

GLOSSARY

The *Annual Budget and Program Objectives* contains specialized and technical terminology that is unique to public finance and budgeting. To help the reader of this document understand these terms, this budget glossary has been included.

Account: A six-digit numerical code of which the first character defines the specific classification of dollar values in the financial records, i.e., assets, liabilities, equities, revenues and expenditures/expense. The remaining digits provide a further breakdown of account types into specific character and object groupings.

Accrual Accounting: A basis of accounting in which revenues are recognized in the period in which they are earned and become measurable, and expenses are recognized in the period incurred instead of when cash is actually received or spent. For example, in accrual accounting, revenue that was earned between April 1 and June 30, but for which payment was not received until July 10, is recorded as being received on June 30 rather than July 10.

Appropriation: A legal authorization made by the City Council that permits the City to make expenditures and to incur obligations for specific purposes. An appropriation is usually limited in amount and the time in which it may be expended.

Appropriation Ordinance: The official enactment by the City Council to establish legal authority for City officials to obligate and expend resources.

Assessed Valuation: A value that is established for real or personal property for use as a basis for levying property taxes. (Note: Property values are established by the Tarrant Appraisal District.)

Audit: A comprehensive examination of how an organization's resources were actually utilized, concluding in a written report of the findings. A financial audit is a review of the accounting system and financial information to determine how government funds were spent and whether expenditures were in compliance with the legislative body's appropriations. A performance audit consists of a review of how well the organization met its stated goals.

Authorized Position (A.P.): A position included in the proposed budget document, authorized by the City Council as part of the total authorized strength of a department. Positions are specifically approved by designated classification titles and corresponding salary level, based on an analysis by the Human Resources Department of the tasks to be performed.

Balance Sheet: A financial statement that discloses the assets, liabilities, and equity of a specific governmental fund as of a specific date.

Bond: An interest-bearing certificate of debt; a written contract by an issuer to pay to the lender a fixed principal amount on a stated future date, and a series of interest payments on the principal amount until it is paid.

Budget: A financial plan for a specified period of time (fiscal year) that includes all planned expenditures for various municipal services and the proposed means of financing them.

Budget Adjustment: A legal procedure utilized during the fiscal year by the City staff and City Council to revise a budget appropriation. The City of Fort Worth's City Charter requires City Council approval through the adoption of a supplemental appropriation ordinance (which specifies both the source of revenue and the appropriate expenditure account) for any interdepartmental or interfund adjustments. City staff has the prerogative to adjust expenditures within a departmental budget.

Budget Calendar: The schedule of key dates or milestones, which the City departments follow in the preparation, adoption, and administration of the budget.

Budget Document: The instrument used by the City staff to present a comprehensive financial program to the City Council.

Budget Message: The opening section of the budget that provides the City Council and the public with a general summary of the most important aspects of the budget, changes from the current and previous fiscal years, and the views and recommendations of the City Manager. The Budget Message is also referred to as the City Manager's Message or Budget Transmittal Letter.

Budgetary Control: The control or management of a governmental unit or enterprise in accordance with an approved budget for the purpose of keeping expenditures within the limitations of available appropriations and available revenues.

Budgeted Funds: Funds that are planned for certain uses but have not yet been formally or legally appropriated by the legislative body. The budget document that is submitted for City Council approval is comprised of budgeted funds.

Capital Equipment Budget: The portion of the annual operating budget that appropriates funds for the purchase of capital equipment items. These expenditures are often separated from regular operating items, such as salaries, services, and supplies. The Capital Equipment Budget includes funds for capital equipment purchases, which are usually distinguished from operating items according to their value and projected useful life. Examples include vehicles, minor equipment, furniture, machinery, building improvements, and special tools. The dollar value varies according to the policy established by each jurisdiction. For the City of Fort Worth, this limit is \$5,000.

Capital Improvement Program: A plan for capital expenditures to provide long-lasting physical improvements to be acquired over a fixed period of years.

