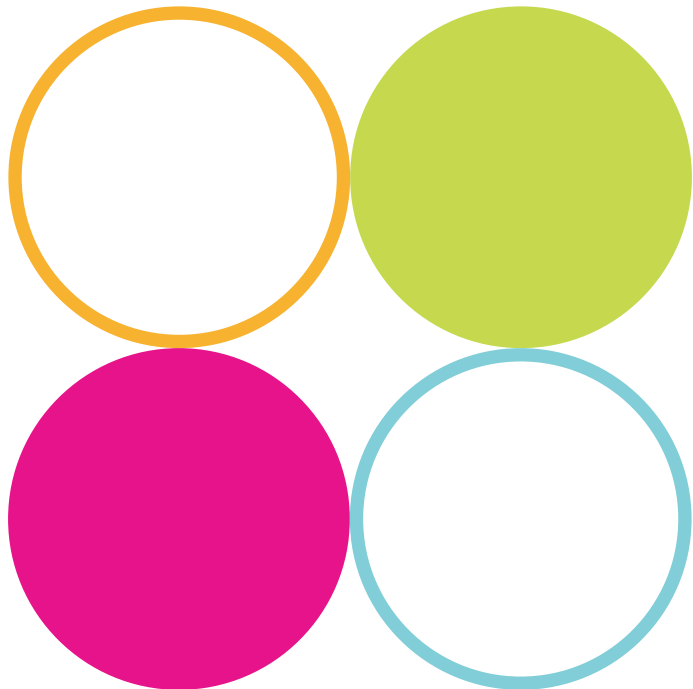


WHOSE BUDGET IS IT ANYWAY?

**Demystifying the Transportation Budgeting Process
in the City of Los Angeles**



**A comprehensive project submitted in partial
satisfaction of the requirements for the degree
Master of Urban and Regional Planning**

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**Client: Investing in Place
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16. Abstract The purpose of this research is to investigate the current process through which the City of Los Angeles develops and approves its annual budget, with a particular emphasis on the role of transportation funding within this process. Additionally, the research focuses on ways for community-based organizations to become more effectively involved in the City's budgeting process. The research methods included professional interviews with city staff involved in or knowledgeable on the budgeting process, as well as focus groups with members of community-based organizations interested in potential budget advocacy. The results of the research revealed a much more complex process than the relatively straightforward timeline presented by the City itself. "Transportation" has a complicated role in the budgeting process because it means many different things to many different people. The report concludes with recommendations for community-based organizations to engage most effectively with the City's budgeting process. The report also includes an educational tool to be used by the research client organization (Investing in Place) in future budget advocacy coalition-building endeavors.			
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DISCLAIMER

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines the budgeting process in the City of Los Angeles with a particular emphasis on how money for transportation and the city's public rights-of-way is allocated. This research is important because the budgeting process is not only a technical one, but also a highly political one, with decisions about where to allocate scarce resources being made across a variety of political actors with differing priorities. And the current landscape for formal public involvement in the budgeting process is limited to the relatively ineffective engagement tool of public comment at City Council meetings. For this reason, Investing in Place, the professional client for this research, is interested in how community-based organizations (CBOs) in Los Angeles might be able to more effectively advocate in the budgeting process. Thus, the research question is two-fold: What is the transportation budgeting process in the City of Los Angeles? And, what are the opportunities for CBOs to intervene in and advocate on the transportation budget in order to affect change?

Sherry Arnstein's (1969) seminal work on citizen participation in governance, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," provides the theoretical basis for the notion of public participation discussed in this report. According to her theory, public involvement in the budgeting process in LA currently is constrained to the middling rungs of her ladder, where information is often provided at a late stage and citizens have little decision-making power over the process. And research on the efficacy of citizen involvement in public budgeting has found that many budget directors across the country believe in the importance of the public's involvement in their budgeting process, but

that they do not necessarily believe in the ability of the public to provide meaningful input on what these directors view as a highly technical process (Hatcher, 2015). This leads them to continue using ineffective participation methods and to restrict the public's ability to have input on the budget (Hather, 2015; Wang & Wart, 2007).

Given this environment of constrained citizen power over the decision-making process for how cities allocate funding, municipal budgeting has historically been a contested site in the fight for equity and social justice in the urban setting. Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a form of direct democracy that has its origins in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre in 1989 (Wampler, 2000). Through the process of PB, citizens were able to invert the spending priorities of the city to favor the needs most crucial to the daily survival of the city's most poor and marginalized (Aragones & Sanchez-Pages, 2009; Wampler, 2000). PB in some form has since been implemented in cities across the world and the US, including New York City (Su, 2012; 2018).

Los Angeles, however, has never implemented any sort of PB program and the furthest the city has gone to formally incorporate public input on the budgeting process is through the city's charter-mandated Neighborhood Council (NC) system. Under the NC system, every NC is allowed to elect Budget Advocates that will meet with city departments and the Mayor to discuss their budget priorities (Los Angeles City Charter, Article IX). However, NCs likely fall short of advocating for the needs of some of the City's most transportation-disadvantaged residents. As self-organized, voluntary organizations, NC boards have historically and continue to be predominantly White, affluent, highly-educated, and homeowners (Musso et al., 2006; Li et al., 2019).

Given this situation of constrained public participation, this research utilizes professional interviews with individuals who

hold key positions in different departments/agencies across the City of LA that all interact with the City's transportation budgeting process. Additionally, the research was an iterative process that used focus groups with members of CBOs to guide and direct the information I was gathering in professional interviews, so that this knowledge would be best suited to meet the needs of these transportation advocacy-focused CBOs with regards to the budgeting process. These focus then also helped to inform the development of an educational tool for Investing in Place to use in coalition building around budget advocacy. This tool, a handbook entitled "Easy Money: A Handbook for Reading and Understanding the City of LA's Budget Documents," can be found in Appendix B of this report.

The findings of my research illuminate a much more complex and winding path leading to the implementation of the final budget in June of each year than the relatively straightforward timeline presented by the city. Rather, my research found that there are many different actors across the city involved in the budgeting process at overlapping and dynamic times throughout the fiscal year. The ability to make changes in the budget, however, drops off dramatically after the Mayor has released the Proposed Budget in April and power transfers to the City Council. At this stage, most of the budget is considered to be set, and the Council typically does not leverage for "big asks" at this stage in the budgeting process, even though this is the point at which formal public input is first allowed through the Council process.

My research also found that change in the budget happens in increments. That is, from one year to the next the city has limited capacity to make large changes. It is instead the cumulative effect of changes over several budget cycles that adds up to make noticeable differences in how the city allocates funding to its evolving priorities. Furthermore, many in the

city disagree with the notion that the budget is itself a policy tool. They believe that the budget implements existing policy, but does not itself create policy. This line between the implementation of versus the creation of policy is fine, but budget directors within the city may be resistant to public input on the budget that they see as attempting to make or change policy without going through the formal policy process. Lastly, my research found that "transportation" has a complicated role in the budgeting process because it means many different things to many different people. In essence, this means that transportation funding is a very political process, which leads to its funds being spread across many different departments and agencies. And some aspects of the transportation network more readily receive funding because their outcomes are more easily translated into dollar amounts. Decision makers in the city often show a preference towards these programs or projects because they feel more confident about where the money is going and the return on their dollar.

Based on these findings, the report concludes with specific recommendations for Investing in Place and other CBOs. These recommendations include starting advocacy as early in the budget cycle as possible and finding a partner to be an advocate on the inside. Additionally, CBOs should understand that budget advocacy is very much about branding and making sure that a budget ask is well-targeted to the intended consumer of that ask, emphasizing how it aligns with their existing priorities and policies. Furthermore, it's important that CBOs break down larger budget requests into smaller pieces that can be achieved through incremental changes from year-to-year, and that they translate those budget requests into specific dollar amounts oriented around outcomes. Lastly, CBOs should work to build coalition around budget advocacy with other CBOs. Speaking with a unified voice underscores the importance of budget goals to the city.

