



2024 Preliminary City Budget | Meeting the needs of our growing community

Like many of us, the City of Savage prepares a yearly budget for essential services that residents value, like 24/7 police and fire protection, snow plowing, park maintenance, water and utilities, and many others. For 2024, the preliminary city budget was set at \$22,789,333, a 12% increase over 2023. "This year's budget meets our goal to minimize city tax impact to property owners, maintain existing service levels at an affordable cost, and meet the needs of our growing city," said City Administrator Brad Larson. The main drivers of the preliminary budget increase are:

- Salaries and benefits for city employees
- Decrease in permit revenue
- A full year of new public safety staff, which was added in 2023
- Two new full-time positions to support our Human Resources and IT departments.

As part of the budget process, the City Council also adopts a property tax levy, which is the amount of money needed from property owners to pay for essential services. This local government tax is based on individual property values and collected through property taxes. For 2024, the preliminary tax levy is \$1,647,626, which is 7.72% above last year. However, this does not mean your property taxes will increase by the same amount. The increase in the City's tax base assists in offsetting the levy increase and results in a 1.581% increase in the city tax rate. At this point in the process, the property tax levy cannot increase but can be reduced before the final budget adoption in December.

What does this mean to you?

The impact on homeowners will depend on how much your property's value changes from 2023. Scott County estimates that residential property values will increase, on average, less than 3% in 2024. In 2024, 83% of the homes within our community will see a reduction or no change in their home market value. Based on an average single-family home in Savage valued at \$421,300:

- 6% of homeowners will see an increase of \$66.59/year or \$5.54/month in their property taxes.
- 64% of homeowners will see an increase of \$26/year or around \$2/month in their property taxes.
- 13% of homeowners will see a decrease in their property taxes.

Cost of city services

When you get your property tax bill, keep in mind your bill includes taxes from several jurisdictions, not just the City. Most residents tend to blame their cities for high taxes, but actually, only about one-third of your bill goes toward city taxes. The other two-thirds of your property taxes go to your school district, Scott County, and other special taxing districts.

In 2024, estimated city taxes on a home valued at \$421,300 are \$1,583 or \$132/month. Please don't forget that you are getting services for that money that no one else can provide you. No one else can solve the crime in your neighborhood, put out the fire in your house, make sure your road is plowed after a snowstorm, or preserve the green spaces and parks that improve the beauty and quality of life in your neighborhood. Here is where your \$132 per month in city tax dollars go:



*Monthly cost is the 2024 projected cost for a home with an estimated market value of \$421,300 for taxes payable in 2024.

Next steps:

Per direction from the Council, staff will continue to fine-tune the budget and levy to hold down tax increases to the minimum necessary to provide city services before the final adoption in December. The City's formal public budget meeting will be Monday, December 4, 2023, at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Public comments are welcome at this time. The 2024 final budget and tax levy will be adopted at the Monday, December 18 City Council meeting.

If you have a market value question, please contact Scott County at 952-496-8115 or visit their website at scottcountymn.gov/383/Pay-Property-Tax. Learn more about the City's budget and tax levy at cityofsavage.com.

Reminders

Winter parking restrictions

Winter parking restrictions begin November 1 through March 31. On-street parking is prohibited between 2 - 6 a.m., regardless of whether there is snow or not. Violations could be ticketed or towed.

Snowmobile Trails

The City of Savage allows for the peaceful and safe operation of snowmobiles within the city limits. The Savage Sno-Pacers, the local snowmobile club, will be posting signs designating these trails, along with grooming and monitoring the trails throughout the winter season. These trails provide local riders access to regional and state trails. Riders are required to follow the marked trails within the City with the exception of access from their residence to the nearest marked trail. Trails will be open December 1 through March 31 but may be closed due to limited snowfall. For current Savage Trail information, follow the Savage Sno-Pacers on Facebook. Snowmobile trail maps are available at Savage City Hall.

Youth Snowmobile Safety Training | December 2

Youth ages 11 - 15 can complete snowmobile safety training through an interactive online course. This online course takes approximately 2 to 4 hours. Once the student has completed the online course, they must also complete a safety class and driving test scheduled for December 2, 2023. For more information, follow the Savage Sno-Pacers online at facebook.com/SavageSnoPacers or contact Tom Wills at snopacers@gmail.com or 612-567-6691.

