major investments to prepare for and mitigate the impacts of climate change, including many identified in the City's Climate Action Plan (CAP). Investments include major enhancements in public transit and direct investments in accomplishing goals of the CAP:

- Bloomington Transit (BT) enhancements:
 - New East-West Express Transit line, with 15-minute frequency weekday service (*See Appendix A.6*)
 - New Paratransit service city-wide, on-call, and Microtransit services, expanding beyond fixed bus routes (*See Appendix A.7*)
 - New Sunday routes for 7-day service (*See Appendix A.8*)
 - Improved service level, with maximum 30-minute frequency on all routes
 - New pilot programs for Park and Ride services, and
 - New subsidy programs to lower costs for regular BT riders
- Climate Action Plan (CAP) direct investments:
 - Energy and built environment
 - Local food & agriculture
 - Waste management
 - Additional support for increasing Bloomington's tree canopy
 - Funding for the Green Ribbon Panel to accelerate climate action

See the FAQs for more information about proposed expenditures to support Climate Action Plan implementation

Equity and Quality of Life for All - \$3,650,000

Investments are needed to advance equity and enhance the quality of life for *all* Bloomington residents. This includes:

- Improving housing affordability, for homebuyers and renters, as well as those experiencing homelessness
- Helping residents get better jobs through training, apprenticeships, and skills coaching
- Supporting access to local food for all
- Supporting a vibrant local arts community
- Expanded ADA accessibility measures
- Measures designed to lessen the LIT burden to low-income workers by providing them access to an economic equity fund

Essential City Services - \$2,500,000

The City also needs major ongoing investments to maintain the essential City services on which we all rely. Increased funding will be necessary to:

- Maintain physical facilities and physical assets
- Cover increases to major expenses like insurance, materials, and services
- Improve IT infrastructure and cybersecurity
- Attract and retain City staff and fund any new positions that may be needed as a result of our increased programs and services. Use financial and non-financial retention strategies to attract and retain a diverse, qualified workforce.

General Obligation Bond Funded Projects:

See Appendix C for a list of Parks and Public Works G.O. bond items, which may be modified based on input from the Council.

Bonds are for longer-term projects and capital investments that generate revenue to repay the bond obligations; they are less applicable for providing ongoing City services. The proposed G.O. bond projects generally parallel priorities listed above, specifically “climate change preparedness” and “equity and quality of life for all.” The following proposed projects follow up on commitments made to the City Council in the context of the 2022 budget discussions:

Parks Bond

- Covenanter protected bike lanes, from College Mall Rd. to Clarizz Blvd.
- Dunn Street multi-use path from the Bypass to Old SR 37
- Griffy Loop Trail dam crossing and community access
- W. 2nd St. Signals and protected bike lane (Walker St. to B-Line trail)
- Replace gas-powered equipment with electric equipment
- Cascades Phase 6 - path/connection to Miller Showers Park
- Replace missing sidewalk on Rogers St. by Switchyard Park

Public Works Bond

- Citywide LED conversion of street lights
- Energy efficiency retrofits for all City buildings
- City fleet vehicle hybrid/electrification fund
- GPS for city vehicle fleet
- High St. Signals and multi-use path from Arden Dr. to 3rd St.
- Create green waste yard at Lower Cascades Park
- Vehicle upgrades for sustainability (hybrid/electric vehicles)
- Citywide traffic signal retiming
- Downtown ADA Curb Ramps (W. Kirkwood and Indiana Ave. corridors)
- Sidewalk projects (TBD)

Acknowledging these many projects are more than proposed revenues can support, the Administration looks forward to receiving feedback and assistance from City Council prioritizing potential General Obligation Bond Funded Projects.

Conclusion and Next Steps

Bloomington is at a crossroads. After the pandemic, in the recovery, what will our path be? New revenue is essential to meet basic obligations and address critical challenges. With this proposal, we offer an ambitious and value-centered path forward. We want this proposal to encourage dialogue and expect it to be refined over the coming weeks. The administration plans to present this proposal formally to the City Council on April 6.

The Appendices to this memo offer details for the projects we have prioritized based on prior consultations, and for other potential projects. We will soon launch on our website a public poll and a feedback form specific to new revenue. In addition, we encourage residents to provide feedback via social media messaging or by email to mayor@bloomington.in.gov. As details are developed, we will share information on the City's web page dedicated to new revenue, at bloomington.in.gov/newrevenue.

Bloomington has long been a special place to live, work, and visit. New revenue is needed to keep it so. We strive to be a leader in the midwest and across the country in livability, inclusion, access to amenities, quality of public safety services, transit options, arts, cultural opportunities, and more. New revenue is needed to achieve this and to live our values. The pandemic taught us all crucial lessons about the need to nurture community, build resilience, and close stubborn gaps in equitable access to opportunity. Our shared future depends upon our actions today.

Appendix A

Figure A.1: Combined Property & Local Income Tax

Bloomington's combined tax rate relative to the 20 largest cities in Indiana.

Source: Reedy Financial Group

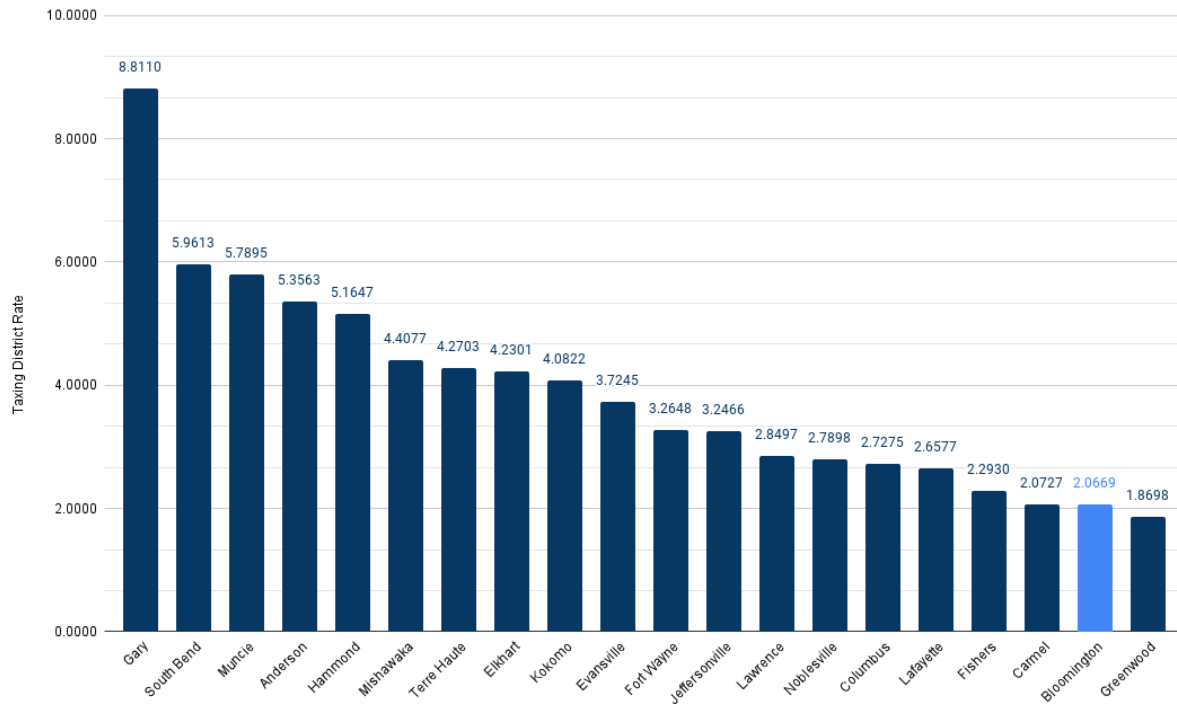


Figure A.2: County LIT Rates

Monroe County's LIT rate as compared to our seven contiguous counties.