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INTRODUCTION

A city's budget exists, in essence, to allocate scarce resources (revenues) towards specific programs and purposes (expenditures). Much of this work is technical, such as estimating how much money the city will take in in a given year from the property tax or a specific sales tax. But a significant portion is also political. In part, this is because budgeting requires the comparison between what are often apparently incomparable items. As Rubin (2019) notes in *The Politics of Public Budgeting*, such comparisons are where cities often rely on agreed upon "priorities" to make funding decisions. However, these "priorities" themselves can be highly controversial. Through the process of budgeting, municipalities decide who should pay for government and who should benefit.

Because the budgeting process is not only technical but also political, it represents a necessary arena for those interested in advancing progressive planning ideals to involve themselves. Thus, the purpose of this research is to investigate the current process through which multiple agencies within the City of Los Angeles, CA propose and approve a budget with regards to that budget's impacts on the City's public rights-of-way. Ultimately, this research will serve to aid Investing in Place in the effort to build coalition around transportation budget advocacy within the City of LA. The research questions being pursued are as follows:

1. What is the transportation budgeting process in the City of Los Angeles?

2. What are the opportunities for community-based organizations to intervene in and advocate on the transportation budget in order to affect change?

Through expert interviews and analysis of budget documents, I break down the transportation budgeting process into popular education tools that can be used by Investing in Place to increase understanding of the budget process among fellow community-based organizations, as well as take advantage of opportunities to affect change in how the City of LA prioritizes its transportation investments. The ultimate goal of this project is to support a growing engaged and informed constituency on transportation budget advocacy in the City of LA.

WHY TRANSPORTATION BUDGET ADVOCACY IN THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES?

In the 2009 budgeting season, as with most cities across the country, the City of LA was trying to answer the question of how to respond to the financial crisis that was in full swing at that point. Unsurprisingly, the city responded with significant cuts to staffing. Immediately in the 2009-2010 fiscal year the city's staffing levels fell by 1,107 regular authority positions. The following fiscal year the city eliminated another 2,899 positions. These are cuts from which the city still has not recovered up to its pre-recession levels. These cuts, however, were not felt equally across city services and departments. And, notably, one of the areas of service that the city determined to be expendable in the name of balancing the budget was tree trimming (Reyes, 2014).

This decision on the part of the city when forming its budget had ripple effects that disproportionately affected our most vulnerable travelers: the low-income mobility disabled. The city's sidewalk infrastructure had at that point already been

falling into disrepair for decades due to a lack of dedicated funding as, frequently, unmaintained tree roots caused sidewalks to crack and buckle (“Who should foot the bill,” 2014). This can make sidewalks impassable for someone using a wheelchair or crutches, pushing a stroller, or who otherwise requires a flat and unobstructed path in order to move safely. These cuts to tree trimming saw the problem escalate as, increasingly, no one was there to make fixes. This situation culminated in the city being sued in 2010 by disability rights advocates over the inadequate state of the city’s pedestrian infrastructure. After settling the case in 2015, the City is now legally obligated to pay between \$31 million and \$63 million every year for a 30-year period in order to fix its pedestrian infrastructure to minimum ADA standards (Barragan, 2015). This requirement is now reflected in the city’s budget through the establishment of the Sidewalk Repair Fund.

Fundamentally, this lawsuit and its resulting impact on the budget reveals a disparity in how the City prioritizes the funding of pedestrian space and how advocates envision equitable transportation spending. It is for these types of “priorities”-based decisions that advocate involvement in the budgeting process is so crucial in LA. Because at its core the budget is a reflection of the city’s true values and priorities. Through litigation, disability rights and mobility justice advocates were able to establish a base level of accessibility that the city must achieve in order to meet ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) minimum standards. But many transportation advocates, including Investing in Place, would like to see sidewalks be funded in the same long-term way and with the same emphasis as travel lanes for cars (Iwasaki, 2017). Under the city’s current plan, once they repair a section of sidewalk and after a warranty period has passed, that sidewalk becomes the financial responsibility of the adjacent property owner

(Barragan, 2016).

The situation the city of LA is in with regards to its sidewalk infrastructure is just one example of the ways that budgetary decision making within the city can lead to adverse impacts for transportation equity. In particular during times of economic downturn or uncertainty, it is imperative that community advocates be heard, as the decisions made at these critical junctures have long-lasting effects. This research thus serves to further a vision of greater involvement for community advocates within LA’s transportation budgeting process. Through effective involvement, advocates might then have a greater say over how the City’s “priorities” affect their budgetary allocations. Ultimately this is undertaken with the goal of creating a more just transportation system that centers the needs of those communities — including the low-income, non-white, and disabled — who have been historically marginalized and harmed by transportation planning and budgetary decisions in Los Angeles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

I begin with a discussion of the relevant literature in order to first outline the theoretical framework through which I will approach the concept of “public participation,” or community involvement, in the budget process. I then discuss what the academic research has found regarding the effectiveness of public participation in the municipal budgeting process as well as the somewhat radical form of public involvement known as Participatory Budgeting. I then include a brief discussion of public participation specifically in Los Angeles, with an emphasis on the Neighborhood Council system, as this is the only formal channel for public involvement in the City’s budget outside of public comment at City Council meetings. While some research exists that examines various aspects of public participation of municipal budgeting, there is little research that would guide a community-based organization in knowing how to be an effective advocate in a specific budgetary environment, such as how the City of Los Angeles allocates money towards its public rights-of-way. This research attempts to fill this gap by shedding light on a relatively unknown process and providing Investing in Place with specific tools that will increase involvement.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For decades now, cities have been putting forth effort to make their planning processes more participatory and inclusive of different factions of the public (Innes & Booher, 2004). The merit of these typically legally-required participation processes can be and has been challenged with regard to how

municipal governments incorporate historically marginalized groups into their processes (Innes & Booher, 2004; Mirafteb, 2009; Conrad et al., 2011). Often the most common forms of participation methods that cities rely on only truly create space for those already in a position of power within their city — typically White, higher-income, abled-bodied, home- and car-owning residents. However, even within this system of unequal participation, in most cities the budgeting process sees relatively little public input even from those privileged groups whose voices are often the loudest in other areas of planning work (Wang & Wart 2007).

Sherry Arnstein’s (1969) seminal work on citizen participation in governance, “A Ladder of Citizen Participation,” provides the theoretical basis for public participation discussed herein. Arnstein portrayed citizen participation as an eight-rung ladder in order to demonstrate that different methods of public participation employed by the government create a hierarchical spectrum of real citizen power. For Arnstein, redistribution of power was foundational to meaningful inclusion. And participation without such redistribution of power was “an empty and frustrating process for the powerless” (p. 216). Thus those rungs closer to the bottom of Arnstein’s conceptual ladder encompass participation methods that allow officials to claim that everyone has had a chance to have their interests considered, but that in the end maintain the status quo. The bottom two rungs of the ladder are those methods that result in outright manipulation of the public. The third rung, “Informing,” and the fourth rung, “Consultation,” are where we begin to see what could be the crucial first steps towards legitimate citizen participation. As the rungs move higher, the level of decision-making power held by citizens increases until rung 8, “Citizen Control.” However, the most common forms of participation employed

in planning processes today stop at around the third and fourth rungs.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BUDGETING

Research has found that most of the participation methods employed by city governments when it comes to soliciting input on their budgets are those methods that could be categorized into the third (“Informing”) or fourth (“Consulting”) rungs of Arnstein’s ladder. Hatcher’s (2015) survey of 195 budget directors from cities across the United States found that only two participation methods were used by a majority of the cities in their budgeting processes: public hearings (98%) and public comment at meetings (84%). Public hearings are one of the examples of participation methods that Arnstein lists as part of the fourth rung of the ladder. Some budget managers surveyed also discussed using one-way informational methods of reaching the public, such as budgeting brochures or newsletters. Such pamphlets and other news media are two of the examples Arnstein lists when describing the third ladder rung.

