

Vadnais Heights Personnel Costs: What the Budget Shows

A fact-based statement for publication, using the City's audited financial reports and adopted budgets.

\$5.01 million	49.1%
2026 General Fund employee personnel-services budget	of 2026 General Fund revenue, excluding transfers

Personnel costs are consuming an increasingly large share of Vadnais Heights' General Fund. Actual personnel spending increased 10% in just one year - from 2023 to 2024 - outpacing the 7.7% growth in General Fund revenue.

By 2026, the City is budgeting more than \$5 million for General Fund employee personnel services, equal to approximately 49% of General Fund revenue, excluding transfers. These personnel-service costs include salaries, overtime, part-time and seasonal wages, benefits, payroll taxes and workers' compensation. Mayor and council compensation is excluded from this employee total.

With approximately 49% of General Fund revenue already budgeted for employee personnel services, the City must also fund sheriff protection, streets, parks, fire operations and its other responsibilities from the remaining revenue, supplemented by a \$500,000 transfer into the General Fund.

The City cannot simply point to a growing budget as proof that this spending is sustainable. Residents deserve to know which new positions and compensation increases drove these costs, what measurable service improvements they received in return, and how these continuing obligations will affect future property taxes.

Personnel expenses do not disappear when a project ends. They become part of the next budget - and the next tax levy. When nearly half of General Fund revenue is already committed to personnel, every new position deserves serious scrutiny. Taxpayers should not be expected to automatically fund an ever-growing payroll without clear results, full transparency and a long-term plan showing how the City intends to pay for it.

The numbers

Measure	2023 actual	2024 actual	2025 budget	2026 budget
General Fund revenue (excluding transfers)	\$8,335,545	\$8,979,741	\$9,313,839	\$10,201,256
Employee personnel services (excluding elected officials)	\$3,622,355	\$3,984,872	\$4,614,553	\$5,011,783

Sources and calculation

All links below are clickable and lead to official City of Vadnais Heights records.

1. [2023 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report](#)
General Fund revenue is reported on PDF page 53. Department-level personnel services appear on pages 118-120.
2. [2024 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report](#)
General Fund revenue is reported on PDF page 50. Department-level personnel services appear on pages 113-114.
3. [2025 Approved Budget](#)
General Fund revenue appears on budget page 3. Personnel-service figures appear in the individual department budgets.
4. [2026 Approved Budget](#)
General Fund revenue appears on budget page 3. Personnel-service figures appear in the individual department budgets.
5. [City Budget Archive](#)
Official archive containing the City's adopted annual budgets.

How the 49.1% figure was calculated

2026 employee personnel services	\$5,011,783
2026 General Fund revenue, excluding transfers	\$10,201,256
\$5,011,783 / \$10,201,256	49.1%

Important context

The 2023 and 2024 figures are audited actual results. The 2025 and 2026 figures are adopted budgets, not completed spending. The statement does not present the 2026 budget as an audited actual result.

The City's full General Fund budget includes a recurring \$500,000 transfer into the fund. That transfer is excluded from the revenue figures above so revenue is presented separately from other financing sources.

For a consistent comparison, actual-to-actual results show General Fund revenue increasing 7.7% from 2023 to 2024 while employee personnel services increased 10.0%.