BRIDGING THE GAP

Balanced Funding for Genesee County Senior Centers

August 13, 2025

As our 2024-2025 fiscal year comes to a close, senior center directors were once again notified there will be no millage funding increase for the 16 centers across the county for the 2025–2026 fiscal year. Unfortunately, this has become a trend over the years, even though there has been a measurable increase in tax revenues.

In terms of millage funding, approximately 90% of millage tax revenues are split between the 16 senior centers and up to 23 senior service providers. While we absolutely recognize the value of the services these providers offer to our seniors, there remains a significant funding disparity between the centers and the providers that cannot be ignored.

Genesee County Senior Centers Include:

- Brennan Senior Center
- Burton Senior Center
- Carman-Ainsworth Senior Center
- Clio Senior Center
- Davison Area Senior Center
- Eastside Senior Center
- Flushing Area Senior Center
- Forest Township Senior Center
- Grand Blanc Senior Center
- Hasselbring Senior Center
- Krapohl Senior Center
- Loose Senior Center
- Montrose Senior Center
- Mundy Township Senior Center
- Swartz Creek Area Senior Center
- Thetford Senior Center

Genesee County Senior Provider Activities Include:

- Adult Day Care
- Audits for Probate Court EAP Program
- Case Management (Assessment and Reassessment Services)
- Elder Abuse Prevention
- Guardianships/Conservatorships/ Payee
- Home Delivered Meals
- In-Home Personal Care & Homemaking Services
- Intake & Telephone Screening Services
- Legal Services
- Prosecuting Services for EAP Program
- Respite Services
- Lawn Care & Snow Removal
- The Disability Network
- Senior Project Fresh
- Interpreter Services
- Visual and Hearing Impaired Services
- Medical Transportation with Liason
- Shred Expert
- Smith & K

Overview - Genesee County Senior Centers

- Each of our 16 senior centers serves as a vital hub where adults aged 50 and older come together to access services and participate in activities that enhance their lives, respond to their diverse needs and interests, enhance their dignity, support their independence, and encourage active community engagement.

- Collectively, the centers offer hundreds of events, classes, and programs each month—ranging from wellness activities and educational workshops to social gatherings and support services. The vast majority of these offerings are available at little or no out-of-pocket cost, ensuring accessibility for all who wish to participate.

Senior Center Requirements Include:

- Level 2 Centers - A minimum of 225 unduplicated members within the first 6 months of the fiscal year.
- Level 3 Centers - A minimum of 900 unduplicated members within the first 6 months of the fiscal year.
- Submission - Monthly Activity Logs - (8 Different Categories)
- Submission - Monthly Programming Logs - Three Categories
  - Education Programs - Level 2 (6) Level 3(10)
  - Health Programs - Level 2 (10) Level 3 (14)
  - Social Services - Level 2 (6) Level 3 (10)
- Offer daily transportation within center boundaries.
- Remain open 5 days per week for a minimum of 40 hours.
- Distribution of monthly newsletters.
- No Required Dues.

Senior Center Millage Funding - Over the Years

- The 16 senior centers received no millage increases from 2008 to 2021.
  - Level 2 Centers - ($113,826)   Level 3 Centers - ($170,255)
- In 2021–2022, centers received a 15% increase.
  - Level 2 Centers - ($131,355)   Level 3 Centers - ($196,505)
- In 2023-2024, centers received a 5% increase.
  - Level 2 Centers - ($137,923)   Level 3 Centers - ($206,330)
- While the centers are grateful for the 21% increase over the past 17 years, it does not match the 49.8% inflation rate during that time.
- Needless to say, current millage funding falls far short of covering the full operational and programming costs of our centers. As a result, each center must rely heavily on the support of local municipalities, grants, private donations, and the dedication of hundreds of volunteers in order to meet the minimum programming and participation requirements set by the county.

Millage Funding Snapshot

2023–2024 Fiscal Year - (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024)

- Total Senior Millage Allocation: $8,975,353
- Service Providers:
  - Funding: $5,158,186 (58% of millage allocation)
  - Unduplicated Senior Served: (Est.) 7,789
  - Average Funding - Unduplicated Senior: $662
  - Duplicated Seniors Served: 10,138
  - Average Funding - Duplicated Senior: $509
  - Total Events: Not Available

Millage Funding Snapshot, (cont.)

2023–2024 Fiscal Year - (October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024)

- Total Senior Millage Allocated: $8,975,353
- Senior Centers:
  - Funding: $2,836,589 (32% of millage funding)
  - Unduplicated Seniors Served: 14,258
  - Average Funding - Unduplicated Senior: $199
  - Duplicated Seniors Served: 18,605
  - Average Funding - Duplicated Senior: $153
  - Total Events: 330,598

Millage Funding Snapshot, (cont.)

2024–2025 Fiscal Year - (October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025)

- Total Senior Millage Allocated: $9,539,059

- Service Providers:
  - Funding: $6,047,658 (63% of millage allocation)

- Senior Centers:
  - Funding: $2,890,838 (30% of millage allocation)

Other Findings

- Based on 2023-24 data:
  - There is a significant imbalance in funding between senior centers and service providers. On average, service providers received 3.3 times more millage funding per senior served than the senior centers.
  - In some cases, this disparity is especially stark. Three service providers collectively received $563,240 in millage funding while serving only 106 seniors combined during the fiscal year.
  - Another service provider was awarded $500,000 to serve 274 seniors, and despite not utilizing $115,000 of that allocation, was awarded the same allocation of $500,000 for the 2024–2025 fiscal year.
  - There are also clear geographic disparities in how provider services are distributed. Just 5 of the county's 33 municipalities account for 52% of the 7,789 seniors receiving services from millage-funded service providers, leaving seniors in other areas comparatively underserved.

Other Findings, (cont.)

- Service providers received $889,472 in increases for this fiscal year. Senior centers received no increases.
- Additionally, there appears to be a lack of transparency and consistency in how performance is evaluated across service providers. Unlike senior centers, which are required to meet clearly defined programming and participation benchmarks set by the county, service providers do not appear to be held to similarly measurable performance metrics. This discrepancy raises important questions about accountability, equitable funding, and the overall effectiveness of service delivery.

Looking Ahead - Proposed Funding Framework

- Consider more balanced funding between senior centers and service providers that follows a cost vs. value method. This can include:
  - Sustainability of each program based on:
    - Number or seniors served within each program.
    - Cost per senior served within each program.
- Consider what alternative revenue streams service providers and seniors centers are attempting to access.
- Consider a sliding payment scale for seniors receiving provider services based on income. At this point, I don’t believe there are any required costs for any provider services.
- Better scrutinize certain service provider budgets so as to limit mid-year funding increase requests.
- Set similar performance benchmarks for service providers to better determine effectiveness and millage allocation. In particular, set a required minimum for the amount of seniors served.

QUESTIONS?

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