Capital Improvement Program Budget: A Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget is a separate budget from the operating budget. Items in the CIP are usually construction projects designed to improve the value of government assets. Examples of capital improvement projects include new roads, sewer lines, buildings, recreational facilities, and large scale remodeling. The City Council receives a separate document that details the CIP costs for the upcoming fiscal year.

Cash Accounting: A basis of accounting in which transactions are recorded when cash is either received or expended for goods and services.

Cash Balance: Cash on hand and cash equivalents at any point in time, net of inflows and outflows.

Cash Management: The management of cash necessary to pay for government services while investing temporary cash excesses in order to earn interest revenue. Cash management refers to the activities of forecasting the inflows and outflows of cash, mobilizing cash to improve its availability for investment, establishing and maintaining banking relationships, and investing funds in order to achieve the highest interest and return available for temporary cash balances.

Center: A numerical code that details financial responsibility for revenues and expenditures. The center specifically shows the department-division-section for operating funds, department-fund-project for bond funds, and department-project for grants and other capital project funds.

Character: A basis for distinguishing types of expenditures; the five major characters used by the City of Fort Worth are: personal services-01, supplies-02, contractual services-03, capital outlays-04, and debt service-05.

Commitment: The pledge of appropriated funds to purchase an item or service. Funds are committed when a requisition is issued through the Purchasing Division of the City.

Current Taxes: Taxes that are levied and due within one year.

Debt Service: The City's obligation to pay the principal and interest of all bonds and other debt instruments according to a pre-determined payment schedule.

Delinquent Taxes: Taxes that remain unpaid on and after the date due, on which a penalty for nonpayment is attached.

Department: A major administrative division of the City that indicates overall management responsibility for an operation or group of related operations within a functional area.

Depreciation: The process of estimating and recording the lost usefulness or expired useful life from a fixed asset that cannot or will not be restored by repair and will be replaced. The cost of the fixed asset's lost usefulness is the depreciation or the cost to reserve in order to replace the item at the end of its useful life.

Disbursement: Payment for goods and services in cash or by check.

Encumbrance: The commitment of appropriated funds to purchase an item or service. Committed funds become encumbered when a purchasing requisition becomes an actual purchase order.

Enterprise Fund: A governmental accounting fund used to account for operations that are financed and operated in a manner similar to private business enterprises, where the intent of the governing body is to recover the cost of providing goods through user fees. Rate schedules for these services are established to insure that revenues are adequate to meet all necessary expenditures. Enterprise funds within the City of Fort Worth are established for services such as water and sewer, parking facilities, airports, solid waste management, and golf courses.

Estimated Revenue: The amount of projected revenue to be collected during the fiscal year. It may also be defined as the proposed financing sources estimated to finance the proposed projected expenditure.

Expenditure: Decreases in the use of net financial resources other than through interfund transfer.

Expenses: Outflows or other depletion of assets or incurrence of liabilities during a specific period of time which result from the delivery or production of goods, rendering of services, or carrying out of other activities that constitute the entity's ongoing major central operations.

Fiscal Year: The twelve-month period to which the annual operating budget applies and at the end of which a government determines its financial position and the results of its operations. The City of Fort Worth's fiscal year is October 1 through September 30.

Fixed Assets: Assets of long-term character that are intended to continue to be held or used, such as land, buildings, machinery, furniture, and other equipment.

Full Faith and Credit: A pledge of the general taxing power of a government to repay debt obligations (typically used in reference to bonds).

Function: A group of related programs crossing organizational (departmental) boundaries and aimed at accomplishing a broad goal or major service.

Fund: A fiscal and accounting entity with a self-balancing set of accounts that records all financial transactions for specific activities of government functions. Seven major fund types and two account groups are commonly used: general fund, special revenue funds, debt service funds, capital project funds, enterprise funds, trust and agency funds, internal service funds, general fixed asset account group, and general long-term debt account group.

Fund Balance: The difference between a fund's assets and its liabilities. Portions of the fund balance may be reserved for various purposes, such as contingencies or encumbrances.

