

Community Budget Outreach



City Budget Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



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What is a budget?

A budget is simply an annual financial plan that lists the anticipated revenues and how the City anticipates on spending them. A Trial Budget and the preliminary Capital Improvement Program (CIP) were submitted to the City Council in March and Community budget hearings are scheduled for the month of April. A preliminary budget is presented to the City Council during a Work Study Session typically held in May. In June, the budget appears before the public at the Council Meetings and is formally adopted.

How is the budget developed?

In accordance with established City Council goals, city departments begin their budgeting process with the previous year's spending plan. City departments adjust their plan anticipating changes in overall costs and departmental needs. After a

review by Executive Management, Finance compiles and presents the comprehensive city budget to City Council and the public.

What is the City's Fiscal Year?

Santa Ana's finances are accounted for on a fiscal year rather than a calendar year basis. That means instead of starting business each year from January 1, through December 31, we begin July 1, through June 30. One can also interchange budget year with fiscal year.



What are funds?

Funds are another way we refer to a certain supply of monies. Santa Ana receives funding from different revenue sources. Many of these funds or revenues come with restrictions on how we spend them, and on what we spend them on. Some fund types are the General Fund, Enterprise Fund,

Internal Service Fund and Special Revenue Fund.



What is the general fund?

The general fund is the largest fund within the City's total annual budget. The fund provides for general government operations such as police, fire, parks, recreation and community services. Nearly 70% of general fund revenue is largely comprised of taxes such as sales tax, property tax, utility user tax and property tax in lieu of VLF (Vehicle License Fee).

What is an Enterprise Fund?

Fees that are charged by a government entity for its product or service are called enterprise funds. These funds are spent on the operations and maintenance of this

service. Examples of this type of fund are the Water Fund, Sanitation Fund and the Santa Ana Depot.

What are Internal Service Funds?

These are monies that are made up of fees or charges that certain individual city departments charge to other departments for services provided. These funds assist in the coverage of costs to provide the service. Some examples of these funds are Fleet Services, Information Technology and Building Maintenance.

What is the Capital Improvement Program (CIP)?

It is the city's plan for the construction or repair of city infrastructure such as roads, buildings, storm drains and parks. The CIP lists the various funding sources for projects and their anticipated costs. CIPs discuss in detail the current year's plan, as well as a 5-year plan.

How can I get involved in the budget process?

Attend City Council meetings, committee and community meetings where resident's input is being solicited. You can also contact your councilmember, City Manager and

executive department heads by phone, web or mail.

Where can I find a copy of the City Budget?

An electronic copy of the Budget, City's fees schedule, Capital Improvement Program and budget presentations are available on the City's website at <http://www.santa-ana.org/finance/budget/default.asp>.

A printed copy of the budget is also available for viewing at the Reference Desk in the Santa Ana Public Library and in the Civic Center Plaza.

