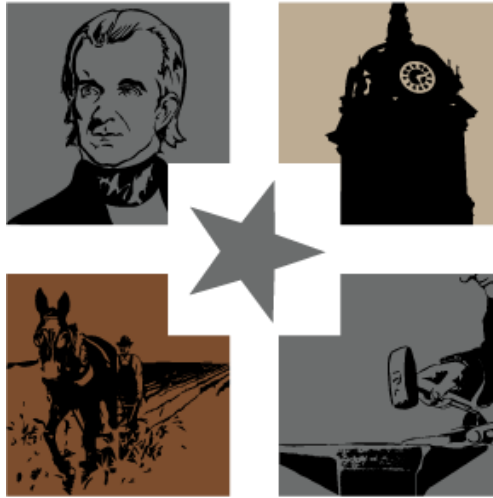


CITY OF COLUMBIA



T E N N E S S E E

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# OPERATING BUDGET POLICIES

City of Columbia, Tennessee

## Policy Summary

The City adopted operating budget policies to provide guidance to City officials and staff to ensure that the City uses best practices in budget development each year in preparing, presenting and adopting the City's fiscal year operating budget.

Adopted on 8/14/2014

## **OPERATING BUDGET POLICIES**

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1. The City's operating budget will consider as its highest priority the maintenance of basic public services and facilities necessary to meet the needs of its residential, institutional and commercial "citizens". The budgeting process will strive to provide for improvement in service levels, balancing the competing needs to meet service demands and to contain operating cost. A basic public service is one that would not be provided without public action, and one that is either:
    - a. Essential to the health and safety of the City's residents; or
    - b. Necessary in order to avoid irreparable damage to City resources; or
    - c. A service which enhances the quality of life and the absence of which the City's residents would find unacceptable.
  2. In January each year, the City Manager will provide guidance to staff for preparation of the proposed budget for the next fiscal year.
  3. Each department of the City will continuously examine its methods for program delivery. Changes which would improve productivity, lower costs, improve services, enhance job knowledge and employee safety and further communication with the public will be implemented when practical.
  4. The City will avoid procedures that balance the operating budget (anticipated revenues equaling or exceed anticipated expenses) by shifting ongoing obligations to future years.
  5. In all actions to balance the budget, the City will attempt to avoid layoffs. If possible, any necessary personnel reductions will be effected through attrition.
  6. The City will continue actions to ensure that all City staff members are sensitive to the special needs of the community and its residents.
  7. The City will continue to fund educational opportunities for employees; to provide for the training and retention of a quality professional staff; and to improve the leadership, motivational and communication skills of all supervisory personnel.
  8. The City will endeavor to provide for a competitive, progressive and rewarding employee benefits and compensation program to attract and retain quality employees.
  9. The City will maintain a financial control system to ensure compliance with the adopted budget and will prepare monthly reports comparing actual revenues and expenditures to budgeted amounts.
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## **OPERATING BUDGET POLICIES**

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10. The City will maintain a minimum unassigned fund balance for the General Fund in excess of 25% of annual operating expenses for this fund. Such fund balance shall serve cash flow needs, protect against unforeseen emergencies and enhance the creditworthiness of the City.

