CITY OF VICTOR

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City Council Staff Report

REPORT DATE: October 21, 2026

MEETING DATE: October 28, 2026

SUBJECT	**Public Safety Funding**
ITEM TYPE	☐ Public Hearing ☒ Work Session ☐ Action Item
PRESENTER	Jeremy Besbris, City Administrator

APPLICABLE VICTOR VALUES

☐Culturally Historic	☐ Sustainable	☐ Connected to Nature
☐ Small Town Feel	☐ Family Friendly	☒ Administrative Need

PURPOSE & PROCESS:

The purpose of this work session is for the Council to discuss how it wishes to approach the $125,000 in public-safety funding earmarked in the FY27 budget. This allocation was made in response to a late-cycle request from the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for additional municipal contributions toward countywide dispatch services.

No action is requested tonight. Staff seeks direction so that any follow-up communication with the County reflects the Council's priorities and expectations.

BACKGROUND/ALTERNATIVES

The FY27 budget includes a $125,000 earmark for public-safety purposes. This action was taken after the BOCC requested that Victor and Driggs contribute additional funding toward countywide dispatch operations, a service that supports emergency response for all county residents, including those within incorporated cities.

As a reminder:

- City residents are also County residents, and their county property taxes contribute to the baseline costs of sheriff services and dispatch operations
- County sheriffs have statutory responsibility for enforcing state law countywide, including within city limits. This baseline level of service is not billed to the City.
- The City may choose to purchase *enhanced* law-enforcement services, and Victor already does so through its longstanding contract with the Teton County Sheriff's Office.

The BOCC's recent request for additional dispatch funding is not based on a defined legal obligation on cities but reflects broader fiscal pressures facing local governments statewide, including state-imposed tax limitations that constrain revenue growth for both counties and cities.

Because the Council earmarked, but did not assign, a public-safety allocation, staff needs Council direction on whether, and under what conditions, these dollars should be used for dispatch funding or other public-safety priorities within City control.

COMMUNITY AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the City's contractual arrangements and Idaho's statutory framework:

- City residents already pay into the County system that funds dispatch and baseline sheriff services. Any additional municipal contribution should advance a specific Council-supported aim rather than merely supplementing general county operations.
- Enhanced or supplemental funding, if provided, should be tied to defined outcomes, such as service improvements, performance measures, or long-term stability of dispatch capacity.
- The City already funds enhanced sheriff activities and independent prosecution of state-law misdemeanors. Additional contributions would require reprioritizing the FY27 earmark or shifting funds from other municipal initiatives.
- County fiscal pressures stem from statewide constraints affecting all jurisdictions; the question for Victor is what targeted investments, if any, serve the City's strategic interests.

DISCUSSION

Council is invited to discuss the following:

1. **Intended Use of the FY27 Public-Safety Earmark**

    - Does the Council wish to consider allocating some or all of the earmarked funds to dispatch operations as requested by the BOCC?
    - If so, what specific goals or service improvements would the Council want to see tied to any contribution?

2. **Information Needed Before Making a Decision**

    - Are there questions about dispatch costs, staffing, technology, service levels, or long-term needs that the Council would like answered before considering a financial commitment?
    - Would the Council like staff to request a formal proposal or cost-allocation methodology from the County?

3. **Conditions or Principles That Should Guide Any Contribution**
    - Should any funding be contingent on transparency, reporting, measurable service outcomes, or a clearly defined scope?
    - Are there alternative public-safety priorities—such as strengthening City-managed programs—that merit consideration for the earmarked funds?

4. **Desired Engagement Approach with the BOCC**

    - Does the Council wish to pursue collaborative discussions with the County, maintain the funds until more information is available, or direct staff toward other public-safety initiatives?

FINANCIAL IMPACT

No financial decision is being requested tonight No expenditure is being proposed tonight. The $125,000 remains uncommitted until Council identifies a preferred direction.

STAFF IMPACT

Staff will follow up based on Council direction: this may include gathering additional information from the County, drafting potential conditions for funding, or preparing options for alternative City-driven public-safety uses.

LEGAL REVIEW

Not applicable at this stage. Any future agreements or funding arrangements will be routed for legal review.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is recommended. Staff requests Council guidance on the objectives, information needs, and principles that should guide potential allocation of the FY27 public-safety earmark.

