

INTRODUCTION TO THE BUDGET PROCESS

Budget Preparation/Development

1. During January, departments begin planning for the upcoming fiscal year and begin to prepare budgets.
2. During February, enable departmental access to the Budget Module to initiate the capture of data for the ensuing fiscal period. The Budget Module provides the following tools that facilitate the preparation and completion of the budget process:
 - a. Defined object codes required by the State Uniform Accounting System.
 - b. An alphabetical listing of object codes for expenditure accounts.
 - c. A current personnel roster.
 - d. Computer-generated budget worksheets showing actual expenditures for the prior and current years, the current working budget, and a status quo personnel cost projection.
2. Each individual department prepares a proposed budget comprised of the following:

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mission b. Goals c. Objectives d. Major Functions and Activities e. Budget Highlights 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> f. Current-year Accomplishments g. Performance Measures h. Organizational Chart i. Revenue and/or Expenditure projections by line item
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3. During February and March, the Finance Department reviews the information for accuracy and proper form, and prepares a budget package for the City Manager.
4. During the months of April and May, the City Manager, the Department Directors, and Finance personnel review the proposed budget and make any necessary revisions.
5. No later than sixty days prior to the close of the current fiscal year, the City Manager submits to the City Commission a budget estimate of the expenditures and revenues of all City departments and divisions for the fiscal year commencing the following October 1st.
6. In August, the Commission holds public workshops and special meetings to review the proposed budget.

Budget Adoption

7. Two public hearings are conducted at the City Commission Chambers to inform the taxpayers and receive their comments. The commission-approved adopted budget is integrated into the accounting software system effective October 1st. It establishes the legal authority to incur expenditures up to the appropriated amount for each line item.
8. Section 30.30(F) of the Code of Ordinances requires a majority affirmative vote of the quorum to adopt the budget that, prior to October 1st, is legally enacted through passage of an Ordinance. Section 5.06 of the City Charter provides that no officer, department, or agency may legally expend or contract to expend amounts in excess of the amounts appropriated for any department, within an individual fund. Therefore, the legal level of control is at the department level.

Budget Amendment

9. The adopted budget may be amended as follows:
 - a. The City Manager and Finance Director approve line item adjustments within a department or a division.
 - b. The City Commission approves budget adjustments that transfer monies from fund to fund or interdepartmentally.
 - c. The City Commission may approve supplemental appropriations of revenues and expenditures. If this is done, adoption of an amended budget Ordinance is required.

Budget Monitoring/Control

The budget is monitored monthly to track variances between actual and budgeted amounts. Significant variances are investigated and compared to prior year. Revisions are made to cover unacceptable variances. In addition, budget staff reviews personnel requisitions and monitors Commission agendas for any financial impact.

Accounting for encumbrances provides a means of monitoring and controlling the budgetary process. Approved capital projects and equipment purchases outstanding at the close of the current fiscal year are submitted to the Commission as a subsequent year budgetary revision. Encumbrances do not constitute expenditures or liabilities in the current year and are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

The hierarchy for reporting and budgetary control is as follows:

- a. Fund
- b. Function
- c. Division
- d. Project
- e. Object Code

Capital Budget Process

The City Manager and the various Department Directors submit capital plans, which are incorporated as part of the Five-Year Capital Improvement Program (see 5-Year Capital Improvement section). The source of funding is identified five years before the actual expenditures are made. The Department Directors are also responsible for preparing the annual budget to operate new facilities. Capital expenditures are an integral part of the annual budget and follow the same approval process as the operating budget.