This is Savage.

Sharing our history.

Written by Nancy Huddleston, Dan Patch Historical Society (DPHS) member. Reprinted with permission from the DPHS.

A rather large piece of history was partially dismantled in September when the spans of the Lynn Avenue railroad bridge were removed after being damaged by a truck.

In 1907, M.W. Savage announced plans for a new railroad to serve southern Minnesota—the Minneapolis, St. Paul, Rochester, and Dubuque Electric Traction Company. It was popularly called The Dan Patch Line and opened in 1910. The Minneapolis, Northfield, and Southern Railway Company (MN&S), a Minneapolis-based short-line railroad, bought the line in 1918, two years after Mr. Savage died.

The date 1926 was stamped in one of the concrete piers, so it's likely that the MNS built the bridge to accommodate the growth of freight lines in the 1920s. The small local freight hauler served independently until 1982 when the Soo Line purchased it. In 1984, the Canadian Pacific Railway gained complete control of the Soo Line and owns the route between West Minneapolis and Lakeville, although Savage to Lakeville does not operate.



MEET A SAVAGE FIREFIGHTER



These men and women are your neighbors, co-workers, and friends. They are people of all ages, races, and backgrounds who are committed to giving back to their community. If you are interested in becoming a Savage firefighter, go to cityofsavage.com.



MATTHEW JENSEN

How long have you been a Savage firefighter?

I have been with Savage Fire since December of 2022 and with Public Works since 2017.

What made you want to become a firefighter?

I wanted to be a firefighter since I was a kid. I remember seeing firefighters at a young age, and they always fascinated me.

What do you like to do when you are not working?

When not working, I like taking motorcycle rides with my wife, traveling and camping with the kids, playing with my dogs, and doing other outdoor activities.

What do you like most about firefighting?

My favorite parts of firefighting are working as a team to accomplish a goal, constantly learning new things, challenging myself, and the camaraderie with the other firefighters.

What would you say to someone considering becoming a firefighter?

If you are thinking of becoming a firefighter, ask yourself why. If the answer is something like you want to make a positive impact on people around you, or you want to be a part of something bigger than yourself, or you would like to be the best possible version of yourself, then firefighting is definitely for you.

What would our cities look like if kids were in charge?

The Mayor for a Day essay contest is back to find out! To enter, fourth, fifth, and sixth graders can answer the prompt, "What would you do if you were Mayor for a day?" for a chance to win \$100 and recognition in Minnesota Cities magazine. View contest rules and the entry form online at lmc.org/mayor-for-a-day-contest. Entries must be emailed or postmarked by December 12. Winners will be notified in early January 2024. Good luck, little mayors!

Council approves reinstalling the basketball hoops at River Bend Park

On 10/16/23, the Savage City Council approved reinstalling the basketball hoops at River Bend Park. This decision was made in conjunction with other recommendations that our Community Equity Commission, Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources Commission, and staff agree will help improve safety at this park and all parks in our community.

These recommendations include continuing extra police patrol, adding fencing and lighting to specific areas, reviewing traffic calming options on Joppa, and adding programming and recreational amenities like a community garden that will increase general park activity.

We know this has been a long process. Throughout this process, we heard how important this park is. We heard how important the basketball courts are. And we heard that you want River Bend Park to remain a neighborhood park.

If you wish to read the complete list of recommendations and review the entire engagement process, go to letstalksavage.com.

I want to know! What is going on at the Library?

The Savage Public Library is expanding to meet the future needs of our growing community. The expansion includes:

- An expanded, enhanced meeting room with a greater capacity to host events and community gatherings.
- Added technology for Extended Access services, allowing residents aged 16 and older to use the Savage Library anytime from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily.
- Office and meeting space for onsite Family Resource Center (FRC) staff, programming, and support.

The project is expected to be completed by mid-2024. The rest of the Library will remain open during its regular hours. Funding for this project comes from ARPA funds and Scott County.

