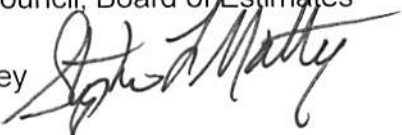


Legal Memorandum

To: Mayor Shaundel; Common Council; Board of Estimates

From: Stephen F. Matty, City Attorney 

CC: Chadwick Hawkins, Finance Director; Rebecca Franzen, Human Resources Director; Nikki Elsen, City Clerk

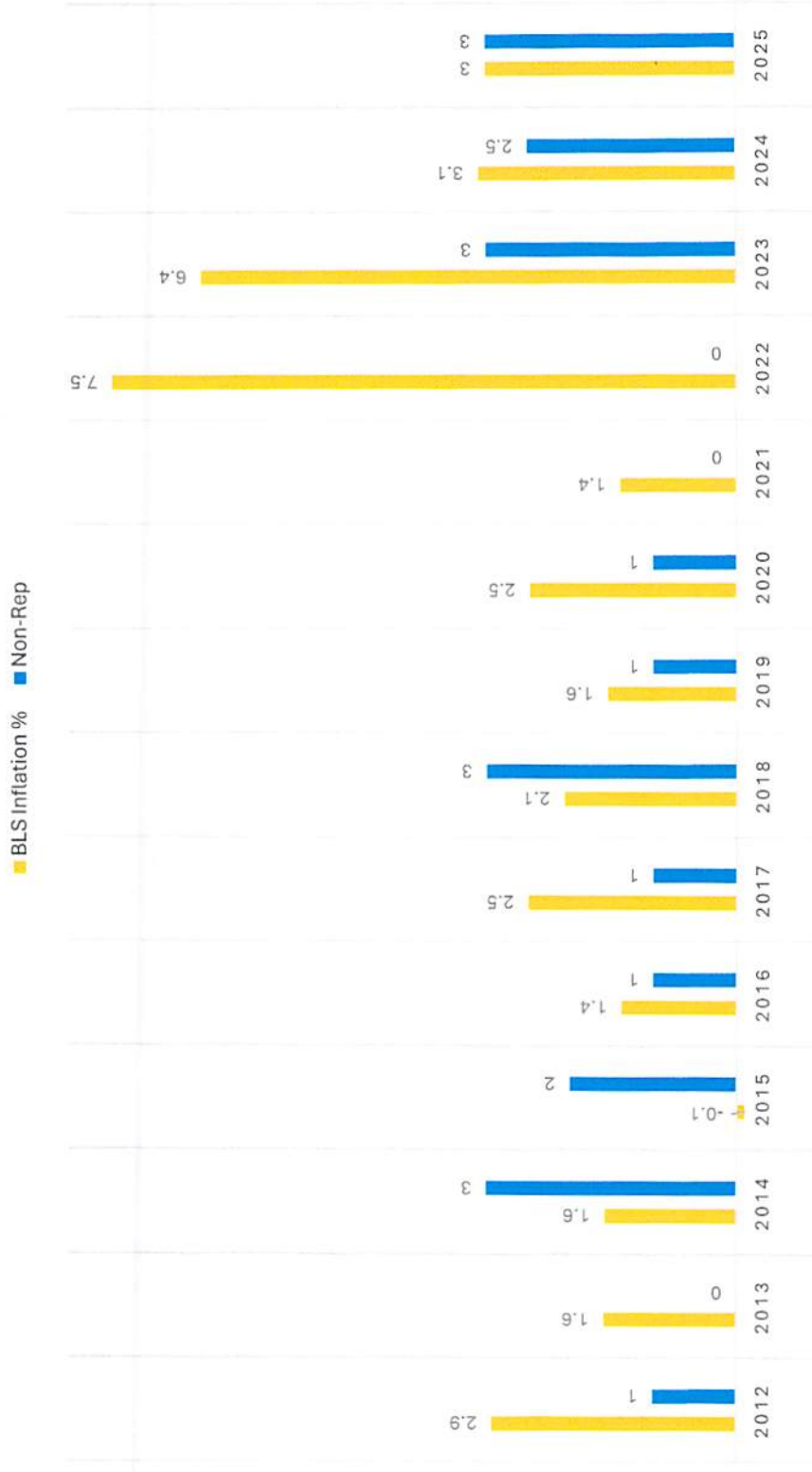
Date: August 27, 2025

Re: City of La Crosse Historical Cost of Living Adjustments for Non-Represented Employees

Please find attached to this memorandum, for your consideration when formulating the 2026 operating budget, the historical cost of living adjustments (COLAs) the City of La Crosse has implemented for non-represented employees since 2012 as compared to inflation over the same period of time.

* * *

WAGE INCREASES VS. INFLATION %



This chart compares inflation percentages each year to the COLA for Non-Represented employees in that same year. This does not consider the compounding effect of these changes over time.

*BLS: Bureau of Labor Statistics Data. Figures calculated using BLS Inflation Calculator.