Wang and Wart (2007) surveyed high-level officials in 249 US cities to assess public participation in administration. Most officials surveyed agreed that their cities incorporated the public in zoning and other traditional planning processes (94%), parks and recreation (87%), and policing and public safety (73%). However, only 46% agreed that their city incorporated the public in their budgeting process. Furthermore, only 7% and 5% agreed that the public was involved in negotiating agency budgets and determining the executive budget, respectively. This indicates that even in those cities where the public is involved in the budgeting process their participation is not perceived as effective by administrators in terms of actually negotiating changes to the budget. Notably, Wang

and Wart (2007) also found that participation in the area of “Transportation and street maintenance” was low among cities (37%).

In his survey, Hatcher (2015) found that budget directors “believe in the efficacy of public involvement in budgeting,” but that they are “worried about the ability of the public to give meaningful input” (p. 660). The budget directors, however, did not acknowledge that a significant barrier to the public’s legitimate contribution to the budgeting process may be that the cities continue to rely on non-interactive, government-controlled methods such as the public hearing, and that city officials do not focus on educating the public about their budgeting process. That is to say, in most cities, the public is left with participation methods that only climb to the middle rungs of Arnstein’s ladder at best and transfer no real decision-making power to the people, but most budget directors do not see the lack of public participation as the city’s responsibility to address.

Timing is also important to attaining meaningful public participation. Guo and Neshkova (2012) found that citizen input in the budgeting process was most important at the beginning and ending stages. That is, involving citizens in the setting of budget priorities and program assessment stages can improve an agency’s organizational performance by increasing its responsiveness to the actual preferences of its constituent’s. However, most of the time public input does not come until after a proposed budget is drafted (Hatcher, 2015).

Given this environment of constrained citizen power over the decision-making process for how cities allocate funding, municipal budgeting has historically been a contested site in the fight for equity and social justice in the urban setting.

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a form of direct democracy that has its origins in the Brazilian city of Porto Alegre in 1989 (Wampler, 2000). Here, direct democracy refers to the power of citizens to decide on governmental policy proposals (Aragones and Sanchez-Pages, 2009). When they won the office of the Mayor of Porto Alegre, the newly formed Workers' Party implemented PB as part of their efforts to end the social exclusion and corruption that had historically characterized Brazilian governments (Wampler, 2000). Their campaign had been based on the "inversion of spending priorities" in Porto Alegre's municipal spending, because spending in the corrupt government had been trending for decades towards the upper classes (Wampler, 2000, p. 3). In the Porto Alegre model, as Wampler (2000) outlined:

Forums are held throughout the year so that citizens have the opportunity to allocate resources, prioritize broad social policies, and monitor public spending. These programs are designed to incorporate citizens into the policymaking process, spur administrative reform, and distribute public resources to low-income neighborhoods. Social and political exclusion is challenged as low-income and traditionally excluded political actors are given the opportunity to make policy decisions. (p. 1)

In its early stages in Porto Alegre, PB decisions were mostly focused on the immediate needs of the working class (Aragones and Sanchez-Pages, 2009). These issues included water supply, sewage disposal, garbage collection, and the relocation of families living in slums. In 1989, at the inception of PB, only 49% of the population of Porto Alegre was covered by basic sanitation. This number grew to 85% by 1996. Additionally, the period 1993-96 saw five times the housing

production than what was built during the period 1986-88 (Aragones and Sanchez-Pages, 2009). As basic needs became covered by the city, the priorities selected in Porto Alegre's PB process shifted to those most pressing to middle class residents (ie education, health, and social services) (Aragones and Sanchez-Pages, 2009).

PB in some form or another has since been implemented in cities across the world, including in the US. New York City's PB program, launched in 2011, is one of the most visible (Su, 2012). PB in NYC, just as in Porto Alegre, was purposefully a bottom-up process in order to engage some of those residents who traditionally have low levels of civic involvement, but are often most harmed by the adverse impacts of city decision-making (Su, 2012). Su (2012) notes that PB in NYC helped to broaden people's notions of whose opinions mattered in policy debates. It is for these reasons that this research on PB is important to the research at hand. While many city budget officials may worry about the ability of members of the public to provide meaningful input on the budget (Hatcher, 2015; Su, 2018), the successes of PB reveal the political nature of the budgeting process. They reveal that producing a budget is not merely a technical feat, but a nuanced process through which some people are made better off, and others worse.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BUDGETING: CITY OF LOS ANGELES

While there is a relatively large range of literature that discusses public participation in various planning processes in Los Angeles (Reitan & Banerjee, 2019; Sloane et al., 2019; Deener, 2016), there is scant existing literature that evaluates involvement with the municipal budgeting process specifically — and nothing in regards to the development of the City's "transportation budget." This is likely due in part to the

constrained environment for public participation in LA's budget process. Currently, there are two formal channels through which the City is required to receive and analyze public input regarding the budget. The first is via public comments at the City Council meetings held in late May regarding the Mayor's Proposed Budget or at the meetings of the Council's Budget and Finance Committee that happen prior to these meetings of the full Council. The second is through the City's network of Neighborhood Councils (NC). Under the City Charter that was adopted in 1999 and that implemented the NC system, NCs are given the right to "present to the Mayor and Council an annual list of priorities for the City budget" (Los Angeles City Charter, Article IX).

To address this task of consulting the Mayor on budget priorities, the NCs have developed a specific role: the NC Budget Advocates. However, as one of the few channels through which public input on the budget is solicited, NCs likely fall short of advocating for the needs of some of the City's most transportation-disadvantaged residents. As self-organized, voluntary organizations, NC boards have historically and continue to be predominantly White, affluent, highly-educated, and homeowners (Musso et al., 2006; Li et al., 2019). Additionally, length of residence and ability to speak English are both positively correlated with more successful NC formation (Jun, 2007). And while their capacity has been found to vary widely across the City based on a variety of factors, ultimately research has found that NCs can only be described as moderately effective and typically remain peripheral in citywide policy and decision making (Musso et al., 2007; Jun & Shiao, 2012; Li et al., 2019).

Based on this existing research, it seems evident that public participation in LA's budgeting process — in particular

for marginalized communities with fewer resources — is constrained to the middling rungs of Arnstein's ladder. Some aspects of the budgeting process indicate only reaching even the third rung of the ladder, where citizens are informed of budgetary options but have little power to make changes. In particular, Arnstein states that this is often characteristic of planning processes where information is provided at a late stage. And as Guo and Neshkova (2012) indicated, public input is especially important early on in the budgeting process in order to be effective. In LA, however, little public input is formally welcomed until the Mayor releases their proposed budget in mid-April, at which point limited changes are typically made as the City Council has only until June 1st to approve the new budget. Even for NCs, the existing research indicates that their role places them at only about the fifth rung of Arnstein's ladder, "Placation." NCs are sites where any member of the public is ostensibly intended to be able to take a more direct role in the democratic decision-making process, but where the "traditional power elite" tend to hold a majority of seats (Arnstein, 1969, p. 29). And, furthermore, the city maintains the right to judge the "legitimacy or feasibility of the advice" provided by NCs, including that of the Budget Advocates (p. 29). Both of these are markers of Arnstein's fifth rung.

CONCLUSION

While much of the existing research on public participation in the budgeting process has been focused on the perspective of the city, the research presented herein expands on this previous work by looking from the perspective of a community-based organization (CBO) — or advocacy group — such as Investing in Place. Within an already operating and existing system, what are the options for CBOs to increase their control over the process? That is, how can CBOs that are currently constrained to low rungs of Arnstein's ladder move

up to higher rungs from their position outside of the city government? While a model such as PB that would achieve the “Citizen Control” unique to the eighth and highest rung of Arnstein’s ladder is unlikely in the City of LA at the current moment, the research presented herein aims to guide the efforts of Investing in Place and other CBOs to wrest some power over the budgeting process. As Arnstein notes, “in most cases where power has come to be shared it was taken by the citizens, not given by the city” (p. 31).

