

Budget Balancing Strategy Guidelines

1. Develop a budget that balances the City's delivery of essential services to the community, including building strong neighborhoods and supporting economic growth, with the resources available.
2. Every effort should be made to resolve the projected budget deficit with ongoing revenue and expenditure solutions to ensure no negative impact on future budgets to maintain the City's high standards of fiscal integrity and financial management. One-time funding sources, however, may be used to transition services to reduce the impact on the community or to provide time for service delivery optimization.
3. Use fee increases, where possible, to assure that operating costs are fully covered by fee revenue and explore opportunities to establish new fees for services where appropriate.
4. Explore expanding and/or re-directing existing revenue sources and/or adding new revenue sources (e.g., ordinance revisions, special assessments, bond measures) for addressing both the General Fund structural deficit and unfunded needs.
5. Focus on protecting vital core City services for both the short- and long-term. Analyze all existing services and target service reductions or eliminations in those areas that are least essential. To the extent possible, use the Analytical Framework for Service Reductions/Eliminations to assist in service delivery optimization opportunities or identify services that should be eliminated.
6. Defer any new program commitments and initiatives or program expansions, unless those program commitments stimulate the local economy, job creation, new revenues, have a significant return on investment, and/or are funded through redeployment of existing resources.
7. Explore alternative service delivery mechanisms (e.g., appropriate community partnerships, public-private partnerships, working with other jurisdictions, outsourcing/in sourcing services delivered by City staff, etc.) to ensure no service overlap, reduce and/or share costs, and use our resources more efficiently and effectively.
8. Focus on business process redesign to improve employee productivity and business practices, including streamlining, innovating, and simplifying City operations (e.g., using technology) through employee engagement and empowerment so that services can be delivered at a higher quality level, with better flexibility, and lower cost.
9. Use the General Plan as a primary long-term fiscal planning tool and link ability to provide City services to development policy decisions.
10. Continue to make community and employee engagement a priority for budget balancing idea development.
11. Assuming positions are in the right program, make every effort to eliminate vacant positions, rather than filled positions, to minimize the number of employee layoffs. As programs are reduced or eliminated, ensure that management and administration are reevaluated accordingly.
12. Explore personal services cost savings, subject to the meet and confer process where applicable, by 1) considering further incorporation of total compensation bargaining concepts into the meet and confer process and focusing on all personal services cost changes (e.g., salary step increases, benefit cost increases), 2) civilianizing more sworn positions, 3) exploring alternate benefit structures for new employees, and 4) changing employee/retiree health care benefit plan designs.