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From: Debra Horner <dhorner@umich.edu>

Sent: 04 February 2026 09:36

To: Joseph Rizk <jrizk@viennatwpgc.gov>

Subject: Michigan local governments' challenges with their budgeting processes, from the Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS)

Dear Mr. Rizk,

Below is a link to a new policy report from the University of Michigan's Center for Local, State, and Urban Policy (CLOSUP), which presents Michigan local government leaders' views on a set of eight specific challenges that they might be facing in their jurisdictions' budgeting processes.

These data come from the Spring 2025 Michigan Public Policy Survey (MPPS), which surveyed local government leaders like you from 1,328 Michigan jurisdictions (counties, cities, townships, and villages).

Statewide, local leaders tend to be more worried about the budget impacts of external factors outside of their control than about technical or procedural financial management challenges. However, many are also concerned about budgeting mandates, lack of internal expertise, and inaccurate financial projections, particularly in larger communities and in places reporting higher fiscal stress.

The report's key findings are summarized below, and the full report is available online at:

<https://us-west-2.protection.sophos.com?d=myumi.ch&u=aHR0cHM6Ly9teXVtaS5jaC9Rd0UzQQ==&p=m&i=NjRkMmEzYmViOWJlYjk1MzNkYTA1ODE2&t=TnRBT0NzenYvbm1vMHBFUXVzNHBEOSTBT2NpQWh5OUFFYXBhWld0NXNuND0=&h=ad007f2a27ff47479565a0b5ee4cd3c7&s=AVNPUEhUT0NFTkNSWVBUSVaScaNRkzVVMcSRpRo9qlsdPGQEjAJY3TehxlyWUaDeMg>

You can read or download the report from the website, or if you contact us here at CLOSUP (closup-mpps@umich.edu or 734-647-4091), we would be happy to email you a PDF version.

Key Findings:

When it comes to common technical or procedural challenges in how local governments conduct their budgeting, a top concern among local leaders is meeting state and federal budgeting mandates, such as reporting requirements, match requirements, and so on. Statewide, 60% say they are somewhat (24%) or very (36%) concerned about this aspect of budgeting. County officials (84%) are the most likely to express concern about state and federal mandates on their budget process, but most city (76%), village (64%), and township (54%) officials also worry about this challenge.

Lack of budgeting expertise is also a widespread concern, with a majority of city (56%) and village (53%) officials worried about the lack of budgeting expertise among their municipality's elected officials, and around a third expressing concern about lack of staff expertise.

Economic concerns about a downturn in the local and wider economy or about continuing inflation are top-of-mind for most local officials, with 71% statewide saying they are somewhat (41%) or very (30%) concerned. Another 58% cite worries about emergencies or unforeseen expenses as significant challenges to their budgeting process. Somewhat less common, but still worrisome, is the problem of managing political pressures from the community or among members of the local Board or Council, with 34% statewide somewhat or very concerned.

More detailed information is available in the report itself.

CLOSUP is happy to answer any questions you may have and to help you interpret the data. Our goal is to help inform the policymaking process in Michigan at all levels.

The CLOSUP website provides detailed tables of the data—broken down by jurisdiction type, population size, region of the state, and urban-rural categories- collected in each MPPS survey wave, including Spring 2025. These tables can be found at: <https://us-west-2.protection.sophos.com?d=myumi.ch&u=aHR0cHM6Ly9teXVtaS5jaC9xZ3dSMA==&p=m&i=NjRkMmEzYmViOWJlYjk1MzNkYTA1ODE2&t=ekY3NEloYXExYzFxbVV4bEVPM3pMWk50Sm1pQnl4MTV6amVhY0NCMGZRcz0=&h=ad007f2a27ff47479565a0b5ee4cd3c7&s=AVNPUEhUT0NFTkNSWVBUSVaScaNRkzVVMcSRpRo9qlsdPGQEjAJY3TehxlyWUaDeMg>

The MPPS is conducted by CLOSUP in partnership with the Michigan Association of Counties, Michigan Municipal League, and Michigan Townships Association. The survey program is unique in the country as the only ongoing survey targeting every unit of general purpose local government across an entire state.

For more information, contact MPPS staff by email at closup-mpps@umich.edu or by phone at 734-647-4091. More information is also available on the CLOSUP website at: <https://us-west-2.protection.sophos.com?d=umich.edu&u=aHR0cDovL2Nsbn3N1cC51bWljaC5lZHU=&p=m&i=NjRkMmEzYmViOWJlYjk1MzNkYTA1ODE2&t=YVFrT2MxbThEdmhIMkY2bURqbEdndUpCN0h3bjFyMmF5eFpOQUFrNlVhZz0=&h=ad007f2a27ff47479565a0b5ee4cd3c7&s=AVNPUEhUT0NFTkNSWVBUSVaScaNRkzVVMcSRpRo9qlsdPGQEjAJY3TehxlyWUaDeMg>