

# **BUDGET OVERVIEW**

Salt Lake City residents can expect to see little change in core services delivered by city employees, and, despite a lean budget, the Salt Lake City Council expects other services funded by the budget will continue to move the City forward.

Budget highlights include:

- Allocations to help prepare neighborhoods for emergencies, provide alternatives to joining gangs, and increased security for Washington and Library squares.
- The hiring of a planner to address issues in Salt Lake City neighborhoods older than 50 years.
- Funds to help improve North Temple Street as the light-rail project to the Salt Lake City International Airport progresses.
- Increasing the number of marked bicycle lanes.
- Transferring the Administration's Sustainability and Environment Division from the property tax supported general fund to the refuse fund. The latter fund is an enterprise fund that supports operation of the City-County Landfill and trash collection – two major environmental activities that have a significant impact on residents and businesses.
- Allocating funds for a study of best practices for encouraging businesses in residential commercial nodes.

Major services such as police and fire protection will maintain current service levels, particularly while on patrol or responding to fires or emergencies; however, under the budget adopted by the City Council, the Police Department has reorganized to better address crime prevention, investigation, reporting and prosecution of criminal cases. This reorganization in large part will save the department \$1.4 million from the current fiscal year which expires June 30. The Fire Department, which pared about 10 positions, anticipates adjusting resources in order to keep the same response time to emergencies. While additional resources are needed in the future, along with other City departments both the Police and Fire Departments recognize the challenges with reorganization and the elimination of positions due to difficult economic times.

In addition, the budget includes hiring a full-time Community Emergency Response Team coordinator to plan and coordinate community-based responses to emergencies. The position had been cut during mid-year budget reductions. It includes the hiring of two community gang-prevention workers to focus on community-level, grass-roots gang prevention. It also includes funds to increase patrols by a private security firm on Washington and Library squares.

Fees for trash collection will increase at most \$1.25 a month (for residents who use a 90-gallon trash can). The increase will maintain the city's practice of furnishing residents with a trash can and a recycling can for a single fee. The increase also will allow the city to continue its neighborhood clean up program.

The budget includes a \$3.1 million allocation for Salt Lake City's share of improvements along North Temple Street as the light-rail line to the Salt Lake City International Airport progresses. The budget also includes funding for a bicycle-pedestrian coordinator to help plan for the development of transportation besides automobiles. In addition, residents can expect to see more painted stripes on streets to better designate bicycle routes and bring the total amount of striped bicycle lanes to 163 miles.

The budget includes funds for the hiring of an historic planner position to ensure the continuation of historic preservation planning priorities for individual neighborhoods as well as the wider community. As the first city in the Salt Lake Valley and Utah's capital, many of Salt Lake City's neighborhoods qualify for historical preservation.

The budget also includes money for a study that would identify best practices for the economic development of neighborhood commercial nodes, including the best mix of businesses serving neighborhoods.

The City Council opted not to raise property taxes to generate revenue to make up for the loss of revenue in a difficult economic climate. However, the budget includes a slight property tax adjustment allowed by Utah law to bring property tax revenue in line with revenue from the current year. The City Council – in concert with Mayor Ralph Becker's Administration, cut some workers' positions, reduced employees' salaries by 1.5 percent and increased the medical premiums employees must pay from 5 percent to 10 percent.

Salt Lake City's general fund receives revenue from property taxes, sales taxes, franchise taxes and license fees and fines. The results of a Dan Jones survey for Salt Lake City indicated that 44% of citizens would prefer an increase of fines and 27% indicated they would prefer an increase in city fees instead of raising property taxes. In response, the Council has approved a number of fine and fee increases as proposed by Mayor Becker. They include:

- a. Vending cart fee: \$75.00 increase
- b. Auto towing/wrecking fee: \$15.00 increase
- c. Retail sale of tobacco disproportionate fee: \$85.00 increase
- d. Parking ticket late fine: \$10.00 increase (after 10 days)
- e. Traffic Plea in Abeyance fine: \$25.00 increase
- f. Various Impact fee increases
- g. Residential parking permit fee: \$24.00 increase
- h. Barricade fee: \$27.50
- i. Public Right of Way Encroachment fee: \$50.00 increase (The fee has not been increased in 20 years and is lower than the fee charged in other cities.)

The adopted budget also includes an across-the-board increase in golf fees. The increase would take effect January 1, 2010. Golfers will pay between \$1 and \$3 more for nine or eighteen holes of golf at Salt Lake City courses.