Source: Indiana Department of Revenue

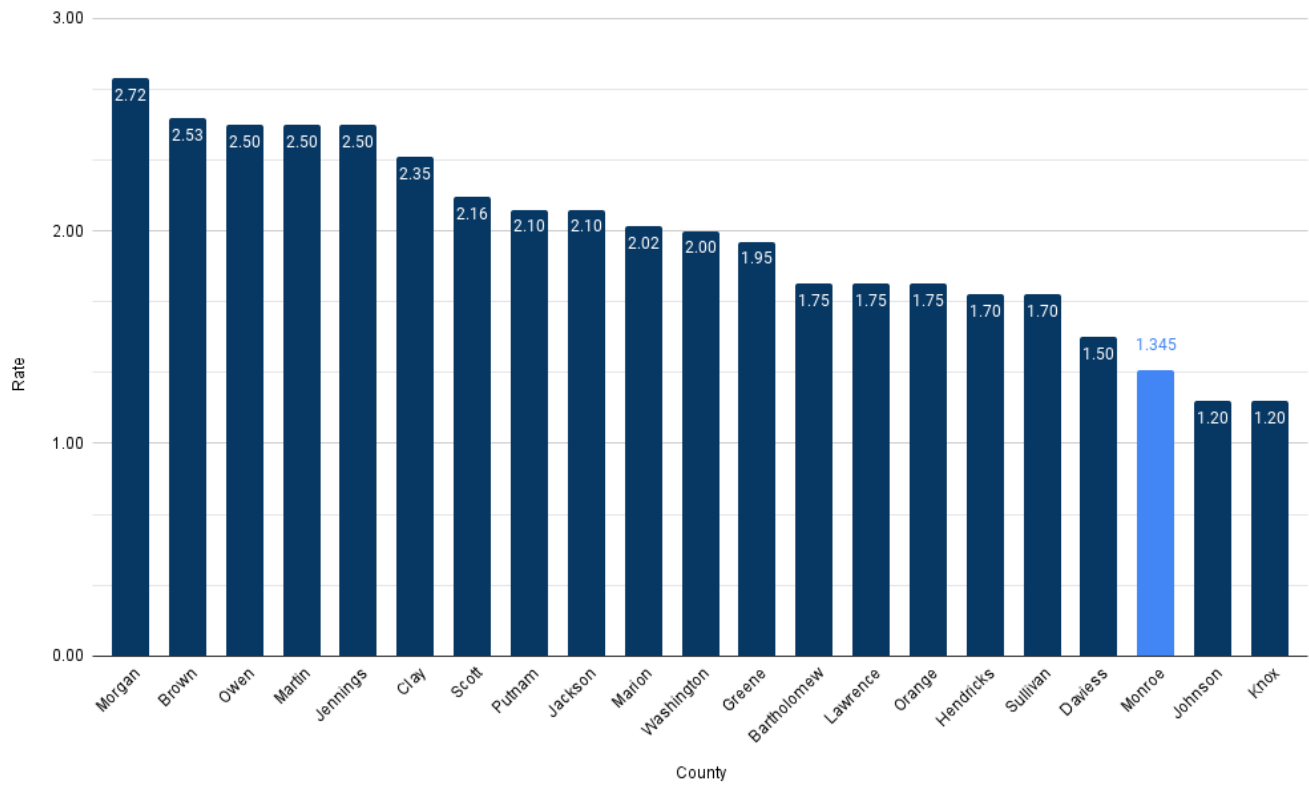


Figure A.3: Per-capita Annual Spending

The 20 largest Class 2 cities in Indiana, ranked by per-capita annual spending from the general fund.

Source #1: 2022 General Fund Budgets in Gateway

Source #2: 2020 Census Population Data

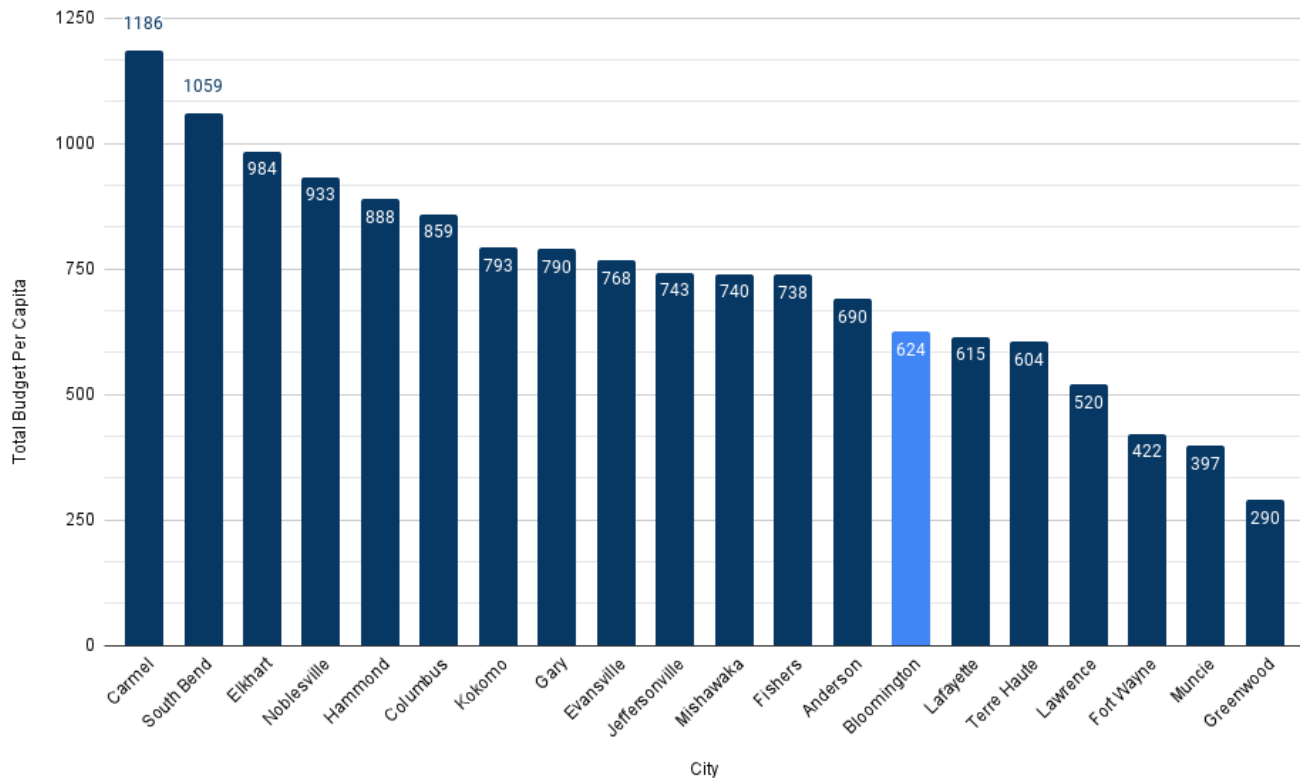


Figure A.4: Wage Growth

Chart of first-quarter wage growth in Bloomington, compared to the national and state averages and similarly-sized Indiana cities.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

