



The Daffodil Town

June 11, 2025

FY2025-26 Budget Message

Dear Mayor and Board of Alderwomen & Aldermen:

Attached is the FY2025-2026 proposed annual Budget for the Town of Fremont. The budget is a balanced budget of \$5,551,370, which is an increase of \$780,354 (or 16.35%) from FY24-25. This is affected by the current inflation rate of 3%, which is expected to rise over the next year. Also, this budget includes a water rate increase of 5%, an electric rate increase of 3.5%, a sewer rate increase of 7.5%, and a 4.85% (\$1.00) increase on trash pick-up services. Each of these increases are increases that were passed on to us and we must pass along to our customers. It is important to note that we must maintain our fund balances in these accounts as well as cover the costs to the Town for providing these services. We never like to pass along costs incurred, but, unfortunately, we cannot absorb those costs and still meet the needs of our citizens while satisfying state mandates on fund balance. The Budget is based on a 59 cents per \$100 valuation property tax rate that is a decrease from 70 cents in FY24-25. The tax-neutral rate for Fremont is 46 cents per \$100 value. However, with property revaluations, there will be an increase in what the citizens pay on in-town property taxes to the town.

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics the cost of living increased 2.3% in the last 12 months. Most of the increase was energy(fuel) and food. This means any increase in pay for employees less than 1.7% is a decrease in buying power. However, considering the general economic conditions the staff are asking for and recommend the town provide a 1.5% COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) increase and a Merit Increase of up to 1.5%. It is important to note here that our biggest assets are our staff and like our other assets, we must invest in them.

The FY 25-26 budget includes the following items:

1. Approximately \$20,000 to replace field lights on the small field at Peele Park
2. Repairs to and updates to equipment to include Tractor Repair, Side Boy Repair, & Jet Rodder Repair
3. \$50,000 for a new Police vehicle.
4. \$136,000 from Powell Bill to be used to repair streets
5. Minor Park improvements are planned to be implemented
6. 15% increase for Billings & Collections Clerk
7. \$3,500 increase for Board Members/Mayor
8. 1.5% COLA increase, & up to 1.5% Merit increase



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The Budget does **NOT** include the following which needs to be considered:

1. Parks Capital Improvements
2. Paving or repairing all streets in town – Guestimate = \$500,000
3. Installing automated water/electric meters throughout town (Future years)
4. Cloud Computer System - \$20,000+
5. Economic Development Funds
- 6.. Updates to the Board Room (\$10,000)
7. Town Clerk Position – (\$12,000 in savings or 1.5 cents savings on the property taxes)

This budget will continue to assist us in improving our community, providing services, and becoming a premier community to live in. We are fortunate to have a community where our citizens are willing to step up and help in any way that they can. Based on the outreach from the community and their willingness to invest their time, our Town is on the right track to becoming a blooming town. I would like to thank the staff, Board, Mayor, and citizens for their help in formulating this budget and all that each one does to make Fremont a special place to live.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Allen, MPA
Town Administrator