**City Council Simulation**

You are a member of the City Council in a city of 100,000 people. Over the past ten years the city has had a population growth of about 20 percent. In order to provide the needed additional services, it has been necessary to increase the property tax rate for the past two years. Citizens are becoming angry about continuing increases.

The funds for the most urgent items in the budget for the forthcoming year have already been appropriated. There are approximately $1.5 million left to allocate and twelve important programs that various citizen groups have urged the council to approve.

**Proposal 1.** One area of the city does not have adequate fire protection. A home in that area burned down in the past year, and a small child was badly hurt. Citizens in the area have written, phoned, and appeared at the budget hearings to request better fire protection. Cost for additional fire personnel: $200,000.

**Proposal 2.** Problems with teenagers have been increasing. Vandalism is on the rise, parents are concerned about the mounting use of drugs, and the police are dealing with more runaways. The City Council would like to start a new juvenile division in the Police Department to help keep youngsters out of trouble. Cost for a social worker, two police officers, and a secretary: $100,000.

**Proposal 3.** The city has inadequate recreational facilities, and much of what is available is in very bad condition. One group of citizens feels that more should be spent on recreation, especially for teenagers. More opportunity for recreational activities, they say, will pay off in a reduction in the number of teenagers getting into trouble. Cost for repairing the tennis, basketball, and softball area, and additional personnel: $250,000.

**Proposal 4.** In addition to the need for more recreational facilities there is the need for a neighborhood center in a particular area of the city. A wealthy citizen is willing to give the city a large mansion, which would provide a place for meetings, programs, and recreational opportunities for everyone from preschoolers to senior citizens—if the city can staff it. Cost of staffing and maintaining the neighborhood center: $350,000.

**Proposal 5.** The city landfill site is reaching capacity. The city must find another area for trash disposal within the next year. Federal and state guidelines no longer allow municipalities to use low or marshy areas for landfill. Cost of using an out-of-town landfill site: $200,000.

**Proposal 6.** One section of the city has developed very rapidly, and sewer lines are at capacity. Citizens are complaining about the unpleasant odors, and many think that a satellite treatment plant is needed. Federal funds will pay for building the plant but the community will have to pay for its operation. Cost of one year’s operation of a treatment plant: $300,000.

**Proposal 7.** Three streets in the city are unpaved and many contain large potholes. When it rains, the unpaved streets are muddy and all but impassible. In dry weather the dust is thick, and some citizens feel the dust to be a definite health hazard. Several citizens have broken automobile axles when hitting potholes. Cost of upgrading those streets: $500,000.

**Proposal 8.** In one part of town the houses are rundown but could be rehabilitated. Wiring, plumbing, general carpentry work, roofing, etc., would make the houses more livable and improve the neighborhood’s appearance. Some citizens have recommended that local money be given to poor citizens so that they could rehabilitate their homes. Cost to fix up the most rundown houses: $300,000.

**Proposal 9.** City employees are feeling the pinch of the rising cost of living. They are demanding a 10-percent raise. Estimated cost of employee pay raise for the first year: $200,000.

**Proposal 10.** A lovely creek runs through the center of the city. Over the years it has been silting up, and as a result one residential section has a flooding problem. Homeowners there are demanding that the city dredge the creek to prevent flooding. Cost of dredging and fixing the banks: $150,000.

**Proposal 11.** Citizens want educational standards to be upgraded. School officials say they can improve education in basic skills and career placement if they employ a specialist at each grade level. Cost of new personnel: $300,000.

**Proposal 12.** The city has a high rate of teenage unemployment. Citizens have said there is a need to develop activities and meaningful work experiences for this age group. Much interest and support for a summer employment program exists. Cost for the summer employment program: $150,000.

ESTIMATED TOTAL COST OF ALL PROGRAMS….$3,000,000.

You have been a good Council member—one who tries to study the issues and is concerned about the welfare of all the members of your community. *You would also like to be re-elected.* Which combination of programs totaling approximately $1,500,000 do you think is the best alternative for the community?