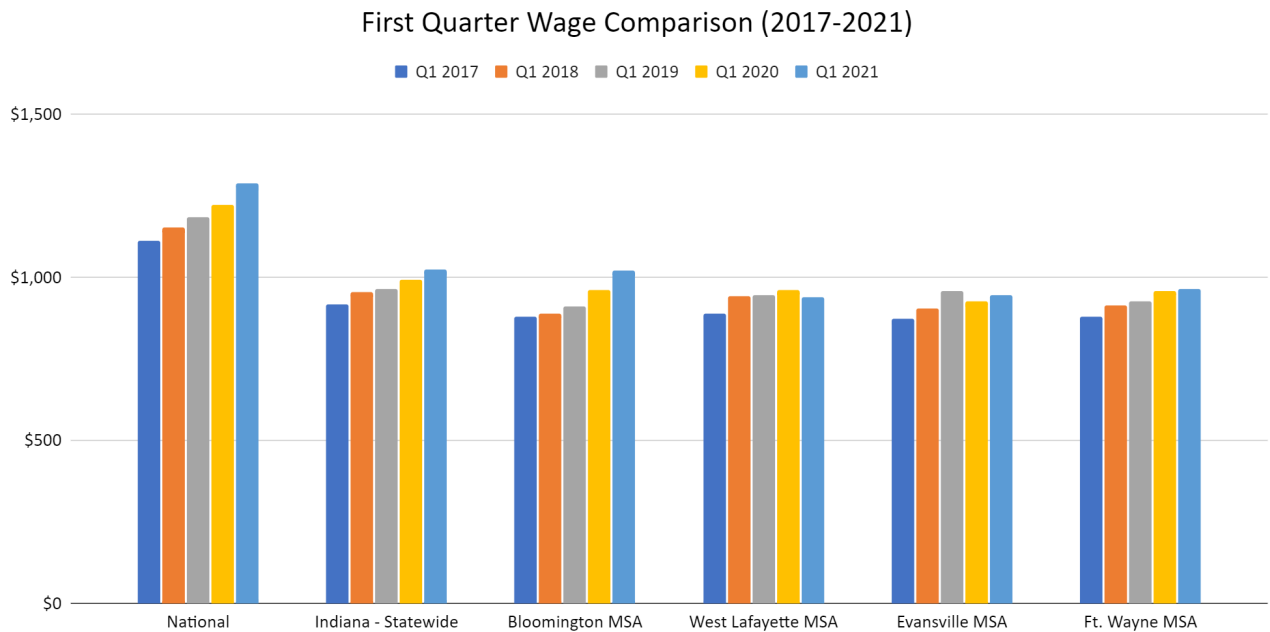


Figure A.5: Per-capita Annual Debt

Chart of 20 largest Class 2 cities in Indiana, ranked by per-capita annual debt from the general fund.

Source #1: Gateway 2021 Debt Management

Source #2: 2020 Census Population Data

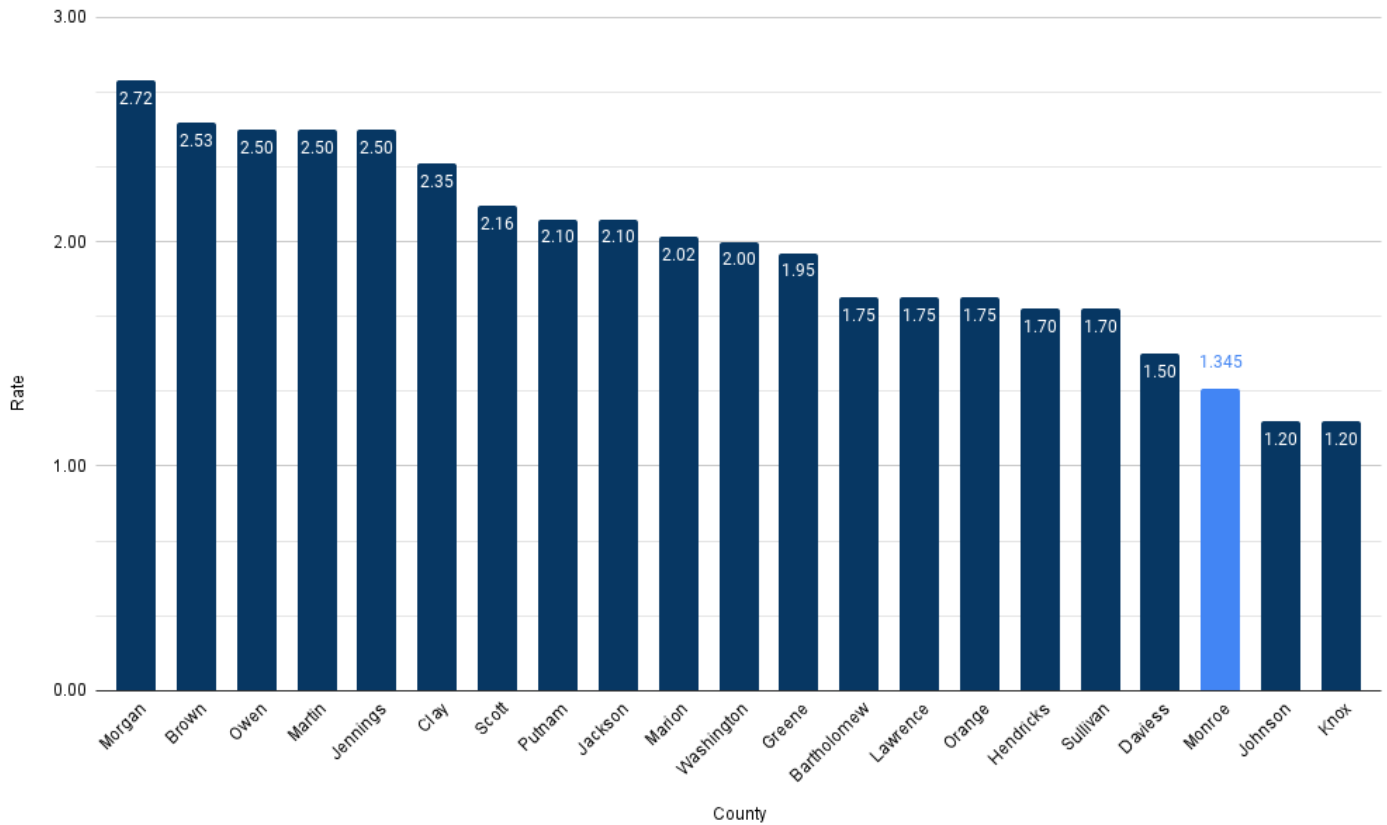
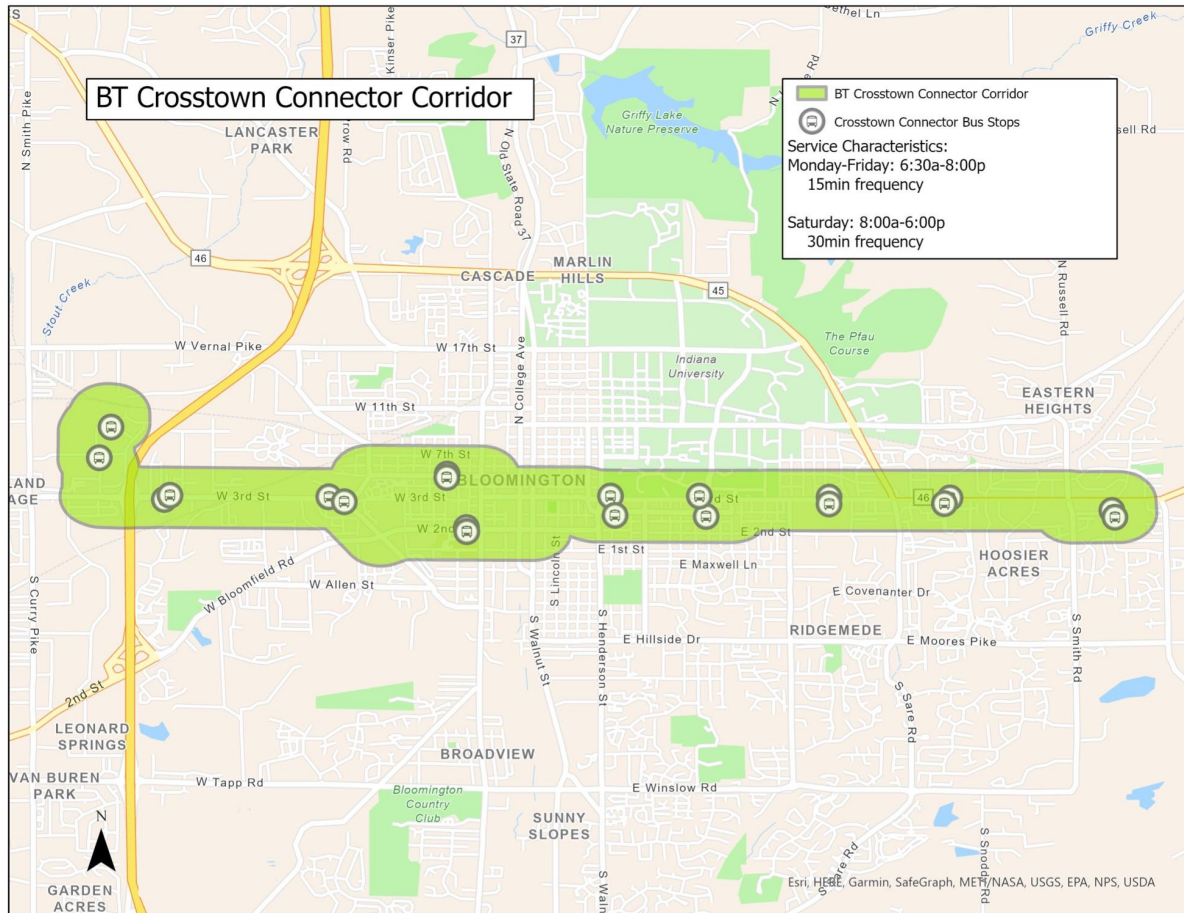