The Savage Public Library was originally built in 1997 and is a unique arrangement where Scott County provides library services, but the City owns and maintains the building. Several community groups use the library, including the Dan Patch Historical Society, the senior social club, the art council, and the public. In 2021, a space study was completed to evaluate how the space could be used better. The recommendation was to add more space for meetings and activities. In addition to adding meeting space, the expansion will include technology updates for Extended Access and office space for our Family Resource Center partnership with Scott County.



Extended Access, also known as “open libraries”, is a library model that uses self-service technology to provide access to library facilities and resources outside of staffed open hours. It empowers residents to access the library when it works for them. Residents can access public computers and wireless internet, print, copy, and scan, pick up requested items, browse the library collection, and work independently or in groups in study rooms. Currently, the Library is staffed 42 hours a week. The extended access hours would add 70 additional hours of access.

Libraries are pillars of the community and are welcoming to all community members. The Family Resource Center (FRC) aims to provide universal access points for education, support, services, and community. Stop by the Savage Library any Thursday afternoon to get connected to parenting education, parenting skills, early childhood literacy, and access to economic support.

WE WORK FOR YOU!

Meet David Hauer,
our new Building Official.



How long have you worked for the City?

I was hired as a Building Inspector for the City of Savage about seven years ago and was named the Building Official just a few weeks ago.

How did you get involved in the building inspections line of work?

I have been around the construction trade my entire life. My dad and uncle are in the trade. I have a formal education in carpentry but lots of hands-on experience in framing, remodeling, concrete work, plumbing, and mechanical. I'm always doing a project for myself or family and friends. For me, it's not a job - it's my passion!

What's the role of the Building Official?

The role of the Building Official is to administer and enforce the building code for the City. They play a major role in ensuring that all commercial, residential, and other public buildings are constructed according to the State Building Code, which addresses structural stability, fire safety, exits, sanitation, energy efficiency, mechanical systems, accessibility, and more.

Why did you want to become the Building Official?

I find it rewarding to serve within the community and industry. I enjoy providing excellent customer service and helping homeowners, contractors, architects, engineers, and others with construction projects.

What's the most challenging part of your new job?

The hardest part is keeping up with current code, products, and construction materials. There are always so many new things coming out that it's hard to keep current.

Meet our Plow Pros

Savage's snow plow drivers are a dedicated bunch. Even with long shifts, unpredictable weather, and fluctuating schedules, they take pride in doing their job well and keeping our local roads, sidewalks, and trails safe for the rest of us.



Public Works carefully plans and staffs plowing routes each winter season to clear your way as effectively and efficiently as possible. This crew often begins their day at 2 a.m., so the main roadways are cleared before we even get out of bed. During storm events, our drivers can be plowing for 12 hours at a time and are called away from their families on evenings, weekends, and holidays to clear Savage's 132 miles of city streets and 299 cul-de-sacs, before they move on to clear the 46 miles of sidewalks and trails. While some roads are plowed before others due to safety reasons and high-traffic areas, please be assured the City is acting as quickly and safely as possible. The bottom line is that our snow plow crew does their absolute best to take care of our resident's winter plowing needs and work hard year-round to keep our City in good, working order. They greatly appreciate your patience and cooperation. To stay updated during snow storms, follow us @cityofsavage on Facebook.

KEEP IN TOUCH:



TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

**NOVEMBER 30
5:30-6 P.M.**

City Campus
6000 McColl Drive, Savage

Join Mayor Williams and other city officials for a community holiday tradition. Come to the City Campus, before heading to Santa Cop Night and help count down the lighting of the holiday tree. Celebrate with activities for everyone to enjoy including hot cocoa, a bonfire, and live holiday music. This is a FREE community event.



SANTA COP NIGHT

Brighten the holiday season
for children in need.



**NOVEMBER 30
6-7:30 P.M.**

Savage Police Department garage
6000 McColl Drive, Savage

Head to the Savage Police Department garage to drop-off your unwrapped gifts for the annual Toys for Tots campaign. Police Chief Seurer and Santa will be there to greet you and volunteers will help unload gifts from cars. Those unable to attend can drop off a donation Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the collection box located in the police department lobby.



LEARN MORE ONLINE AT CITYOFSAVAGE.COM

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