METHODOLOGY

The research question I intend to answer herein is two-fold: What is the transportation budgeting process in the City of LA? And, what are the best methods for transportation-focused CBOs to advocate within this process? Currently, this system has little in the way of requirements for public participation or engagement, and community stakeholders are frequently brought in only when it is too late to make meaningful changes to the budget. To answer the two-part research question then requires qualitative research methods, as only qualitative methods will allow me to paint an in-depth picture of this complex process and the highly political web in which it exists. The research methods used are as follows:

PROFESSIONAL INTERVIEWS

I conducted 10 interviews with individuals who hold key positions in different departments/agencies across the City of LA that all interact with the City's transportation budgeting process. Key individuals from the Mayor's Office, Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO), City Councilmember Offices, City Controller's Office, and the Department of Transportation (DOT), as well as one representative from LA's Neighborhood Councils, were tapped for their particular knowledge on aspects of the budgeting process and transportation funding. The sampling method for interviews combined both selective and snowball sampling. I generated an initial list of interview contacts based on historical documents published across various City agencies, as well as from recommendations based on the expertise of my client. I then asked each interview

subject to recommend other staff members they believed would provide an important perspective to this research and then contacted these recommendations.

Interviews were conducted in-person, generally 30-45 minutes long, and questions were tailored to the expertise and specific area of work of each individual interview participant. However the interview schedule overall followed a general outline: (1) I began with questions about the subject's background with the City of LA and role in the budgeting process, (2) then covered questions related to how that individual approaches reading the budget, (3) then asked questions related to the transportation budget specifically and the political nature of these funds, and (4) concluded with questions about public involvement in the transportation budgeting process and recommendations for CBO involvement. For an example of an interview schedule, see Appendix A.

For the analysis, I summarized the most salient points from each interview and paid specific attention to those points that were brought up across multiple interviews. I then differentiated these into major takeaway categories: (1) best practices on how to read the budget quickly and efficiently, (2) understanding the transportation budgeting process (expanding on the timeline, key players, tensions, politics, etc.), and (3) recommendations for CBO involvement. The purpose of this analysis was to illuminate this process and form a set of precise recommendations for Investing in Place to discuss with other CBOs on how to frame a budget advocacy request that will most likely achieve success.

FOCUS GROUPS

The intent of this research process was to be iterative between both expert interviews and focus groups with CBOs. That is, I

began with an initial set of 4 expert interviews conducted in December. I then synthesized the main takeaways and initial findings from these interviews to present at a focus group with CBOs in January. At this focus group, I presented my initial findings and some potential educational tools meant for educating CBO staff about the transportation budgeting process. The CBOs in attendance at this focus group provided feedback on my findings and these tools, which I then incorporated into my expert interviews moving forward in order that I could better tailor my research to meet their needs. I then conducted another round of expert interviews leading up to another focus group meeting in March with the same cohort of CBOs, followed by a final focus group meeting in May where I presented my final findings and educational tools.

The purpose of these successive focus groups was to connect with a cohort of CBOs who are heavily invested in transportation advocacy in the City of LA so that I could repeatedly tune my research process to best meet their needs. The individuals who attended each focus group represent the following CBOs:

- Alliance for Community Transit (ACT-LA)
- American Heart Association
- Inclusive Action for the City
- Los Angeles Walks
- Move LA
- People for Mobility Justice
- Women Organizing Resources, Knowledge, and Services (WORKS)

I analyzed focus group findings by identifying those needs regarding budget analysis that were voiced most frequently and which received the most support among fellow focus

group attendees. While not every need expressed by CBOs could be addressed within the scope of this research project, I identified those that could be addressed and subsequently incorporated these into my expert interview questions and the development of an educational tool.

FINDINGS

I present the results of my research as follows. First, I discuss those findings that help to illuminate the truly complex process of developing the city's budget, which is typically partially obscured from public view. Following from this, I discuss my findings on how change happens incrementally in the budget, and how there is tension within the city on the role of politics in instigating any such changes in the budget. Next, I discuss what my interviews found about the specific role of transportation-related funding and its unique challenges within the budgeting process. Lastly, I discuss the focus groups and the development of my budget advocacy educational tool, "Easy Money: A Handbook for Reading and Understanding the City of LA's Budget Documents," which can be found in its entirety in Appendix B of this report.

ILLUMINATING THE BUDGET PROCESS

Formally, the city lays out a relatively straight forward timeline of events for each budget cycle. That is, each department/ bureau is required to submit their budget requests to the Mayor's Office and the Office of the CAO by the end of November; the Mayor's Office reviews these requests with input from the CAO and releases the Proposed Budget in April; and then City Council reviews the Proposed Budget, holds public hearings where they receive and consider public comment on the budget, and then pass a final version of the budget by June 1. But interviews revealed a much more winding path to the ultimate budget approval with a wide range of internal stakeholders involved at overlapping moments.

Interviewees from different offices throughout the city noted that the budget is considered by many to be mostly set by the time the Mayor has released their proposed budget. A city councilmember's staffer noted that "it's hard to put in a heavy lift at the late stages." That is, by the time it reaches the Budget and Finance Committee of the City Council, there is limited time to make drastic changes to the budget. Most of the changes implemented by the council are small re-arrangements or fixes. Very rarely will a fully new project of budgetary request receive funding at this stage. An important and somewhat intuitive aspect of the budget, brought up in most interviews, is that it is easier to make bigger budget requests when there is more money to go around or when the economy is strong. It is harder to make the case for allocating money when that money must be moved away from something else in order to do so. The City Council stage of the budgeting process can be thought of through this lens. Regardless of the strength of the economy that year, by the time the budget reaches the Council all of the money in the budget has already been proposed to be allocated for a specific purpose. Making changes at this stage is thus always harder than earlier on in the process.

This goes against what the city has laid out as its formal process of public input, where if a member of the public wants to make change in the budget they are expected to be able to do so through public hearings via City Council. But this finding fits with what has been found in previous research that cities often employ ineffective means of engaging public opinion on the budget process (Hatcher, 2015; Wang & Wart, 2007). And that input is most effective early on, but that many cities do not seek out the public's input until the late stages (Guo & Neshkova, 2012; Hatcher, 2015). Time and again throughout almost every interview, city officials stated that effective

input must happen before the Mayor releases their Proposed Budget.

In this time before the budget reaches the City Council, departments and bureaus must first draft and deliver their budget requests to the Mayor's Office. But they are far from formulating these requests in a vacuum. The Mayor sends out their Budget Policy Letter in early September. This is a short directive (the Letter for fiscal year 2020-2021 was three pages) that informs departments of the Mayor's main citywide priorities for the upcoming budget and general rules to which they must comply. An example of an instruction from the fiscal year 2020-2021 Budget Policy Letter is to, "Maximize the use of special funds in all budget proposals, where appropriate" (Garcetti, 2019). Immediately following this Letter, the CAO releases their Budget Instructions. These Instructions provide in-depth details on how departments should go about formatting and submitting their budget requests. Along with the Instructions, the CAO also provides departments with forms (typically either Excel or Word documents) for them to fill out for every budget request. Interviewees informed me that the CAO receives approximately 800-1,000 individual budget requests across all city departments, so these Instructions and forms help them to review and compare requests from different departments.

And as departments begin to formulate their budget submissions, conversations are already happening between decision makers to establish priorities. City Council offices communicate with departments about their district's priorities. The Council offices aim to have their priority funding issues included in departments' submissions to the Mayor. But, as one representative from a City Council office informed me, if the funding priority does not make it into a department's

submission or the Proposed Budget, then ensuring that a priority is well-known early on in the process can make it easier to add into the budget later when it reaches council. As discussed, this is a time when it is typically difficult to make significant changes to the budget. So an understanding that this has long been a Council office priority is quite helpful.

