

# BUDGETARY POLICIES

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## CURRENT POLICIES

### Goal

Government cannot effectively or efficiently operate without the development and application of missions, goals and objectives. In keeping with these requirements, the current year budget was based on adopted Assembly budget policies. The following budget policies were used in developing the Adopted Operating Budget.

### Budget

1. **Reporting.** The annual operating budget document will be published in conformance with currently accepted standards of the Government Finance Officers Association.
2. **Biennial Budget.** A balanced budget will be prepared every other year as a biennial budget. In the first year of each two-year budget, the Assembly will adopt the first year's budget and approves, in concept, the second year's budget. The conceptually approved 2<sup>nd</sup> year budget will be brought back before the Assembly for adoption in the following year. A balanced budget is one in which proposed expenditures do not exceed total estimated revenues and reserves.
3. **Efficiencies.** The Assembly will support the Manager's programs, which have the effect of reducing costs and increasing efficiencies. The growth of operating costs will be controlled by implementing efficiency techniques, measuring performance, adapting service to meet the current public need and achieving cost effectiveness.
4. **Fund Balances.** The General Fund will maintain an emergency reserve equal to 5% of the total annual general governmental operating budget. A minimum of \$2 million per year will be deposited in the Sales Tax Budget Reserve until the total amount equals \$10 million. Each fund of the operating and capital budgets will be accompanied by a rationale for the proposed amount of fund balance. The policy on contributions into the Budget Reserve was modified during FY96's budget review. The revised policy reduced the annual contribution to \$550,000 based on operational needs.
5. **Revenue.** A fair balance between the imposition of property tax mill levy, sales tax, and user fee structures will be achieved to fund services and maintain the quality of life Juneau residents expect. A broad tax base will equitably distribute the tax burden across the greatest populations. Mill levies; sales tax rates, sales tax exemptions, and user fee structures will be reviewed annually. Requests for tax exemptions and fee waivers will be considered annually by the Assembly as part of the budget process.
6. **Midyear Appropriations.** The Assembly will avoid mid-year appropriations unless necessary to avoid a crisis, resolve an emergency, or perform an operational necessity. The Assembly by ordinance may make supplemental appropriations for the year.
7. **Equipment Replacement Reserve.** All major acquisitions of CBJ equipment or vehicles within the fleet replacement reserve shall be budgeted in an equipment replacement reserve fund. These funds shall be used only for the purchase or lease of equipment and not for general operations. A schedule of contributions and equipment replacement shall be included in the annual operating budget.
8. **Process.** The Assembly shall provide the Manager with a set of directives and priorities by which to formulate and balance the annual operating budget. Each department, its director and staff, is responsible for developing the expenditure and revenue (if applicable) budget for their department. For non-department specific revenues, expenditures, and funds (e.g. sales tax, hotel tax), the budgets are developed by the Finance Department. The department requested budgets are submitted to the Finance Department for review. The information is compiled into a Preliminary Budget Book and the manager submits a balanced budget to the Mayor and Assembly. The Mayor and Assembly sit as the Assembly Finance Committee and review the Manager's Proposed Budget during a series of meetings. The final budget is adopted no later than June 15.

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## Education

The Assembly requests the Juneau School District Board of Education to submit an annual budget which is balanced and reflects total estimated revenues and expenditures, both special revenue and general operating funds. On November 7, 2001, the Assembly Finance Committee unanimously requested that the Juneau School District Board of Education provide a detailed programmatic annual budget.

## Levels of Service

The annual operating budget shall provide funding for the best possible balance of allocations to meet varied community needs and provide long-term value at a reasonable cost.

The Assembly opposes unfunded mandates from the state and federal governments. All service requirements imposed upon the CBJ should be accompanied by revenues sufficient for maintenance and operations.

## Economic Development

1. **Jobs.** Consistent with federal, state, and local laws, a firm's location in Juneau shall be given due regard in municipal procurement decisions.

2. **Long-Term Planning.** In each budget, the Manager shall project revenues, expenditures and fund balances for the subsequent five years. The projections shall be presented to the Assembly for its use in creating the guidelines and principles by which the current year operating budget will be balanced.

## Infrastructure

1. **Capital Projects.** The CBJ will coordinate development of the Capital Improvement Program budget with development of the annual operating budget. Future operating costs associated with new capital improvement projects will be projected and included with the annual operating budget forecast.

2. **Maintenance.** The CBJ will maintain every physical asset at a level adequate to protect the city's investment and minimize future maintenance and replacement costs.

## Debt Service

Bonded indebtedness will be maintained at less than 5% of the assessed borough property value.

Bond propositions approved by the voters will result in a mill levy increase equivalent to the amount necessary to retire the debt.

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## Accounting Principles and the Budgetary Basis of Accounting

The fiscal year for CBJ begins July 1 and ends June 30 of every year. Several different fund types are presented in the budget. The General, Special Revenue and Debt Service Funds are budgeted and financially reported by the modified accrual basis of accounting. The Enterprise and Internal Service Funds are budgeted by the modified accrual basis of accounting and financially reported by the accrual basis of accounting.

In the accrual basis of accounting revenues are recognized when earned and expenses when the liability is incurred, regardless of the time of related cash receipts or disbursements. A more complete definition of the accrual basis of accounting can be found in the Glossary.

In the modified accrual basis of accounting revenues are recognized when they become measurable and available to finance expenditures of the current period. Expenditures are recognized when the related fund liability is incurred except in specific instances. A more complete definition of the modified accrual basis of accounting can be found in the Glossary.

Budgets are adopted for capital improvements on a project to project basis. Capital projects are reported by the modified accrual basis of accounting. Appropriations for capital projects are not subject to lapsing at the end of the fiscal year.

CBJ follows encumbrance accounting to comply with legal requirements and assure effective budgetary control and accountability. CBJ does not include depreciation in the operating budget.

According to the Charter, the Manager is authorized to transfer budget amounts within all operating funds, except school operations. The Assembly approves all budgetary transfers which cross funds or departments.

# NOTES

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This page has been left for notes.