Figure A.6: Bloomington Transit New East-West Express Transit line
(Example Only)



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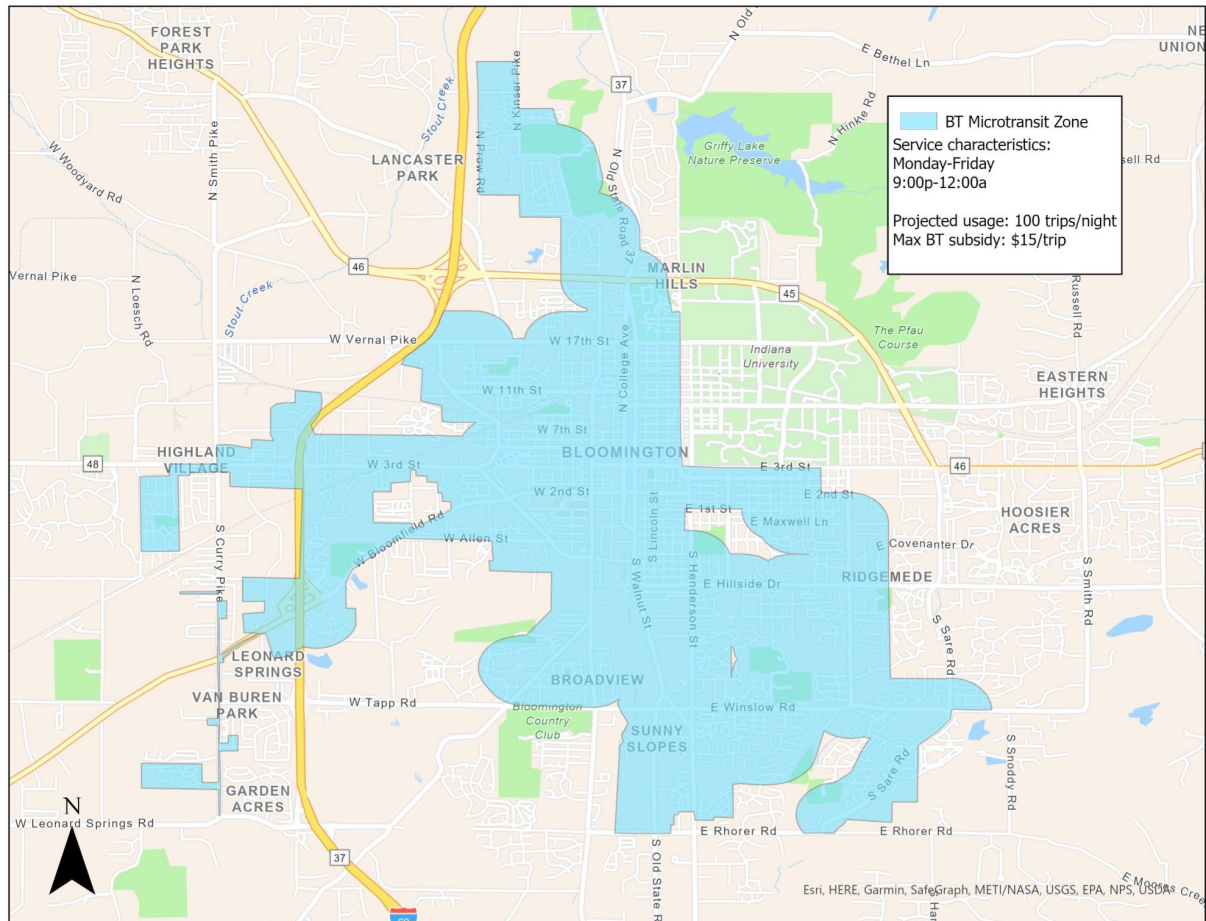
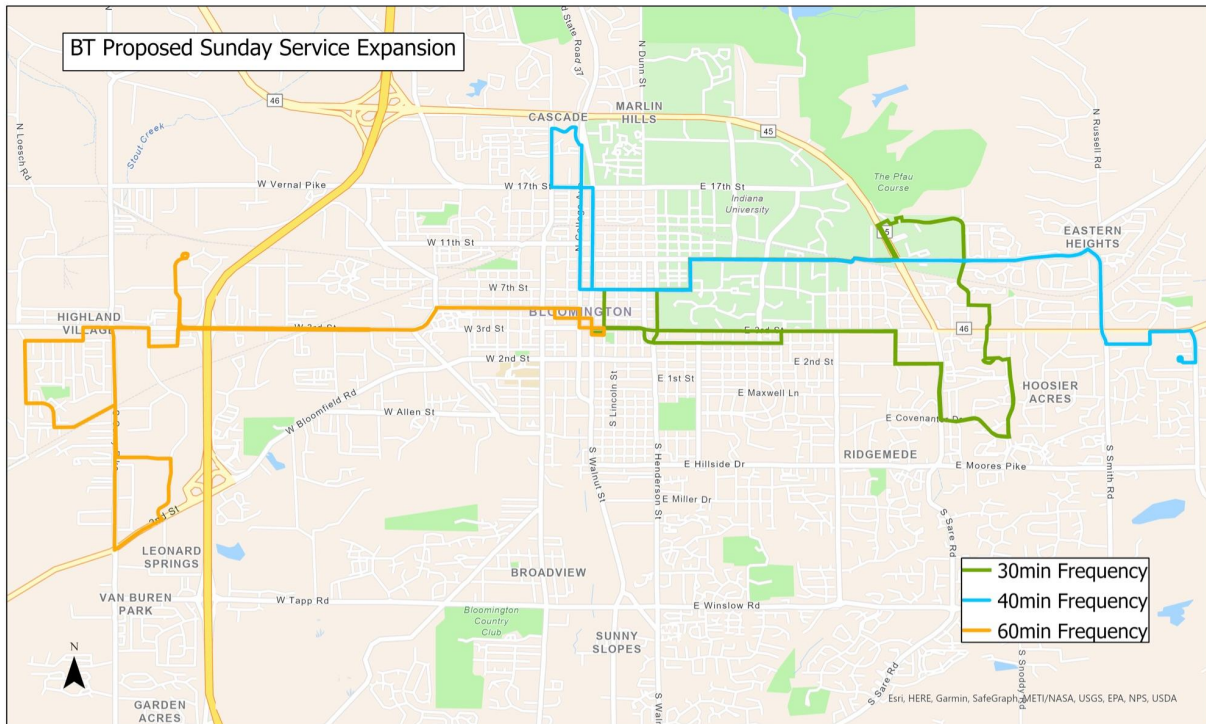


