Citizen Plan: requests for the 2027 budget

Nov. 24, 2026. From Nederland residents Melody Baumhover, Karen Blakemore, Dallas Masters, and Ben White. Not a Town document and not legal advice. Amounts are estimates from Town records, rounded. The full plan is at eldorarecord.org.

What this is

These are the changes the Citizen Plan asks the Board to make to staff's proposed 2027 budget. The starting point is staff's Nov. 17, 2026, "2027 Budget Update" tables, in the version with no raise: General Fund revenue of $2,948,597, spending of $3,445,752, and an available balance of −$2,528,102 at the end of 2027. The plan adds the 3% raise for employees and pays for it with General Fund cuts.

We ask the Board, on Dec. 1, to direct staff to bring a 2027 budget with these changes to the Dec. 8 hearing, next to the Town's own proposal, so the Board and the public can compare the two.

A motion a trustee could make on Dec. 1

"Move to direct the Interim Town Manager to present at the Dec. 8, 2026, budget hearing a 2027 budget alternative that makes the changes listed in the Citizen Plan's requests for the 2027 budget, and to report at that hearing what the Water Fund's and the Sewer Fund's cash is made of and which costs now charged to the General Fund belong to other funds."

1. No change to the 2026 budget

No supplemental appropriation, no amendment, and no transfer or loan from another fund in 2026. Staff forecast 2026 General Fund spending at $5,493,955, which is $180,221 less than the $5,674,176 the Board approved.

2. Changes to the General Fund's 2027 budget

#	Request	Effect in 2027	Notes
1	Sheriff contract: budget a sergeant and two deputies, billed as two positions, from June 1, 2027	−$296,000 of spending	The 2026 contract is $931,629. Five months at that rate and seven months at about $424,400 a year is about $636,000. Depends on notice by Dec. 1 and on the County's agreement to bill for two positions.
2	Co-responder: budget the Town's half	+$65,000 of spending	The full cost is $130,461. The County paid half of 2026. The 2027 budget for it has to be approved by Dec. 31, 2026, for the service to continue.
3	General Fund cuts, shown by department	−$151,000 of spending	From a review of every department and line and an organizational review. About $35,000 of it pays for the 3% raise. Lines to start with: Board goodwill ($10,000); travel, training, lodging, and meals (up to $29,000); memberships and dues (up to $11,600); and administrative professional services ($11,600).
4	Visitor Center: move it to the Downtown Development Authority under a written agreement	−$27,000, net	$44,921 of spending and $17,950 of revenue in the 2026 budget. Needs the Authority board's approval at a public meeting.
5	Keep the 3% raise for employees	+$35,000 of spending	Staff's tables: the balance at the end of 2027 is −$2,563,003 with the raise and −$2,528,102 without it. For the other funds, use staff's figures with the raise.
6	Acquisition settlements: a separate line, payable only on a settlement the Board approves at a public meeting	$406,000 of savings (planning figure)	The $1,623,777 owed is already recorded as 2026 spending. A settlement for less improves the balance. The $406,000 is a planning figure, not an offer. Staff and the auditor should say how

#	Request	Effect in 2027	Notes
			the line is shown.
7	Land sales: a revenue line that can be spent only after a sale is completed	TBD	Only for land that is free to sell. Each completed sale reduces the Water loan.
8	Costs that belong to other funds: charge them to those funds	TBD	Staff list each cost, the fund, the reason, and the amount.
	Savings in 2027	**$880,000**	$406,000 + $296,000 + $151,000 + $27,000. The co-responder's $65,000 and the raise's $35,000 are counted in the amount needed, below.

3. Loans in place of the transfers

The Town's proposal transfers about $2.6 million from the Community Center, Water, and Sewer funds. We ask that the 2027 budget instead show three loans to the General Fund. Each is approved by resolution, with an interest rate, a written repayment schedule, and a yearly public report. Each is budgeted "up to" an amount and made at the end of 2027 only for the amount still needed. We ask that the Board adopt the three loan resolutions with the budget on Dec. 15, so the loans in the budget are a commitment.

Order	Lending fund	Up to	Conditions
First	Community Center Fund	$825,000	Only money not restricted by the voters, in an amount the auditor confirms. The center's 2027 operations are fully funded, the fund keeps a three-month reserve, life-safety work goes ahead, and other capital work is deferred to a stated year.
Second	Sewer Fund	$400,000	No more than the fund can lend while keeping its operating reserve and its required debt coverage in every year of its utility plan. Made only from user fees. The Town Attorney first reports whether the loan agreements or the 2018 debt vote limit it.
Last	Water Fund	$523,000	Lent, not transferred, because most of its cash is sales tax voters dedicated to water debt. The Town Attorney first reports whether the loan agreements or the 1998 and 2012 votes limit it.
	Total	**$1,748,000**	

If a loan can't be counted toward the budget. We ask that staff put that question to the Town's auditor in writing before Dec. 8, along with whether a loan the Board has approved but not yet made can be budgeted. If the answer is no, the Community Center and Sewer amounts could be shown as transfers with a written schedule for returning them. No Water money would be transferred, and the Board would need to cover $523,000 from other sources before adopting the budget.

4. How it adds up

Item	Amount
Amount needed for the General Fund's balance to reach $0 at the end of 2027 (staff's tables)	$2,528,000
Plus the Town's half of the co-responder	$65,000
Plus the 3% raise for employees	$35,000
Total needed	**$2,628,000**
Savings in 2027 (section 2)	**$880,000**
Loans (section 3)	$1,748,000
General Fund balance, end of 2027	**$0**

5. Changes to the other funds' 2027 budgets

- **Community Center Fund.** Show the line items behind its $622,851 of spending. Fund operations in full. Defer capital work other than life-safety work to a stated year. Show the loan to the General Fund. Keep the fund separate, and report its sales tax and its other revenue separately.
- **Sewer Fund and Water Fund.** Show each loan to the General Fund as an amount owed to the fund. Show no transfer to the General Fund. Report how much of each fund's cash comes from user fees, dedicated sales tax, and tap fees.
- **Sewer Fund table.** Correct the 2027 ending balance. $1,258,630 + $1,108,301 − $1,032,451 = $1,334,480, and the table shows $1,191,381.
- **General Fund table.** Explain the $88,423 by which the change in the available balance differs from revenue minus spending.

6. What we ask staff to report by Dec. 8

- What the Water Fund's and the Sewer Fund's cash is made of.
- Whether the cash in the draft utility plans is counted before or after what each fund owes the General Fund.
- The costs now charged to the General Fund that belong to other funds.
- The auditor's answer on whether a loan to the General Fund can be counted toward the 2027 budget.
- What the administrative professional services line (10-12-5133) is paying for, and when that work ends.