General Fund: The largest fund within the City that accounts for all financial resources of the government except for those required to be accounted for in another fund. General Fund revenues include property taxes, licenses and permits, local taxes, service charges, and other types of revenue. This fund usually includes most of the basic operating services, such as fire and police protection, finance, public health, parks and community services, libraries, public works and general administration.

General Ledger: A file that contains a listing of the various accounts necessary to reflect the financial position and results of governmental operations.

General Obligation Bonds: Bonds that finance a variety of public projects such as streets, buildings, and improvements. The repayment of these bonds is usually made from the General Fund, and these bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the issuing government.

Grant: A contribution by a government or other organization to support a particular function. Grants may be classified as either categorical or block depending upon the amount of discretion allowed to the grantee.

Interfund Transfers: Amounts transferred from one fund to another.

Intergovernmental Revenue: Revenue received from another governmental entity for a specified purpose. In Fort Worth, these are funds from Tarrant County, the State of Texas, and through recovery of indirect costs from federal and state agencies.

Internal Service Fund: A fund used to account for the financing of goods or services provided by one department to another department on a cost reimbursement basis. Examples of some of these funds are as follows: the Office Services Fund, the Equipment Services Fund, the Temporary Labor Fund, and the Information Systems Fund.

Inventory: A detailed listing of property currently held by the government showing quantities, descriptions and values of the property, units of measure, and unit prices.

Invoice: A bill requesting payment for goods or services by a vendor or other governmental unit.

Levy: To impose taxes, special assessments, or service charges for the support of City activities.

Line-Item Budget: A budget that lists each expenditure category (salary, materials, telephone service, travel, etc.) separately along with the dollar amount budgeted for each specified category.

Long-Term Debt: Any unmatured debt that is not a fund liability and at the same time has a maturity of more than one year.

Modified Accrual Accounting: A basis of accounting in which revenues should be recognized in the accounting period in which they become available and measurable and expenditures are recorded in the accounting period that they are incurred. Since this type of accounting basis is a conservative financial approach, it is recommended as the standard for most governmental funds.

Operating Budget: The portion of the budget that pertains to daily operations that provide basic governmental services. The operating budget contains appropriations for such expenditures as personnel, supplies, utilities, materials, travel, and fuel and the proposed means of financing them.

Operating Fund: A fund restricted to a fiscal budget year.

Performance Budget: A budget that focuses upon activities rather than line items. Workload and unit cost data are collected in order to assess the efficiency of services. Typical data collected might include miles of streets paved per year, cost of paved streets per mile, tons of garbage collected per employee hour, or cost per employee hour of garbage collection.

Performance Measures: Specific quantitative and qualitative measures of work performed as an objective of the department.

Program Budget: A budget that focuses upon the goal and objectives of an agency or jurisdiction rather than upon its organizational budget units or object classes or expenditures.

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Property Tax: Property taxes are levied on both real and personal property according to the property's valuation and the tax rate.

Reconciliation: A detailed analysis of changes in revenue or expenditure balances within a fund.

Requisition: A written request from a department to the purchasing office for specific goods or services. This action precedes the authorization of a purchase order.

Reserve: An account used to indicate that a portion of a fund's balance is legally restricted for a specific purpose and is, therefore, not available for general appropriations.

Retained Earnings: The difference between assets and liabilities for enterprise and internal service funds.

Revenue: Increases in the net current assets of a governmental fund type from other than expenditure refunds and residual equity transfers, and increases in net total assets of a proprietary fund type from other than expense refunds, capital contributions and residual equity transfers. Included are such items as tax payments, fees from specific services, receipts from other governments, fines, forfeitures, grants, shared revenues, and interest income.

Revenue Bonds: Bonds usually sold for constructing a project that will produce revenue for the government. All or part of the revenue is used to pay the principle and interest of the bond.

Risk Management: An organized attempt to protect a government's assets against accidental loss, utilizing the most economical methods.

Source of Revenue: Revenues are classified according to their source or point of origin.

Unencumbered Balance: The amount of an appropriation that is neither expended nor encumbered. It is essentially the amount of money still available for future purchases.

Voucher: A document indicating that a transaction has occurred. It usually specifies the accounts related to the transaction.