Figure A.8: Bloomington Transit Sunday Services
(Example Only)



Appendix B: LIT Details

Item	Annual Cost	Description
PUBLIC SAFETY	\$4,500,000	
Police - Sworn Officer Salaries	\$1,500,000	Fund the costs associated with the contingent Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) contract
Police - Nonsworn officer salaries and public safety programs	\$250,000	Expand the roles and increase the number of Police Social Workers and Community Service Specialists to respond to some non-emergency calls for service and those calls that do not require a law enforcement response. Provide ongoing support for the STRIDE center.
Fire - public safety programs	\$250,000	Tailor response options for 911 calls, health and wellness checks, etc. to divert more 911 calls to nonsworn personnel. Explore combining police/fire nonsworn.
Police & Fire headquarters	\$1,000,000	Consolidate public safety headquarter operations to replace current damaged and inadequate facilities and to benefit from efficiencies of scale.
Fire - new/upgraded stations (4, including new downtown)	\$1,500,000	Replace or repair damaged and aging facilities with new or upgraded facilities, in order to attract and retain employees and meet safety standards
CLIMATE CHANGE PREPAREDNESS AND MITIGATION	\$6,345,000	
Add Bloomington Transit (BT) Sunday service	\$300,000	Achieve 7-day service for greater consistency and reliability in an effort to boost ridership and reduce single occupancy vehicle use
Establish East-West Express Transit line	\$2,100,000	Major new service providing 15 minute frequency across a priority East/West corridor. This route addition would boost attractiveness and convenience for riders and reduce automobile use
Enhance In-house BT Para-Transit & Microtransit	\$1,400,000	Increase access/improve equity for people who can't ride fixed-route BT, qualify for paratransit, require special accommodations while enhancing convenience. and expand those services. City-wide service expansion.
Enhance BT weekday service to maximum 30-minute frequency	\$820,000	Improve convenience for all riders, boost ridership, reduce automobile use
Establish BT Park & Ride pilot program	\$125,000	Focus on workforce partners to develop pilot program in collaboration with the Transportation Demand Management program; explore a potential "Park and Ride" program for special event traffic management
Subsidize BT ridership	\$100,000	Improve access to public transportation with a focus on workforce and low-income riders

Appendix B: LIT Details

Item	Annual Cost	Description
Climate Action Plan (CAP) implementation	\$1,500,000	Multiple efforts toward climate change prevention and preparedness. See Proposed Climate Action Plan Investments in "New Revenue FAQs" for more detail
EQUITY AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL	\$3,650,000	
Housing funding, for ownership, rental, Housing Security	\$2,000,000	Improved access to housing equity through funding assistance for the Housing Security Group/homeless; low/mod income renters; low/mod homeowners; support missing housing types
Workforce and economic development	\$500,000	Funding for workforce development initiatives, including workforce re-entry, re-skilling and up-skilling, and entrepreneurship training, as well as operations and infrastructure funding for the Trades District Technology Center.
Economic equity fund	\$750,000	Direct support of low income working residents / families - possible Individual Development Accounts to match savings; focused on direct impact, possibly thru SSCAP, MCUM, Trustees, others
Public art and arts development	\$200,000	Funding for maintenance of existing arts spaces, execution of the recommendations of the City's Arts Feasibility Study and Public Arts Master Plan, and support for arts organizations.
Local food access and nutrition security	\$200,000	Funding to improve food access and nutrition insecurity. Funding support will focus on partnerships with food service providers to address gaps in local food access for low income and food insecure residents.
ESSENTIAL CITY SERVICES	\$2,500,000	
Personnel	\$1,000,000	Offer incentives to attract and retain talented City employees, such as pay adjustments, hiring bonuses, creation of new positions, tuition reimbursement, relocation allowance, longevity bonuses, and/or housing assistance.
Maintenance/Replacement of Assets	\$500,000	Maintain aging facilities and other physical assets and replace when required
Increases to major categories of expenses	\$500,000	Meet obligations for city property & liability Insurance, materials & supplies, repair & maintenance.
Lost Revenue Replacement	\$500,000	Replace shortfall resulting from decreased Cable Franchise Fees (cable fees lost to streaming) to fund essential IT infrastructure replacements, cybersecurity, and CATS
TOTAL	\$16,995,000	