And departments themselves start pitching potential budget requests to the Mayor's Office early on, according to one interviewee from the Mayor's Office. In several interviews it was brought up that the Mayor's stated priorities have a significant effect on how department's formulate their requests. For example, Mayor Eric Garcetti's priorities for the budget throughout his term have been as follows:

1. A Safe City
2. A Prosperous City
3. A Liveable and Sustainable City
4. A Well-Run City Government

All budget requests submitted by departments must include which of these four priority areas they support. But there is also what one interviewee referred to as "an overall tone" to the budget process that is generally set by the Mayor that can reveal more than what is written about these four priority areas. And departments communicate with the Mayor's Office about how to best frame their budget asks, working within this framework. Often, budget politics comes down to what an interviewee from a City Councilmember's office referred to as "branding," or what another interviewee from the Finance Department referred to as the strategic use of "buzzwords." For example, if LADOT were to make a budget request for a pedestrian or cyclist safety project, they would likely frame it as a "resilience" project. They would be unlikely to say that it is a "public safety" project. "Resilience" being a buzzword

for projects that promote environmental sustainability and reduce reliance on automobiles. In the world of LA budgeting politics, “safety” almost always refers to services provided by the Los Angeles Police and Fire Departments.

And while the stated priorities and direction of the Mayor may play a heavy hand in how budget requests are formulated, the Mayor’s Office itself does not make many direct requests of departments. Based on interviews with Mayor’s Office staff, the Mayor’s Office will tell departments when something is a priority to them in advance of the department compiling its request submission. But the actual projects or the programs that they recommend to departments to include in their budget requests is a small percentage of the overall budget that departments submit.

Once departments have submitted their budget requests to the Mayor’s Office by the end of November, a significant amount of negotiating and maneuvering has already occurred between various actors within the city. Even after they submit their requests, however, departments are still allowed to submit supplemental budget requests. Interviews informed me that these can be used in the event that the department forgot to include something in their initial request, or if the Mayor’s Office recognizes an inconsistency when doing its review. And according to anecdotal experience from a city official in the Mayor’s Office, on average only about half of the requests made by a department will make it into the Mayor’s Proposed Budget. So the budget is far from set after requests have been submitted, and departments must continue to champion their own cause as the Mayor and CAO weigh the benefits of allocating funding to different programs and different departments given the limited pool of finances from which the city has to draw on. Throughout the winter, the

Mayor and CAO hold meetings with departments to discuss in detail the needs they have identified through their budget submissions.

All of this happens before the city begins its formal public engagement process, which only begins when the Mayor releases the Proposed Budget in April and City Council holds public hearings to consider the proposal. Before this, the only formal public input happens via the NC Budget Advocates. Throughout the month of October, the NC Budget Advocates meet with every department and bureau in the city to discuss that department/bureau’s current fiscal situation, their plans for the coming fiscal year, and the Budget Advocates’ priorities for that department or bureau. Based on these meetings, the NC Budget Advocates then release a White Paper, typically in February or March, that details their recommendations for the city as a whole, as well as for each department individually. They present their findings in a meeting with the Mayor and also have the opportunity to present to the Budget and Finance Committee of the City Council when the public hearing process begins. As an interviewee from the NC Board of Commissioners indicated, however, it is difficult to measure the influence that the Budget Advocates are able to have on the official budget because most of their work is done in private meetings. While the Budget Advocates include a summary of each meeting’s discussion in their White Paper, these meetings are nonetheless private.

In response to the NC Budget Advocates’ White Paper, the CAO submits to City Council an analysis of every recommendation made in the Paper. Table 1 provides three examples of feedback provided by the CAO for the 2019 White Paper. The feedback does not address the recommendation itself. Rather, it addresses to what degree the recommendation has or has

TABLE 1: Three examples from the CAO's report to the Budget and Finance Committee on the recommendations made by the NC Budget Advocates in their 2019 White Paper.

Department	2019 White Paper Recommendation	Category	Submitted with 2019-2020 Budget Request?	Status of 2019-20 Budget Request	CAO Feedback
Bureau of Engineering	Add 6 to 8 positions to design and deliver new and expanded projects including one position to accelerate construction on the Purple Line, 3 to 5 positions to double Department of Transportation's (DOT's) Automated Traffic Signal Program, and both a construction manager and administrative person for the Civic Center Program	New Proposal (not under consideration by the Council as part of the Proposed Budget, an existing motion, or other pending actions)	No	N/A - department did not submit budget request	The Bureau of Engineering did not request additional positions to support the Purple Line, DOT's Automated Traffic Signal Program, and Civic Center Building Project. Consequently, this item was not considered.
Bureau of Street Services	Make data available to the public broken down by project, documenting dollars spent, services provided, performance metrics and project schedules (existing and future) drilled down by Council District (CD), Neighborhood Council (NC) area, and street	Pending in Budget (department submitted proposal in 2019-20 budget request)	Yes	NOT included in 2019-20 Proposed Budget	The Bureau of Street Services submitted a budgetary request for \$500,000 in its Contractual Services Account to hire a consultant to advise on a strategic plan to implement a public-facing data panel. The Proposed Budget does not provide funding for this request.
Bureau of Street Services	Implement an alley repair program.	Pending in Budget (department submitted proposal in 2019-20 budget request)	Yes	Included in 2019-20 Proposed Budget	The Proposed Budget provides \$3,000,000 for alley paving as a Special Fund Appropriation within the Measure M Local Return Fund.

not already been incorporated into the Proposed Budget, or if it is something the city is already implementing in some other way. The CAO indicates that the Budget and Finance Committee should use the budget memo process if they would like a further report on any White Paper recommendations. Though in reviewing the Proposed Budget for FY 2019-2020 the Committee did not request any such reports.

Clearly, there is much more complexity to the budget process than the straightforward timeline presented by the city. The four key players — the Mayor's Office, the City Council, the CAO, and the budgetary department — go back and forth throughout the year, fluctuating in who has the most control over a budget ask. Overall though, there are parameters that are set that city staff work within. Knowing these parameters can be key to success for a CBO looking to get involved from the outside.

HOW DOES CHANGE HAPPEN IN THE BUDGET?

Understanding the complexity and overlapping nature of the budget process raises the question of how change actually occurs to reflect shifts in policy, direction, or public sentiment in the city. And my interviews revealed that the budget is somewhat resistant to change. As one interviewee from the Office of the CAO put it, "There's only so much you can do to change the direction of a 40,000 person organization in one budget cycle." As such, budgetary change is inherently a "slow march" that occurs in increments year over year, as described by an interviewee from a City Council office. This understanding of the budget changing slowly and incrementally was repeated throughout interviews. Several interviewees brought up the funding that the city has put towards homelessness as an example of this incremental change, stating that — over the course of several budget cycles — Mayor Eric Garcetti's prior-

ity emphasis on homelessness can be seen through a shift in budgeted amounts.

This very incremental change is in part due to the fact that the city does not do a re-evaluation of all of its funds every year. That is, most of the money actually remains in what is known as the "base" budget. This is money that maintains city services at the same level from year to year. For the most part, the base budget is constituted of the salaries of the city's regular authority positions. Regular authority positions are those long-term, permanent positions that have been instituted by an ordinance adopted by the City Council and Mayor, as opposed to resolution authority positions, which must be re-authorized each fiscal year. Departments will detail their base budget in their budget requests to the Mayor and CAO for inclusion in analysis, and the city may delete some regular authority positions — typically only those that are vacant — as well as institute cost of living adjustments. But the base budget is not laid out in the budget documents the Mayor's Office produces and that City Council and the public review.

