

BUDGET Revealed

YOUR GUIDE TO
THE BUDGET
PROCESS AND
COMMUNITY
FINANCES

www.dover.nh.gov/government/open-government/budget-revealed/

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No. 2 | Tuesday, March 24, 2015

FY2016 proposed budget before City Council March 25

Each year, I present a proposed budget to the City Council, followed by a series of public hearings, workshops and special meetings. The City Council adopts a final budget in June.

The fiscal year 2016 budget will be presented to the City Council on Wednesday, March 25, 2015 during a City Council meeting in Council Chambers at City Hall. [Click here](#) to view the agenda.



J. Michael Joyal, Jr.
City Manager

The proposed budget represents spending and revenue across all departments and services, including general government, culture and recreation, public works, public safety and education. The education portion of the budget was adopted by the School Board in February, and is now before the City Council as part of the overall proposed budget. For more on the school budget, including budget documents and on-demand viewing of School Board budget meetings, visit the Budget Revealed online resource [here](#).

Following the presentation of the budget to the City Council on March 25, two public hearings on the budget are scheduled in the coming weeks. The first public hearing is on the education portion of the budget, and will be held on Wednesday, April 8, at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall. A public hearing on the City portion of the budget will be held on Wednesday, April 22, at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall.



City of Dover
New Hampshire

Proposed Budget
Fiscal Year 2016

As submitted to the City Council
By City Manager J. Michael Joyal, Jr.

**UPCOMING
BUDGET
MEETINGS:**

**Wednesday, March 25
7 p.m.**

City Council Meeting
Budget presentation by
the City Manager

**Wednesday, April 1
7 p.m.**

City Council Workshop
Budget review

**Wednesday, April 8
7 p.m.**

City Council Meeting
School budget
public hearing

**Wednesday, April 15
7 p.m.**

City Council Workshop
Budget review

**Wednesday, April 22
7 p.m.**

City Council Meeting
City budget public hearing

**Wednesday, April 29
7 p.m.**

City Council Workshop
Budget review

**Wednesday, May 6
7 p.m.**

City Council Workshop
Budget review
and
Special Meeting
Budget adoption

**Wednesday, May 13
7 p.m.**

City Council Meeting
Budget adoption, if not
adopted on May 6

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION:**

In addition to the City Council presentations, there are additional ways to stay informed and learn more about the budget process.

This newsletter is intended to help you navigate the budget process and provide more detailed information about the proposed budget.

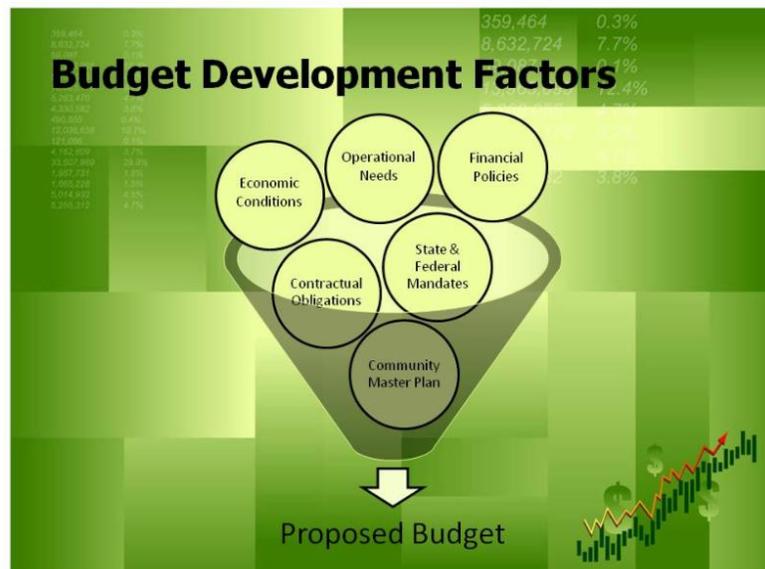
If you want to learn even more about the budget and budget process, visit the Budget Revealed resource on the City's website, which includes extensive and updated information about the current and previous fiscal year budgets.

Sincerely,



**J. Michael Joyal, Jr.
City Manager**

DID YOU KNOW?



How is the budget developed?

Long before a proposed budget is presented to the City Council, many factors contribute to how the budget is developed over the course of the fiscal year. Although the budget is largely the result of a detailed and complex

Budget Revealed



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analysis of City finances, many other factors help shape the proposed budget.