Appendix C: GO Bond Details

Item	Minimum Estimate	Maximum Estimate	General Notes	Financial Notes	Other Potential Funding That Could be Leveraged	City Plan Addressed
PARKS GO BOND	\$8,275,000	\$8,915,000				
Replace gas powered equipment with electric equipment	\$25,000	\$25,000	Advance phased approach with large purchase. Parks has been replacing gas powered equipment with battery for several years a few pieces of equipment at a time as budget allows -- namely weed eaters and blowers. This amount of funding would allow us to purchase ahead several years and speed up the replacement of gas powered equipment and investigate new battery equipment applications in Parks.	Confident in estimate.	Advances planned GF spending	Climate Action Plan
Replace missing sidewalk on Rogers St. by Switchyard Park	\$200,000	\$200,000	This section of sidewalk was required to be replaced by code when Switchyard was built but was missed. It is currently in design through Parks and is being coordinated with Engineering. The current sidewalk dead ends and does not connect through on the east side of Rogers to The Warehouse.	Confident in estimate from consultant.	No other funds.	Condition of Parks zoning requirement
Covenanter Drive Protected Bicycle Lanes (College Mall to Clarizz Blvd)	\$2,400,000	\$2,880,000	Add protected bicycle lanes per the Transportation Plan's priority bicycle network recommendations. This project will likely include bus islands, bus stop improvements, and pedestrian ramp improvements.			Comp Plan (Goal 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4) Transportation Plan (Priority Bicycle Facilities Network, Phase 2); Transportation Plan Recommended Projects Climate Action Plan (Goal TL1, Strategy TL1-A, TL1-B, TL1-C, TL1-G,
N Dunn St Multiuse Path (45/46 Bypass to Old SR 37)	\$800,000	\$960,000	This project would be a ~1.3 mile multiuse path on one side of N Dunn St. The proposal is to fund design in order to have a shovel-ready project for the full 1.3 miles; however, it is possible to split the project into multiple phases and start with the southern portion and create a connection to the Griffy Nature Preserve trails system and the adjacent neighborhood. The census block group south of this area (the area between Walnut and Dunn, 17th and the Bypass) is among the highest population density areas of the City. This multiuse path would create a connection for residents to the Griffy Nature Preserve and trail system.	This request will only fund the project's design phase. The intention is to create a shovel-ready project and obtain other funding for construction.	State funding could become available in the near term. Recommend funding design and a match to leverage state funds.	Comp Plan (Goal 6.1, 6.3, 6.4; Goal 1.1, Policy 1.1.3) Transportation Plan (Recommended Projects) Climate Action Plan (Goal TL1, Strategy TL1-A, TL1-B, TL1-G)
Griffy Loop Trail dam crossing and community access	\$375,000	\$375,000	Needed to finish Griffy Loop Trail - dam Crossing. Shovel-Ready. The Dam Crossing was value engineered out of the project due to cost when it was approved in Fall 2021. There is currently a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) permit approved for this work.	Already estimated during prior bid process and removed due to value engineering	Applied for in Next Level grant, award notifications Spring 2022.	Parks Strategic Action Plan, Parks CIP
W. 2nd Street Modernization and Protected Bike Lanes (Walker St to B-Line)	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	This project will construct multimodal safety and mobility improvements on West 2nd Street from Walker Street to the B-Line Trail. Project improvements are expected to include sidewalks, bus stops, a two-way protected bicycle lane, pavement maintenance, and traffic signal replacements.	Local funding need to leverage programmed federal dollars	Local match to leverage ~\$3.1 M in MPO funding.	Comp Plan (6.1, 6.3, 6.4), Transportation Plan, MPO TIP, Climate Action Plan, Hospital Sitei Redevelopment Master Plan, Sustainability Action Plan
Cascades Phase 6 - path/connection to Miller Showers Park	\$3,200,000	\$3,200,000	We propose starting with an Interdepartmental Scoping Exercise to determine the preferred multi-use path/trail route for a pedestrian connection between Miller Showers Park and the Cascades Phase 5 trail (currently being completed), then moving into design and construction of Phase 6 Trail to Miller Showers.	Large estimate, exact cost will depend on decisions made.	No other funds.	Transportation Plan; Parks Strategic Action Plan

Appendix C: GO Bond Details

Item	Minimum Estimate	Maximum Estimate	General Notes	Financial Notes	Other Potential Funding That Could be Leveraged	City Plan Addressed
PUBLIC WORKS GO BOND	\$7,692,500	\$15,375,000				
Citywide LED conversion of street lights	\$1,500,000	\$2,000,000	Select the 2,469 leased high pressure sodium vapor (HPS) cobra head fixtures to convert to (LED) roadway fixtures mounted on existing.	Head to head conversion approach is the most cost effective since poles and/or electrical systems are not installed -- saving \$725k		Sustainability Action Plan, goal # 8.1
Downtown ADA Curb Ramps (e.g., W Kirkwood and Indiana Ave)	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	Accessibility improvements in downtown areas (some locations are not great candidates for federal funding). We estimate ~\$7,000 to install ADA compliant ramps per intersection corner (typically 2 ADA ramps). In some cases it would be beneficial to install bump outs/curb extensions which would be ~\$15,000/corner. In addition to accessibility improvements appropriately located bump outs can improve pedestrian safety and help promote speed compliance. This project would be scalable based on the amount of funding allocated.	Project can be scaled between low and high estimates	These roads are not ideal for MPO funding due to historic districts	Comp Plan (6.1, 6.3, 6.4), Transportation Plan, ADA Transition Plan, Climate Action Plan, Sustainability Action Plan
Sidewalk projects (TBD)	\$300,000	\$1,000,000	The need and demand for sidewalks currently outpaces available funding. Sidewalk projects would be selected and prioritized based on impacts as well as the ability to pair with other capital projects. Sidewalk construction costs vary dramatically based on context, but on average, sidewalk on one side of a street costs about \$1 million per half mile of new sidewalk. A half mile is about 7 city blocks or the distance from the B-Line Trail to the Sample Gates on Kirkwood Avenue.	Project can be scaled between low and high estimates	Could potentially supplement or pair with other capital projects (e.g., Council Sidewalk) and leverage outside funding sources (e.g., Community Development Block Grants).	Comp Plan (6.1, 6.3, 6.4), Transportation Plan, ADA Transition Plan, Climate Action Plan, Sustainability Action Plan
Energy efficiency retrofits for all City buildings	\$1,000,000	\$3,000,000	First need to conduct a building energy audit on all primary City owned facilities, then implement recommendations of these audits.	Initial cost assumptions based on GESC 2016 audits	ARPA match; Duke Energy rebates	CAP Goal EB 2 (Phase 1)
City fleet vehicle hybrid/ electrification fund	\$1,200,000	\$2,200,000	Replacement of conventional with hybrid. This is scalable depending on investment: will start with prioritizing top 100 vehicles identified in replacement analysis that are over 10 years old and have the fastest return on investment from conversion to hybrid or electric. Approximately 25 vehicles can be replaced for \$1,000,000.	Cost is scalable depending on vehicle replacement frequency and type	ARPA match	SAP Goal 8.3, CAP TL2 (2020)
GPS for city fleet	\$250,000	\$250,000	The telematics component of a GPS program provides realtime data on vehicle usage citywide. Case studies have shown that across an entire organization our size that a 10-15% reduction in fuel usage is feasible from reduced driving and idling.			
High Street Multiuse Path and Intersection Modernizations (Arden Dr to 3rd St)	\$2,500,000	\$5,000,000	This project will construct multimodal safety and mobility improvements on High Street from Arden Drive to 3rd Street. Project improvements are expected to include sidewalk curb ramps, accessible bus stops, multiuse path, and intersection modernizations. Multiple intersection alternatives would be evaluated and considered through the project's early design phase. Upon completion, the project would result in a continuous bike and pedestrian facility from 3rd St to Rhorer Rd connecting parks, schools, trails, neighborhoods, etc.	Necessary local match to leverage federal funds.	Local match to leverage ~\$3.4 M in MPO funding.	Comp Plan (6.1, 6.3, 6.4), Transportation Plan, MPO TIP, Climate Action Plan, Sustainability Action Plan

Appendix C: GO Bond Details

Item	Minimum Estimate	Maximum Estimate	General Notes	Financial Notes	Other Potential Funding That Could be Leveraged	City Plan Addressed
Create green waste yard at Lower Cascades Park	\$400,000	\$500,000	Already designed, shovel ready. We have had an initial discussion about this between Parks and Public Works (esp. Sanitation/Street): both departments generate a lot of green waste and a key disposal location in the community was recently closed. Additionally, City employees spend time and resources to haul green waste off-site. Design has already been completed to install this at Lower Cascades (south of the ball fields) but it was not completed due high bids.	Estimate should cover construction, still researching potential additional equipment costs		Climate Action Plan, Parks Strategic Action Plan, Parks CIP
Citywide traffic signal retiming	\$42,500	\$425,000	This is a part of continued efforts to enhance the safety and efficiency of the City's traffic signal system. This project wouldn't include changes to physical infrastructure but rather optimizes the physical infrastructure in place to be as smart/safe/efficient as possible. The project would start in FY2024 when its programmed federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funds become available.	We need a PO for \$425,000 of which \$382,500 will be reimbursed.	Local match to leverage \$382,000 in MPO funding.	Comp Plan (6.1, 6.3, 6.4), Transportation Plan, MPO TIP, Climate Action Plan, Sustainability Action Plan
TOTAL	\$15,967,500	\$35,430,000				



New Revenue: Frequently Asked Questions

As of March 16, 2022. As details are developed, this document will be updated.