VICTOR CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION ITEM

Public Safety Funding

Overview & Discussion

This handout provides an overview of the current structure of law-enforcement and prosecutorial services in the City, clarifies both city and county responsibilities under Idaho law, and summarizes the issues prompting current discussion around public safety funding. This is intended solely as contextual information to help the Council determine next steps.

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1. Current City Contracts & Responsibilities

Enhanced Sheriff Services Contract

- The City contracts with the Teton County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) for enhanced service levels above the county's baseline obligations.
- The contract automatically renews and currently costs just under $50,000 per year.
- Enhanced services typically include dedicated patrol time or additional law-enforcement presence tailored to City needs.

Prosecutorial Services

- The City separately contracts with Hall Angell & Associates for prosecutorial work at $36,000 per year.
- The County Prosecutor's *position* is that their office handles felonies and matters involving offenders under 18, but that state-law misdemeanors occurring within city limits must be prosecuted by the City.
- The City therefore continues to fund independent misdemeanor prosecution.

County Funding Requests

- Over the last several years, the BOCC has asked Victor and Driggs to contribute additional funding toward law-enforcement and dispatch operations.
- The City has not approved these requests previously. In FY27 budget adoption, Council earmarked $140,000 for public safety, prompted by a recent request relating to dispatch services, but did not designate a specific use for those funds.
- Staff now needs direction regarding next steps.

2. Idaho's Legal & Operational Framework for Law Enforcement

Baseline Sheriff Duties Are Countywide

- Idaho statutes assign the Sheriff primary responsibility for enforcing state criminal laws throughout the county, including inside incorporated cities.
- This baseline enforcement is funded through countywide property taxes paid by all county residents, including City residents and businesses.
- A sheriff's response within city limits does not automatically constitute an "extra" or billable service to the City.

Municipal Police Departments Are Optional

- Cities are authorized—but not required—to establish their own police departments.
- A city without a police department is not considered to be "shifting" a cost; it is operating within the structure envisioned by state law.
- When cities do create police departments, those departments typically provide additional patrol presence or municipal-priority enforcement, but countywide duties remain with the Sheriff.

Enhanced Services Must Be Voluntary & Contractual

- State law provides a mechanism for cities to voluntarily contract with counties for service levels beyond the baseline.
- Contracts must define responsibilities clearly and be approved by both governing bodies.
- The City's long-standing enhanced-services contract with TCSO is an example of this voluntary, mutually agreed model.

3. Key Policy Considerations for the City

A. The County's Proposed Cost-Allocation Concepts

The County has floated ideas in recent years suggesting that Victor and Driggs contribute additional funding arguing that sheriff activity inside city limits appears to exceed the value of county taxes paid from that area.

Important considerations for Council:

- Incidents alone do not necessarily represent added cost, many are low-impact or unrelated to specific municipal factors.
- City residents *are* County residents and already contribute to county revenues that fund sheriff operations.
- Workload and cost attribution should distinguish between baseline county responsibilities and true incremental city-specific services.

B. Fiscal Pressure & State Property Tax Limits

- Both counties and cities face rising service demands due to population growth and development patterns
- State-imposed caps on property tax budget growth limit the ability of local governments to match revenues to growing service needs.
- This environment has prompted counties statewide to explore alternative funding approaches, including cost-sharing proposals.
- These pressures originate at the state level and affect all local governments—City and County alike.

C. Local Impacts for Victor

- The City already pays for enhanced sheriff services and prosecution of state-level misdemeanor offenses.
- Additional contributions requested by the County would likely require shifting dollars away from other municipal services or re-prioritizing the public safety earmark.
- The FY27 earmark provides flexibility but not a defined plan; Council direction is needed to determine whether to pursue discussions with the County or focus on City-managed service enhancements.

4. Decision Points for Council

Baseline state-law enforcement is a county responsibility, funded by all county taxpayers.

- Cities may voluntarily purchase additional sheriff services, and Victor already does so.
- County requests for additional municipal contributions arise from broader statewide fiscal constraints, not from a defined legal obligation on the City.
- **the FY27 budget earmark gives the Council flexibility, but Council direction is needed to determine whether and how to engage further**