This is reflective of an understanding among city officials that a large portion of the budget is not going to be shifting from year to year. Thus, when city staff are making and prioritizing budget requests, it is with the understanding that they are not working with the city's entire \$10 billion budget, but rather a much smaller portion of funds that are flexible. Because of this, an interviewee from the NCs stated that, "There's more power in the smaller stuff than mobilizing for the big, \$10 million budget," seemingly reflecting the entrenched belief among city staff that the budget is slow and often resistant to respond to change.

Implementing a budgeting system where every dollar of ex-

penditure in the budget does get scrutinized and evaluated each fiscal year was recognized by one interviewee from the Mayor's Office as a change that would likely make the budget more transparent and responsive to current needs. Such a budgeting method is known as "zero-based budgeting" (Callaghan et al., 2014). However, moving the city over to a zero-based budgeting system would certainly require a tremendous amount of effort and is beyond the city's current capacity, especially without a groundswell of support, according to this interviewee.

DOES THE BUDGET MAKE POLICY, OR IMPLEMENT IT?

An area of tension that came up across my interviews with city officials was the question of whether the budget is a tool that itself makes policy, or simply implements already established policy. Some interviewees were adamant that the budget is not a place for CBOs, members of the public, or people within the city government to try to push policy changes. As one interviewee from a City Councilmember's office put it, "People want to use the budget to make policy changes. We put up a hand there. Policy changes need to go through the public process." Interviewees thus indicated the reticence, in particular on the part of the City Council, to make changes via the budget that they viewed as diverging from stated policies of the city. For one example, an interviewee from the Finance Department brought up that many transportation advocates may be interested in looking at money that's currently used for enforcement, or policing. However, she indicated that such a change in the direction of the city's budget — that is, taking money away from LAPD and instead directing it to other programs or projects to try to achieve the same goals of public safety — would likely have to begin as a conversation outside the budgeting process before advocates might begin to see a change in the budget.

Despite this, there also seemed to be an understanding among many interviewees that the budget is nevertheless a policy tool that reflects the political nature of the city at large. As that same interviewee from the Finance Department put it, "Our budget is a statement of values." And an interviewee from the Mayor's Office stated that, "If you're going to be putting money towards one program versus another program, you're still making policy in general." But the fact that city decision makers — and in particular members of the City Council — want the budget to be viewed as a technical rather than political document ends up shaping the very politics of the budget process itself. That is to say, this anti-political stance of the City Council means that departments must be clear in how their budget requests relate to already articulated policies and priorities. This frames a large part of the budgeting process discussed above.

TRANSPORTATION'S ROLE IN THE BUDGET

Transportation advocates face an uphill battle when looking to make changes to how the city allocates funding for its public rights-of-way. On top of the complexities and challenges of the budgeting process already discussed, transportation advocates will find that funding for the public rights-of-way in LA is spread across many different departments and bureaus. As many as eleven different agencies across the city have jurisdiction or are responsible for different aspects of city street-scapes (Iwasaki, 2017). Three of these tend to be the focus of much of the work with which transportation advocates are concerned: the Department of Transportation (DOT), the Bureau of Engineering (BOE), and the Bureau of Street Services (BSS). The fact that there is no holistic "transportation" budget can make understanding the city's priorities with regards to transportation funding even more difficult for advocates.

Interviewees stated that funding for transportation is spread across so many different sources because transportation is a very political topic. In part, this is because “the street means different things to different people,” as one interviewee from the Mayor’s Office stated. They went on to say that some in the city view transportation as “mobility,” while others view it as a necessary aspect of “economic development.” These different paradigms for understanding what transportation actually is for the City of Los Angeles then lead people to various conclusions about how money should be spent across the public rights-of-way and what aspects of mobility should be prioritized. For instance, “everyone’s definition of what is and isn’t Vision Zero is different,” according to an interviewee from a City Councilmember’s office. Vision Zero, launched in 2015, is the city’s program to implement its commitment to reduce the number of traffic fatalities to zero by the year 2025 (Linton, 2015). Ostensibly, the Vision Zero program and funding is intended to implement street safety projects. But because definitions around both the “street” and “safety” tend to remain up to the interpretation of the individual, departments will often attempt to stretch Vision Zero funding to cover many types of department projects. One example provided by this same interviewee was a hillside maintenance project at risk of landslide next to a busy road being classified as a Vision Zero project.

Following from this, another issue for transportation advocates both in and outside of the city is the fact that many city officials are wary of allocating money towards Vision Zero because they, too, question how the money will be spent. Another interviewee from a City Council office discussed how it is easy for Council to understand the costs associated with a BSS expenditure like filling potholes. BSS can clearly state how

many potholes they can fill with a given amount of money, and how many they can fill with a given amount more. DOT (which oversees the Vision Zero program), on the other hand, struggles with “outlining what they’re expecting to achieve with the dollars.” Thus it can be difficult for the Mayor and City Council to compare the more tangible results of a request for transportation funding such as BSS filling potholes versus the more intangible results of DOT doing Vision Zero-related education projects, for example.

Furthermore, DOT has struggled in recent years with project delivery, as several interviewees brought up. This has led to a lack of faith on the part of the Mayor and City Council, especially as the media continues to discuss the perennially high numbers of traffic deaths despite investments in Vision Zero (Chou, 2018; Fonesca, 2019). As one interviewee from the Mayor’s Office pointed out, Vision Zero has actually had a lot of success in recent budget years in terms of funding allocations. The issue has revolved more around staff capacity. As this interviewee pointed out, BOE, BSS, and, in particular, DOT have high vacancies rates largely concentrated in field crews — the staff needed to actually implement and perform construction management for street projects. Retaining staff in these positions has proved challenging for these departments with a major reason being that private companies are paying higher salaries, according to this interviewee.

All of this adds up to equal a very difficult landscape for transportation advocacy-based CBOs to navigate when attempting to get involved in budget advocacy. There are many different places for transportation advocates to look in terms of the budget, but without much direction or understanding of how decisions may have been made. Having the ability to understand the city’s budgeting documents may be a good place to

start for CBOs potentially looking to keep track of how the city is responding to the staffing needs of transportation projects, since this has arisen as a critically needed aspect of project delivery.

DEVELOPING A TOOL TO FOSTER BUDGET ADVOCACY

A critical part of this research has been the development of an educational tool that can respond to some of the challenges discussed here for CBOs looking to get involved in the transportation budgeting process. Based on my focus groups, CBO staff had a wide range of experiences in terms of working with the City of LA's budget, as well as different desires in outcomes they would like from potential budget advocacy. Some wanted to be able to read the budget books in-depth and be able to train their community members in doing the same, while others felt their capacity was more limited to just gaining a better understanding of the budgeting timeline and when they could best intervene. Some were involved in campaigns or projects on a citywide scale, while others were interested only in understanding how they could potentially increase funds for improvements in one particular neighborhood.

While responding to all of the specific needs brought up by CBOs in these focus groups would be much beyond the scope of this project, over the course of these meetings I workshopped potential educational tools and presentations and incorporated the most salient feedback. As was brought up in the first focus group, knowledge is power in the context of the budget just as it is elsewhere. Thus, as CBOs expressed an overall interest in an expanded version of an annotated budget that I presented at the first focus group meeting, I took this direction for the educational tool. I added in definitions as suggested by members of CBOs and clarified on points of difficulty in the budget.

