

City Council Announcements

September 4, 2007

A. Information Needed by Council Staff

1. Attached is a draft of the Budget Book message from the Chair of the Council. Does the Council have any changes or suggestions, or is the Council ok with using this draft?

Dear Salt Lake City Residents,

The most important and challenging responsibility the City Council has each year is to finalize and adopt an annual budget. As with other years, the budget process for fiscal year 2007-08 has been a challenging one of balancing important City service needs with anticipated revenues. The process takes a number of months of study, evaluation, planning, and public participation. We believe that the result of this process is a budget which will continue to efficiently provide quality services to Salt Lake City residents without raising property taxes.

The general fund budget provides for traditional government services such as police, fire, streets, parks, and planning and zoning. The adopted budget for the general fund is \$201,911,839, up \$14.5 million from the previous year's budget. This increase is not due to an increase in property taxes, but instead is primarily a result of a strong economy resulting in increased revenue from sales taxes and building permits. In addition, this year's budget will recognize approximately \$3.8 million in one-time revenue from building permit fees associated with the re-development of the Crossroads and ZCMI Center Malls.

The final budget includes an increase in the daily Airport Parking Tax from \$0.50 to \$1.00, as well an expansion of this fee to include other City-funded parking facilities such as the Matheson Courthouse, the Salt Palace, the Gallivan Center, and the Main Library. In addition to this fee however, the Council adopted a legislative intent to encourage the Library Board to increase the free parking period from 30 minutes to 1 hour at the Main Library. There is no increase included for any business license tax.

The final budget includes the addition of 45.95 new positions, all intended to enhance the City's ability to provide quality service to its citizens. There are 10 new police officers, 6 new fire fighters and 2 new fire dispatchers. There is also an additional graffiti technician to assist with the increased number of graffiti service calls that the City receives.

The budget also reflects the City's continued commitment to the development and protection of open space. One of the added positions will work directly with the Open Space Advisory Board and help to secure new land to preserve as open space with the funds that voters approved in 2003. Also in the budget is funding for a management plan for Parley's Historic Nature Park, and funds for additional animal enforcement in open space areas.

The adopted budget includes funding for computer software that will tie multiple City services such as planning, engineering, permits, inspections, and zoning enforcement into one system. This software will also enable citizens to access key information, submit applications, and pay fees via the internet. Other City departments will also be able to use this software to more efficiently track projects between departments and assist with residents' inquiries.

The budget includes incorporation of a new refuse program, which will be made available in March of 2008 that will give residents the option of adding a green waste container to their refuse service at a cost of \$3.50 per month. As a potential cost-offsetting option, residents will also be given the choice to switch to a smaller sized regular garbage container, at a lower price than the current container charge. A 48 gallon container will be available for \$8.25, and a 60 gallon container will be available for \$9.25. The current 90 gallon containers will still be available for a slightly increased fee of \$11.25 per month.

The Council's budget also includes approximately \$36.9 million for Capital Improvement Projects. The Capital Improvement Program provides for major repair or renovation of streets, parks, lighting and traffic signals, public buildings, and City

property. The City uses a 10-year inventory of capital needs to plan for future projects and keep track of regularly scheduled maintenance. Projects are reviewed and ranked annually by a Citizen board. Despite a continued yearly increase in funding, the City Council remains concerned about the continued backlog of needed capital projects due to lack of funding.

In addition to the general fund budget, the Council also scrutinized and adopted budgets for the enterprise funds including the Airport, Public Utilities, capital projects fund, special revenue funds, debt service funds, and internal service funds.

We express appreciation for the input we received from City residents during this budget process, and we encourage you to remain active in City government. Working together, we can make decisions which will benefit our community for years to come.

For additional information on the City's budget or any other issue, please call the Council Office at 535-7600, send us an email at council.comments@slcgov.com or visit us on the City's Website at <http://www.slcgov.com>.

Sincerely,
Van Blair Turner
Council Chair