US Annual Inflation				
Year	BLS* Inflation %	Rep (Avg)	Non-Rep	
2012	2.9	1.3	1	
2013	1.6	2.3	0	
2014	1.6	3	3	
2015	-0.1	2	2	
2016	1.4	2	1	
2017	2.5	1.5	1	
2018	2.1	3.7	3	
2019	1.6	3.3	1	
2020	2.5	2.5	1	
2021	1.4	2.5	0	
2022	7.5	2.2	0	
2023	6.4	3	3	
2024	3.1	3.3	2.5	
2025	3	3.3	3	

This chart shows, for illustrative purposes only, how both represented and non-represented employee wage increases have compared to inflation from 2012-present. The Rep (Avg) number is calculated using the COLAs of each group of represented employees divided by the number of groups. This does not account for the number of employees per group and is therefore not a weighted average.

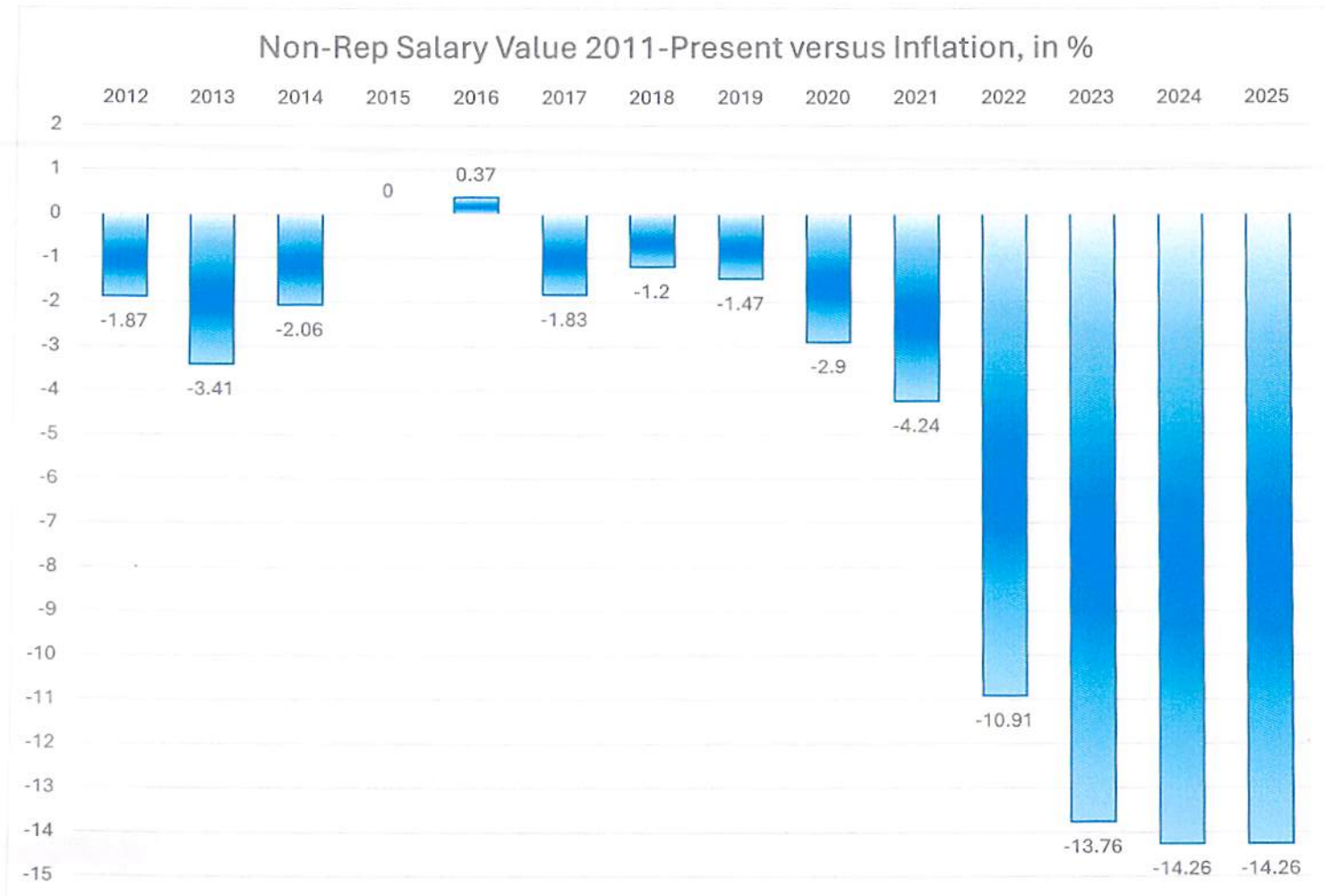
*BLS: Bureau of Labor Statistics Data. Figures calculated using BLS Inflation Calculator.

Inflation vs. Non-Rep Salaries, 2012-2025



This, however, evaluates the growth in non-represented employee salaries versus the growth of inflation. The underlying assumption used in this illustration is that in 2011 everything was equal (used for illustrative purposes).

*BLS: Bureau of Labor Statistics Data. Figures calculated using BLS Inflation Calculator.



This measures the difference in *value* between a non-represented employee's salary in 2011 and each subsequent year against inflation. So, due to the difference between the COLA and inflation in 2013 for example, the value of an employee's salary is 96.59% what it was in 2011 (-3.41% change from 2011).