The City's budget process begins in earnest in the fall of each year with the Capital Improvements Program. All capital spending of \$25,000 or more for items with a useful life of three years or longer are included in this budget. Based on City Council financing policy, items are identified for bonding, the annual operating budget or other types of financing.

Items identified for the annual operating budget are included in the next City Manager's recommended annual budget. Departments are responsible for submitting their annual budget request to the City Manager. After reviews with the departments, the City Manager makes any final adjustments to his recommended budget. The City Manager's recommended annual budget for the next fiscal year, which includes the School Board request, is due to the City Council by April 15 of each year. The City Council may add to, or cut from, the manager's recommended annual budget by a majority vote; however, the City Council must pass the budget by June 15 after separate public hearings for the City and School budgets, and the budget becomes effective July 1. If the City Council does not adopt the budget by June 15, the City Manager's recommended budget takes effect July 1. After initial adoption, the City Council may amend the budget by a two-thirds majority vote.

After the original budget is adopted, the City Manager may make appropriation transfers within a department or transfer between departments with City Council approval. The City Manager does not make transfers within the School department. The City Manager does not make transfers within the School Department. These are conducted by the School Administrative District and School Board.

Several other factors contribute to the development of the budget over the course of the year, including:

The Master Plan

The Master Plan is a comprehensive plan which guides the long-term development for a community. This plan is a good gauge of community expectations and priorities, and is an important contributing factor to the proposed budget. For more in the Master Plan, [click here](#).

Contractual obligations

Another important factor in developing the budget are the contractual obligations before the City. These include debt service, long-term contracts with vendors, and labor contracts, for example.

Operational needs

A careful analysis of the City's operational needs, including inflationary increases, is another factor in preparing the budget.

Mandates and downshifting

Preparing a proposed budget also requires careful attention to the cost of state and federal mandates and the downshifting of costs. This includes the permitting for wastewater treatment, stormwater mandates by state and federal agencies and the associated equipment upgrades, and reduced education adequacy funding. These and other mandates or downshifting of costs to the City can have financial implications in the current fiscal year and for years to come.

Solid financial policies

In preparing the budget each year, the City adheres to consistent and established financial policies. These policies ensure stringent compliance with accounting and budgeting standards, balanced budgets, and maintain stabilization funds, such as the fund balance.

The Tax Cap

By charter, the City of Dover's budget is required to meet the constraints of a tax cap, which limits spending based on a formula that weighs development, the prior year's budget, and the cost of living index. The budget process is guided by the provisions of the tax cap. Proposed budgets above the tax cap require a two-thirds majority vote of the City Council.

EFFICIENCY AND COST-SAVINGS INITIATIVES

Each year, City staff implements and follows budget initiatives and best practices that help reduce costs and improve efficiency across all services and operations. The cost-savings initiatives have saved the City millions of dollars over the last several years. Many of these efforts will or have the potential to reduce costs for years to come.

These savings are largely the result of the hard work and creativity of City staff and department heads, in concert with the funding decisions made by recent City Councils. Each edition of Budget Revealed will highlight some of these cost-savings initiatives.

Volunteers, shared resources and donations

help reduce costs

City departments and staff continually seek creative options to reduce the cost of labor, equipment and supplies, while retaining the City's commitment to efficiency and best practices.

Wherever possible, the City shares resources and responsibilities, keeping labor costs down. For instance, in the Police Department, dispatch personnel now assist with data entry, which was previously handled by Records personnel. Dispatch also assists with parking ticket management by entering data into an electronic database, instead of printing out motor vehicle records for the parking clerk. This saves time and paper.

The Public Library and schools also share resources, which dates back to 1995. The Public Library and five school libraries share a library automation system and split the maintenance costs of that system. The school libraries rely on the Public Library's system administrator for technical assistance. There were 82 school "help tickets" logged and resolved by DPL staff during 2014. During the past year, 1,385 items were loaned from the Public Library to the five schools and 1,496 items were loaned to the public library from the schools, primarily during the summer vacation period when the school libraries are closed. The public library borrows many copies of popular titles in order to meet demand during the Summer Reading Program. The value of these items, if purchased instead of being loaned, would be over \$35,000, thus saving money in both the City and School budgets by sharing and combining resources.

