

FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY POLICIES

The budget document for the City is an Annual Operating Plan serving as the guidebook for the fiscal year. It sets policy, identifies new initiatives and allocates the resources necessary to maintain City services and meet the objectives of the fiscal year.

A summary of the new initiatives and how the budget allocates this year's resources is described in the Executive Summary section of the budget document. Financial and budgetary policies are outlined below.

BUDGET PREPARATION AND ADMINISTRATION

- 1) Annual budgets will be developed for the general and all required special funds by the Budget Division for review by the Board of Estimate and Apportionment
- 2) A five-year expense and revenue projection will be developed for the general fund and the capital improvements fund to match revenue capacity with expenditure needs as a planning and decision making tool.
- 3) Appropriations will be based on reasonable estimates of revenue
- 4) Revenue and expenditures will be accounted for on a cash basis for budgetary purposes
- 5) The City will prepare a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report which it believes will meet all of the guidelines necessary to receive the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in

Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association

- 6) Annual budget appropriations will be made in a timely manner. In accordance with the City Charter, the Board of Estimate and Apportionment shall submit a balanced budget proposal to the Board of Aldermen at least sixty days before the beginning of the new fiscal year.

GENERAL FUND BUDGET

- 1) Revenue estimates will be developed for the ensuing fiscal year by the Budget Division, with independent review and commentary provided by the staff of the City Comptroller.
- 2) A revenue manual will be developed and updated annually with information concerning the assumptions underlying the projections.

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GENERAL FUND BUDGET (cont.)

- 3) The City will maintain the unreserved portion of the General Fund Balance at a minimum of 5% of the total General Fund Budget.
 - 4) The general fund budget for on-going operations will be developed to match recurring revenues.
 - 5) Revenues will be monitored monthly with official review and updates provided to the Board of Estimate and Apportionment on a quarterly basis.
 - 6) Apparent shortfalls will be analyzed for their impact on future years.
 - 7) Expenditures will be monitored monthly and apparent overspending will be handled on a departmental basis.
 - 8) Known cyclical costs such as the 27th pay which occurs every eleven years will be funded at an appropriate amount in each budget.
 - 9) Appropriations will be made annually to cover the expenses of the self-insurance fund.
 - 10) Each request for a new program must be accompanied by an analysis that shows the long-term impact of the program on existing revenue sources and on existing programs.
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- 4) All long term debt shall be structured with prepayment options, except when alternative structures are more advantageous to the City. The City will consider prepayments when available resources are identified.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

- 1) The City shall prepare a five-year Capital Improvements Plan and a Capital Budget annually in accordance with its Policy and Procedures Manual.
- 2) The five-year Capital Improvement Plan shall identify sources of funding.
- 3) For major capital projects, an analysis should accompany the proposed projects with information on expected annual operating costs, projected revenue benefits (if any) and any other indirect costs or benefits to the City.
- 4) The City shall fund capital projects with resources made available to the Capital Fund including but not limited to the proceeds from the 1/2 cent sales tax.

CITY DEBT

- 1) Bonding should be used to finance or refinance only those long-term assets or projects that benefit a significant portion of citizens in St. Louis and for which repayment sources have been identified.
- 2) The scheduled maturity of bond issues shall not exceed the expected useful life of the capital project or asset financed.
- 3) For property tax supported bonds, the Comptroller will strive for a debt service reserve in an amount not less than the succeeding year' principal and interest requirements. Reserve requirements for other bond issues will be set forth in respective bond covenants.

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- 5) Bond refunding shall be considered if one or more of following conditions exist:
 - 1) present value savings of 3% of par value of the refunding bonds
 - 2) bond covenants restrictive or outdated
 - 3) restructuring debt is deemed desirable
- 6) Bond insurance shall be considered when present value of debt service savings is equal to or greater than the insurance premium.
- 7) The City will take all steps necessary to maintain its credit rating on outstanding debt and comply with bond covenants.
- 8) The Comptroller will select underwriters and bond counsel from a pre-qualified list to be revised at least every two years.