About General Obligation Bonds

What is a General Obligation (G.O.) Bond?

A general obligation bond (G.O. bond) is a municipal bond backed solely by the credit and taxing power of the issuing jurisdiction rather than the revenue from a given project. General obligation bonds are issued with the belief that a municipality will be able to repay its debt obligation through taxation or revenue from projects. No assets are used as collateral.

What projects are best suited to being funded with a G.O. bond?

One-time capital investments are good projects for being funded with a G.O. bond, such as a multi-use trail or essential equipment replacements.

About the Local Income Tax

What is a Local Income Tax (LIT)?

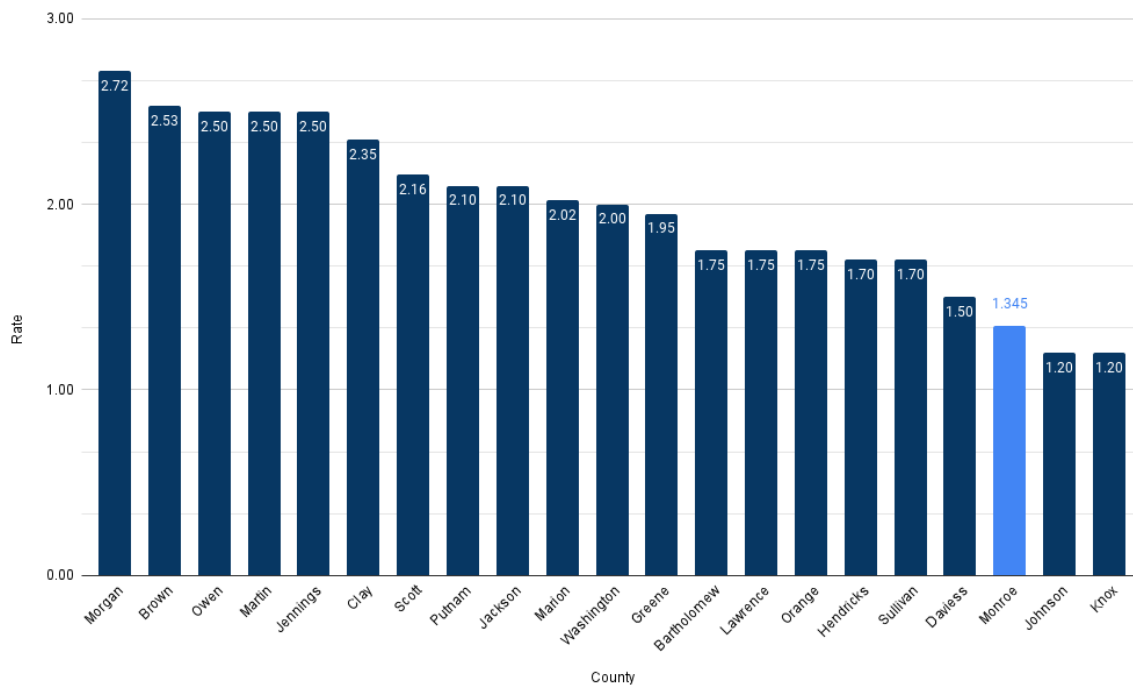
The Local Income Tax (or LIT) is a tax on income, paid by individuals. It is a proportionate tax on adjusted gross income, assessed at a flat rate, meaning that the more income you earn, the more tax you pay. The LIT is imposed countywide. If the taxpayer lives in a municipality (like the City of Bloomington), then the tax is paid to that municipality.

What is our current Local Income Tax rate?

The LIT rate for Monroe County is currently 1.345% of adjusted gross personal income for Monroe County residents.

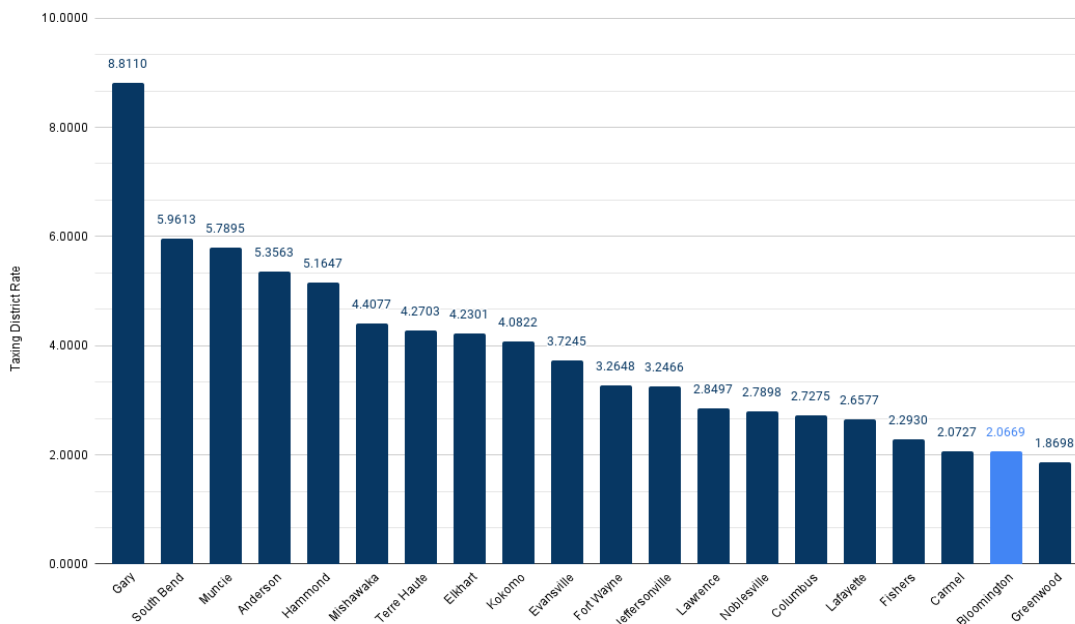
How does our tax rate compare to other communities?

Historically, Monroe County has among the lowest tax rates in the region, including the lowest local income tax rate of our seven contiguous counties. Monroe County's rate ranks 23rd from the lowest in the state.



Source: Indiana Department of Revenue

Note that among Indiana's 20 largest cities (excluding Indianapolis/Marion County), Bloomington is a very low-tax city. Specifically, we are in the lowest quartile of those cities both for property tax rates and local income tax rates.



Source: Reedy Financial Group

LIT Logistics and Implementation

What is the process for getting this tax approved?