In the end, I developed a handbook titled "Easy Money: A Handbook for Reading and Understanding the City of LA's Budget Documents." Given the varying levels of comfort with the budget of CBO staff at focus groups, the handbook is targeted at an audience of any level of budgeting experience. To develop the handbook, I integrated suggestions and explanations from interviewees on how to most efficiently take in the budgeting documents with my own analysis of the budgeting documents. The purpose of this handbook is to be used as a stand alone document by Investing in Place and other CBOs in order to increase knowledge of, and subsequently, power over the city's budgeting process. The handbook can be found in Appendix B of this report.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research has illuminated the complex nature of the transportation budgeting process in the City of LA. The formal process for public input only happens through the limited settings of public hearings at City Council and via meetings with the NC Budget Advocates. And interviews revealed that these forms of input are unlikely to have a large effect on the budget, though more research should be done to analyze and define the true degree of “effectiveness” of these existing public engagement tools. Interviews indicated that CBOs must look beyond these methods of engagement to informal forms of involvement via relationship building with city staff. However, when entering into the landscape of the transportation budgeting process, there are many obstacles that potential advocates must be aware of. These include the tensions between policy implementation and policy creation, as well as the incremental nature of change in a relatively inflexible budget. Furthermore, transportation is a highly political topic within the city with different meanings to different people. This means advocates must be careful to tailor their message to their audience. To conclude, I make the following recommendations to Investing in Place and fellow CBOs looking to get involved in transportation budget advocacy in the City of LA:

1. The earlier (in the budget cycle) the better. Start budget advocacy in September and October as departments are putting together their budget requests. The best position

to be in is to have your budget priority included in the submission the department makes to the Mayor and CAO.

2. Find a partner to be your advocate on the inside. It’s not enough just to have knowledge of the formal process, and CBOs must be diligent in their relationship-building with city staff. Finding staff that are sympathetic to the goals of your organization can be the difference in how far your budget advocacy goes. This relationship works best when it is mutually beneficial, because city departments are also looking for additional support and evidence for their budget requests as they lobby for the limited pool of funds.
3. Understand that making budget requests is about branding. To be most effective while working within the current system, make it clear how what your organization is asking for aligns with the established policies of the city — which have often been articulated by the Mayor. Utilize the city’s own buzzwords to describe and package your goals.
4. Break down larger budget requests into smaller pieces that can be achieved through incremental changes to the budget from year to year. Know how you want this change to affect the budget for this coming year versus how you envision it changing the budget in five years, ten years, etc. What would a win look like this year, and how does that translate into a ripple effect across many budget cycles?
5. As much as is possible, translate any budget requests into dollar amounts that focus on outcomes. City officials want to know what their money is buying. And this makes it easier for staff to advocate for your request, as they can better compare it to alternatives.

6. When looking at the budget and keeping track of funds, pay attention to where the city is putting resources towards increases or decreases in staffing. Staff salaries and expenses are the city's primary expenditure and the baseline needed for the city to provide most of its services. Advocating for adequate staffing for programs that align with your goals can thus be a crucial part of successful budget advocacy.
7. Build coalition around budget advocacy with other CBOs. Speaking with a unified voice underscores the importance of your budget goals to the city. Create a cohesive top three or top five list of your priorities with other CBOs for the coming fiscal year, just as city departments do in their budget submissions. Presenting this to departments, City Council, and the Mayor will make these changes much more actionable to the city than disjointed calls for more funding across various projects.

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APPENDIX A: SAMPLE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The following is the interview schedule used in my first interview. This interview was conducted with a staffer from a City Councilmember's office. My interview schedules evolved throughout the process to as I learned more about the budget and the budgeting process and in order to respond to the specific knowledge of each interview participant.

BACKGROUND

1. What is your role in the budgeting process?

READING THE BUDGET

2. Walk me through your approach to reading and taking in the budget. Where do you go first?
 - To understand the appropriation of funds to specific purposes I've been looking at the fund schedules and supplementing with the budget summaries in the White Books. Is this the best approach?
3. What is your approach to tracking all of the funding for a specific program or group of programs that receive funding from different sources?
4. Special Funds have stipulations attached to them regarding how they are allowed to be allocated, while money coming from the General Fund does not. But once funds are allocated in the budget, is there any difference in how they can be spent?
 - Is there a preferable source, between General and Special Funds?
5. What do people miss when trying to understand the City's

budget?

6. What is important for people to know before looking at the budget, especially from an advocacy perspective?

THE "TRANSPORTATION BUDGET"

I know that there are many departments beyond just LADOT who are involved in constructing and maintaining the City's public rights-of-way. As a part of my project, I am trying to build a more comprehensive understanding of this wider "transportation budget" for advocates to know where all of the different revenue is coming from that is touching the public right-of-way.

7. Funding for our public rights-of-way clearly comes from sources such as the Sidewalk Repair Fund, Measure M, Measure R, Proposition C, Proposition A, and the Gas Tax Improvement Fund. How should I understand other, less clear sources of funding for public rights-of-way, such as Schedule 29 (Figure 1)?
 - Why are there so many "Actual" funds in Schedule 29 from 2017-18 compared to the Budget for 2019-20?
 - Where is there information about these funds?
8. What other sources of funding do you know contribute to projects in the public right-of-way?
 - What funds do you believe are most important for groups interested in mobility advocacy to be tracking?
9. Why is funding for the public rights-of-way spread across so many different places?
 - What do you think are the consequences of this, good or bad?

THE BUDGETING PROCESS

10. During the process of developing the budget, where do you look to find opportunities to make changes in appropriation amounts?

11. What role do you think public input currently plays in the budgeting cycle?

- Is there an example of a time when public input specifically about the budget led to a change in budget amounts?
- What aspects of previous public input have been effective or ineffective?

12. Part of my project involves working with Community Based Organizations and nonprofits who want to see increased funding for issues such as Complete Streets, sidewalks, Vision Zero and more.

- What recommendations do you have for them?
- Strategies for effectiveness?
- Key people to talk to?
- Timing of their organizing and advocacy efforts to effectively engage in the City's Budget development process?

13. What are ways you think the City's budget process could be improved?

14. Is the way the City of LA develops its budget similar to other big cities?

CONCLUSION

15. Is there anything else that you think hasn't been covered that you think is important to discuss?

16. Who else do you recommend I reach out to about an informational interview?

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUND SCHEDULES		
SCHEDULE 29		
ALLOCATIONS FROM OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND SOURCES		
The City receives funds from private agencies, citizens, and various County, State and Federal programs for engineering design, fire protection, acquiring rights of way, construction, and for various other programs. These funds are deposited into various special funds that are managed by City departments. Appropriations to departments are authorized based on the criteria in which the funds are received.		
Actual 2017-18	Estimated 2018-19	Total Budget 2019-20
REVENUE		
53,316	-	-
52,218	-	-
97,020	-	-
43,779	-	-
299,741	670,000	814,260
86,711	-	-
3,041	-	-
29,326	-	-
-	-	14,000
14,200	14,000	-
298,041	-	-
2,500	-	-
81,592	39,000	-
979,460	937,000	993,616
3,228	4,000	-
-	87,000	-
9,303	-	-
12,893	1,000	-
100,000	-	-
5,770,443	5,861,000	5,477,266
1,430,439	-	-
617,808	-	-
8,800	-	-
7,814,079	10,312,000	11,390,601
669,804	-	-
358,939	656,000	1,100,326
113,684	-	-
24,990	-	-
58,000	-	-
243,000	-	-
90,267	-	-
150,000	-	-
110,000	-	-
100,000	-	-
130,000	-	-
187,647	-	-
173,853	-	-
161,528	-	-
93,496	-	-
438,169	-	-

FIGURE ONE: Schedule 29 of the Mayor's Proposed Budget (2019-20)

APPENDIX B: BUDGETING HANDBOOK

In the following pages, I present the budgeting handbook that I developed through my research process, “Easy Money: A Handbook for Reading and Understanding the City of LA’s Budgeting Documents.” The purpose of this handbook is that it can be used as a tool on its own, separate from this report, to educate and build coalition around transportation budget advocacy and budget advocacy more broadly. Its contents were informed by the needs expressed by CBO members in focus groups, by the information and guidance on reading the budget I gathered through my interviews, and through my own experience of taking in the budget for the first time.



EASY MONEY

A Handbook for Reading and Understanding
the City of LA's Budget Documents

Prepared by Katherine Stiegemeyer
UCLA Master of Urban &
Regional Planning, 2020

INVESTING
in **PLACE**

UCLA Luskin
School of Public Affairs

WHAT IS THE BUDGET?