Volunteers contribute significantly to the City. In addition to the countless hours the City's boards and commissions contribute each year, volunteers help reduce costs through the generous donation of time and services. For example, the annual Dover Pride Cleanup Day draws hundreds of people to the downtown to assist with various improvements and maintenance, including landscaping, planting and repairs. This saves the City on some of the cost of this upkeep. Dover's Adopt-A-Spot program achieves similar results by allowing residents and businesses to spruce up "adopted" locations throughout the City. *(More on these two programs below)*

At the Public Library, a group of 12-15 regular volunteers report to the Library once or twice a week to repair books, attach book covers, stamp materials, index obituaries, help with de-acquisitions and online catalog maintenance, scan and index historical documents, aid with book donations and the book sale, tend to the aquarium, or help with reshelving, shelf reading, inventory, and stack straightening.

The Police Department's Senior Volunteer Program

provides an opportunity for retired individuals with some extra time to contribute to the community by assisting the Police Department in a variety of non-enforcement activities. The program, which began in 1993, has helped reduce costs thanks to the seniors who assist with a variety of tasks, including clerical support, computer data entry, digital document imaging, records management and computer data entry. Volunteer tasks are always matched with the volunteer's interest and abilities.

Local businesses also help the City reduce costs through generous donations. For instance, Liberty Mutual donates copy paper to the McConnell Center, which is distributed to tenants, and is also used by City departments in the building, including Welfare, Recreation and the Media Access Center, reducing the cost of supplies.

Residents in recent years have also made significant donations to various City and School programs and services. Through the City's "Green Envelope" program, residents can make voluntary donations based on personal preference, including the public schools, the Mounted Patrol, the annual 4th of July fireworks display, City parks, the public pools, low-income residents, and land preservation. This program has raised a total of \$57,243.56 to date, including \$14,962 for the mounted patrol, \$14,446 for low-income residents and families, \$10,507 for the Public Library, \$5,502 for the City's pools, and \$4,272 for the public schools.

These are but a few examples of the continuing efforts of City staff to reduce costs, and the generous support of residents and businesses.

Main Street Adopt-a-Spot, Clean-Up Day programs help reduce maintenance costs

The City of Dover has a reputation as an attractive, clean and proud community. Maintaining that image isn't only about tending to the City's facilities, but also requires constant attention to hundreds of other locations throughout the City, such as street islands, ball fields, historical markers, median strips, parks, cemeteries and street corners.

Thanks to the dedication of volunteers, the City has saved significantly on maintenance and grounds keeping costs at dozens of locations. The Adopt-a-Spot program is an example of the community pitching in to help beautify the City while saving tax dollars in the process. The program began in 1995 as a way to allow the community -- businesses, individuals, civic clubs, garden clubs, churches, and other organizations -- to maintain a wide variety of public property, including all of the City's parks. Volunteers perform routine maintenance, such as mowing, weeding, litter removal, landscape plantings, painting, and in some

cases, minor repairs. Some participants choose to donate funds to help pay for maintenance or make donations of materials or discounts on products or services.

Whether it's the volunteer effort to maintain these sites, or through donations, the hard work and community spirit not only help keep the City attractive, they reduce the City's cost of such work.

The City has seen additional savings from Adopt-a-Spot by shifting the administration of program to Dover Main Street. Dover Main Street now manages the program and is actively seeking new volunteers and adding additional spots for adoption.

Dover Main Street also organizes Dover Clean-Up Day each April, which dispatches volunteers to spruce up sites throughout the City, again reducing the cost of upkeep to the City.

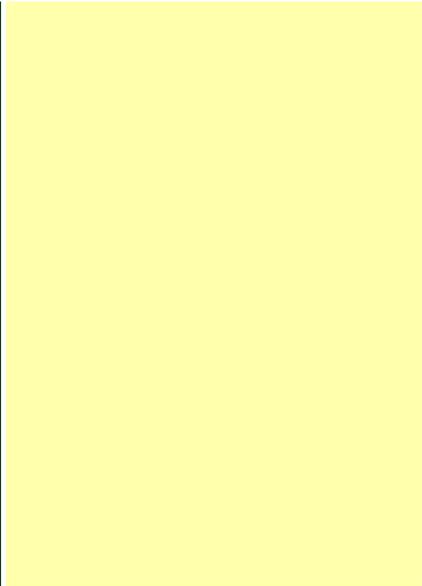
Another initiative to reduce maintenance costs on City property involves agreements with businesses on Indian Brook Drive and the corner of Central and Glenwood avenues. The agreements allow the City to license the use of signs on public property in exchange for the businesses assuming the responsibility and cost of property maintenance on significant parcels of public property.

BUDGET RESOURCES

Want to know more? Check out this Budget Revealed session, hosted by City Manager J. Michael Joyal, Jr. In this video, the city manager details the budget process.

This session can also be seen on Channel 22. For upcoming times, tune in to DNTV Channel 22.

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