A new Monroe County tax may be proposed by the Bloomington City Council, the County Council, the Ellettsville Town Council, or the Stinesville Town Council. These Councils together form the “Local Income Tax Council” or LIT Council for Monroe County. The Councils can meet together to vote, or each council may vote on the proposed tax separately. The LIT Council has 100 votes in total, which are distributed among the member councils based on population. Because a majority of Monroe County’s population lives in Bloomington, Bloomington’s City Council has a majority share of the votes.

Will the funds raised by the LIT increase go into a special fund or the general fund for the City, and why?

Funds resulting from a LIT increase would go into the general fund for the City, so there would be just one annual budget for the City. There are a few reasons for this:

- A LIT increase would be ongoing, as opposed to one-time monies, like ARPA funds.
- The revenue raised through this LIT increase wouldn’t be for one specific purpose, like revenue raised through a Public Safety (PS) LIT is, but rather would be designed to meet major pressing needs like climate change and public safety and cover increased expenses related to overall City operations.
- Our specific priorities may change over time, as our community evolves and our needs change.

The annual City budget process is public and requires approval by the City Council. This provides us with an annual opportunity to review and refine the way the LIT is spent.

What does the portion of LIT for property tax relief mean?

Indiana Code 6-3.6-5-4. Allows a county to impose a LIT rate to be used as a credit against property taxes. Allows the County to use LIT funds for the purpose of offsetting property taxes for all residents: this operates essentially an exemption/credit on a person’s property taxes.

Why Raise the LIT?

Why doesn’t the City just cut costs and tighten its belt instead of raising the LIT?

The City consistently reviews and implements ways to save money through innovation and critical assessment of programs and services provided. Those programs and services that have proven necessary and helpful to residents continue; those that are not are improved upon or discontinued. Savings as a result of innovation include a range of projects, from solar panel installations that lower energy costs, to adding quick response vehicles to the Fire Department

fleet, to more efficient deployment of Public Works crews, to revamping how leaves are collected and processed. The scope of services, programs, and projects that the City seeks to provide to its residents cannot be fully funded through these cost-saving measures.

What would happen if the LIT didn't pass?

Bloomington would be faced with significant challenges in the coming years meeting our current level of services and continuing to move forward on economic, social, and environmental justice endeavors. The City Council would not be able to ratify the agreed-upon FOP contract, as there are no funds available for the additional salary costs (approximately \$1.5 million annually.) Other initiatives such as many of those outlined in the Climate Action Plan (CAP) would also not have funding available.

Why are you proposing this now, and why is this happening so fast?

While requesting a tax increase is always a difficult choice, an increase is essential if we are to be proactive about rebuilding our community from this downturn in a way that better incorporates our goals for public safety, economic, racial, and climate justice. The state legislature may well reduce or eliminate a municipality's ability to accomplish new revenues. Mayor Hamilton proposed a 0.5% increase to the LIT in January of 2020, designed for climate change action and preparedness, though the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic made this not feasible at the time. In the fall of 2020, Mayor Hamilton proposed a 0.25% increase to the LIT, focused on COVID response, climate action, and economic justice. This did not receive the necessary votes to be implemented.

At this time, there are significant programs and initiatives implemented with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars for the purposes of economic, racial, and climate justice, which will not be able to continue without an increase in the LIT providing ongoing funding. As our community recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic, amid rising labor and materials costs, we will not have the resources we need to meet our stated goals as a community without this increase in the LIT.

The needs are urgent and the sooner the LIT is approved the sooner we will have resources available to address our community's needs. We also anticipate that the state legislature may continue to make changes to the way local governments can raise revenues to meet local needs, so a timely approval of the LIT will better equip us to manage our recovery.

How will this money be used to help Bloomington recover from the COVID pandemic?

City government has a responsibility to Bloomington's future even as we seek immediately to repair the damage wrought by the COVID pandemic. The revenues generated by the proposed Local Income Tax are needed not only to compensate for the current downfall but to build the City back in a way that ensures long-term and widely distributed well-being and resiliency. Proposed investments will build toward this stronger, more just, and more sustainable future by

increasing access to jobs, housing, social services, transportation options, quality of life, retaining and attracting well-trained public safety professionals, and more.

LIT Impact

The LIT is a flat tax. How can we make the impact of the LIT more progressive (i.e. less burdensome on low-income residents)?

Unfortunately, the State of Indiana doesn't allow municipalities to levy a wealth tax or a progressive income tax. The LIT proposal includes \$750,000 annually for an economic equity fund that would provide direct benefits to low-income working residents and families.

Is the tax just for City residents or would it apply to all residents of Monroe County?

According to state law, local income taxes are county-specific; so the LIT would apply to all Monroe County residents.

What is the effective date of tax rate adjustment?

The ordinance adoption date determines when the ordinance will become effective. If the ordinance is adopted prior to November 1, then it will be effective at the beginning of the next year and the eligible units should start receiving the income tax distribution at the same time.

Do all Indiana counties have a tax like this?

All 92 Indiana counties have a Local Income Tax. Of Indiana's 92 counties, 73 of them (79%) devote some of their Local Income Tax to local economic development.

How many new taxes or raised taxes have been enacted since 2016?

Two. The public safety local income tax was increased by .25% in 2016 to fund police, fire, and dispatch improvements that protect us all. The food and beverage tax, approved by County Council and enacted in 2018, was a new 1% sales tax placed on retail sales of prepared food and beverages and will be used to fund a convention center expansion and other tourism-related projects.

Proposed Climate Action Plan Investments

The proposed LIT increase would provide \$1,500,000 annually in investments to implement the CAP. What are examples of items that could be implemented from the Climate Action Plan (CAP)?

The Climate Action Plan can be found here: <https://bton.in/ZC2Y5>

1. Transportation investments
 - a. City fleet vehicle electrification (*CAP TL 2-A: support and encourage electric vehicle adoption*)
 - b. Expanded micromobility options (example: electric bike share program) (*CAP TL 1-B*)
 - c. Transportation demand management (*CAP TL 1-A: reduce single-occupancy vehicle use*)
2. Energy and built environment investments:
 - a. Energy efficiency retrofits for all City buildings (*SAP 8.1: reduce non-renewable energy use from municipal operations*)
 - b. Bloomington Housing Authority solar conversion (*CAP EB1: increase distributed renewable energy*)
 - c. Continuing and expanding the Solar & Energy Efficiency Loan (SEEL) program for nonprofits and small businesses (*CAP EB5: increase financing options for energy efficiency and renewable energy*)
 - d. Continuing and expanding the Bloomington Green Home Improvement Program (BGHIP) for homeowners (*CAP EB5: promote equity in energy and resource costs and ownership*)
3. Local agriculture investments:
 - a. Local food purchasing incentive program (*CAP FA 3: increase and stabilize the local food market*)
 - b. School food garden program (*CAP FA 3: increase local food supply*)
 - c. Incentives for food processor businesses (*CAP FA 3: increase local food supply*)
 - d. Increased community gardens (*Sustainability Action Plan 4.2: increase food gardens within the community*)
4. Waste management investments:
 - a. Curbside composting program, parallel to trash and recycling services (*CAP WM1: increase organics diversion*)
 - b. Recycling services for apartment buildings and other multi-family units (4+) (*CAP WM 1: increase recyclables diversion*)
5. Additional tree canopy measures, such as shade trees in high heat areas and/or private tree planting incentives (*CAP G2: increase citywide tree canopy coverage*)

6. Funding for the Green Ribbon Panel to accelerate climate action (*CAP CE 2: attract, create, and support businesses that are committed to sustainability and climate goals*)