

Recommended Changes to Budget Policies

Process for consideration of state reductions

Recommend new language in yellow:

Current 2017 Language

4. If program funding from any non-County sources (e.g. state grants, federal grants, intergovernmental agreements, etc.) is reduced or eliminated, commensurate expense reductions or new revenue increases shall be made or, where necessary, the program will be eliminated. Exceptions may be made where grant funds were used to offset expenses that were previously provided for by local tax dollars, where loss of funding may result in a verifiable increase elsewhere in the County budget, or when a service is considered critical as recommended by the County Administrator and approved by the Board. When a request to fund a program or service grant that has been cut is brought forward, a similar cost reduction or revenue increase must be identified. Approval of such a request will require a supermajority vote in the Finance & Administrative Services Committee.

Similar to the New Program Request process, Finance and Administrative services will provide a template as part of the budget instructions that will be used to document requests to replace State and/or Federal funding. This form will include quantitative data in support of the criticality of services. In keeping with the policy language above, the County Administrator, as part of the budget process, will provide the Board a complete list of requested replacement funds, along with a recommendation on funding

Use of special revenue funds first, New Section- Recommended language

Recommended new 2018 language in yellow:

Revenues coming into special revenue funds, typically in the form of fees, are used to support the programs and services related to those fees. In the event of a request to begin or expand a program or service legally eligible to be funded, in whole or part, by special revenue funds, then the special revenue funds directly tied to that program or service shall be considered as the funding source prior to seeking general fund revenue. As special revenue funds can vary considerably from year to year based on economic and other conditions, consideration will be given to the balance of the special revenue funds, as well as the sustainability if the expense is on-going. In order to preclude the County becoming overly reliant on a particular revenue stream, the County shall maintain the current practice of a diverse mix of property tax and special revenue appropriations.

Language on Accelerated Retirement Option –

Current 2017 Language

Recommend new language in yellow:

- A.** A *status quo* budget, defined as no new positions or programs, shall be submitted by departments. The County Administrator may underfund certain line items, based on historical averages, as necessary to balance the budget. When work load levels have changed, or as appropriate based on financial challenges, the County Administrator may require written justification for status quo funding levels and may require the submittal of multiple budget scenarios including departmental reductions. Given the continued uncertainty of the State budget, the County will seek to eliminate, or hold open, certain positions previously filled with persons that left as part of the ARO program.

Modification to Carryover Language –

Current 2017 Language

Recommend new language in yellow:

The budget may be amended with emergency appropriations throughout the year at regular Board meetings resulting in a modified budget. One such emergency appropriation is a “carryover.” The unexpended portion of projects that were not completed in one fiscal year may be requested to be “carried over” to the next fiscal year. Other accounts may be designated for carryover by the County Board, County Administrator, and/or Director of Finance and Administrative Services. Such accounts may include long term capital needs where money may be accumulated for multiple years until needed for projects as approved by the Board. A preliminary list of carry-overs will be prepared by all Departments, and presented as part of Departmental budget hearings.