The budget is a document that lays out the city's financial plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Each new **fiscal year** starts on July 1st and ends on June 30th of the following calendar year. In order to come up with this financial plan, the city estimates what **revenues** it anticipates in the coming fiscal year. Revenues come from various sources including taxes, fees, and fines that you pay to the city. These revenues are then turned into **expenditures**. In the City of Los Angeles, some revenues are **appropriated** directly to each of the city's departments and bureaus in order to pay for staff salaries and other general uses, while other expenditures are appropriated to special purpose funds. Money that is put towards a special purpose fund typically must be used for a specific purpose.

BUDGET VOCAB

Fiscal year

Often abbreviated as "FY", a 12-month period for which each iteration of the budget is applicable.

In LA, the fiscal year runs from July 1st through June 30th of the following calendar year.

Revenues

Money that the city receives. Each year, the LA City Controller is responsible for putting together a revenue projection for the coming fiscal year, which forecasts how much money the city can expect to bring in.

Expenditures

Money that the city spends. Expenditures cover the costs of services, materials, equipment, or capital improvements for the city.

Appropriation

An appropriation is a legal authorization for an expenditure to be made for a specific purpose. When the city "appropriates" money to departments or to special funds, they are allocating that money to spent in a designated way.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES FUND STRUCTURE

All revenue that the city receives goes into a specific fund. These funds are set up in order to organize revenues that will serve different purposes for the city. The City of LA has four different categories of funds:

1 The **General Fund** is the primary operating fund for the city. It contains all city revenues that are not required by ordinance or by the City Charter to be put towards a specified purpose. As such, money in the General Fund can be used for any discretionary purposes and is often highly desired by departments making budgetary requests for this reason. Revenue sources that constitute the General Fund include:

Property Tax **Parking Fines** **General Sales Tax**

2 **Special Funds** account for revenues derived from taxes, fees, governmental grants, etc. that have legal stipulations requiring that they be spent on particular functions. These funds can only be used for their intended purpose. However, they are usually not so specific as to proscribe specific projects on which they must be spent, rather general programs or functions. Examples of Special Funds include:

Proposition A **Measure M** **Gas Tax** **Sidewalk Repair**

3 The **Reserve Fund** allows the city to set aside money from the General Fund to be used in the case of unforeseen expenditures or emergencies. For example, Mayor Eric Garcetti authorized use of the city's Reserve Funds to cover sudden costs associated with the COVID-19 crisis in 2020.

4 The **Budget Stabilization Fund** allows the city to set aside savings during times of economic prosperity. Excess revenue from seven economy-sensitive taxes is placed into this fund to be used in times of economic duress

WHAT IS THE BUDGETING PROCESS?

The budgeting process is an almost year-round event. Very soon after a new budget goes into effect at the beginning of a new fiscal year (July 1st), the process begins to start drafting the next budget. The Mayor's Office is in charge of the budgeting process for the majority of the year, as all city departments must submit their budget requests to the Mayor by the end of November. The Mayor then reviews these requests in consultation with departments and the Office of the City Administrative Officer (CAO). The CAO is in charge of providing financial analyses of budgetary items to both the Mayor and City Council. The Mayor then releases their Proposed Budget no later than April 20th, at which point power over the budget transfers to the City Council. The Council's Budget and Finance Committee first reviews the Mayor's Proposal, making recommendations to the entire Council. Around mid to late-May the entire City Council holds public hearings regarding the budget. By June 1st, the Council must adopt the budget, which then goes into affect on July 1st.

BUDGET DOCUMENTS

Released in Mid-April:

Mayor's Proposed Budget

Budget Summary

Detail of Department Programs Vols. I & II

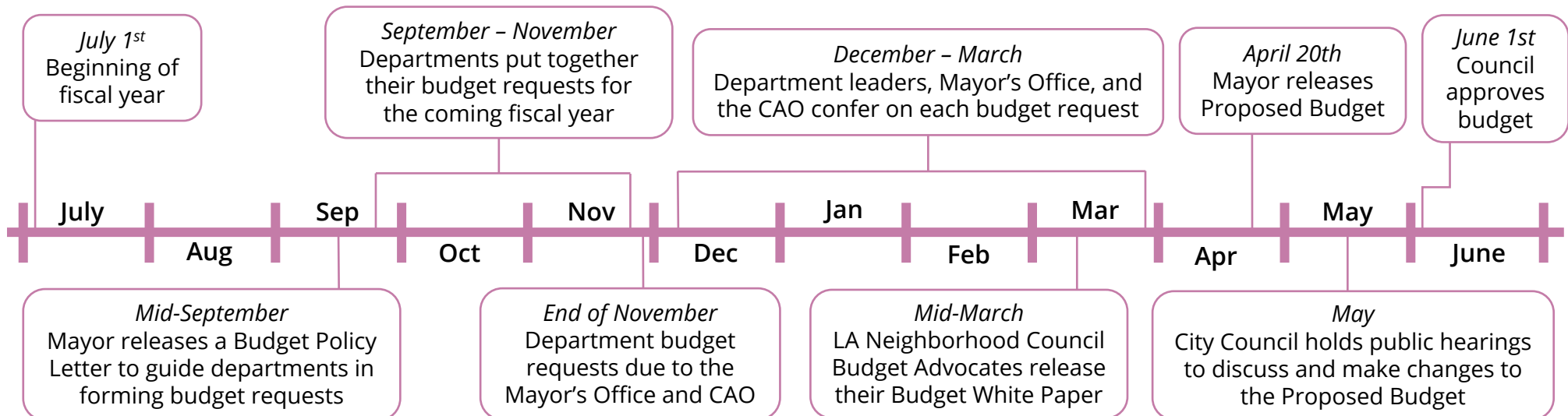
Along with their Proposed Budget, the Mayor releases a Budget Summary that outlines broad categories of priorities for the coming fiscal year, and highlights budget items that support these priorities. The Detail of Department Programs, called the Blue Books for short, provides more in-depth information about the proposed budget changes for each department.

Released in Early June:

Final Budget

Final Detail of Department Programs Vols. I & II

FISCAL YEAR TIMELINE OVERVIEW



HOW CAN I ANALYZE THE BUDGET?

The budget can tell us about how the city is or is not manifesting its stated goals into dollars. The city intends for the budget to be an objective document that reflects its established policies. But the interpretation of these policies into dollar amounts can be a subjective process. This is why it is important to be able to interpret the budget documents to understand what they say about the city is implementing its stated goals and policies.

WHAT CAN THE BUDGET TELL ME?

There are a number of reasons why advocates may want to be able to better understand and analyze the City of LA's budget documents. Below are some examples of information one can glean from analysis of the budget books:

1 It's important to keep in mind that the city's largest expenditure, across all departments, is staff salaries. Though we often associate city services with the capital needed to fulfill them, frequently the most critical and expensive aspect of delivering city services is to have adequate staffing. The budget can tell us about where the city is allocating funding for increases or decreases in staff resources.

2 In particular for advocates interested in transportation, analyzing the budget is important because it reveals how the city gets and spends transportation revenues across many different departments. Much of the city's budget for transportation funding comes from various voter approved sales taxes. These revenues are then placed into Special Funds because they must be spent on specified transportation-related activities. The budget then outlines how all of the revenue from these Special Funds is allocated.

3 By comparing budgets year-to-year, you can see how the city's priorities shift and are reflected in the budget. For example, looking at budgets from the last decade will show a precipitous rise in city spending on homelessness.

WHAT CAN'T THE BUDGET TELL ME?

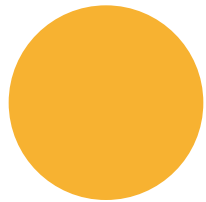
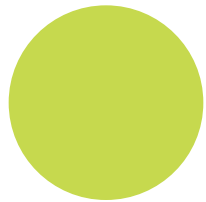
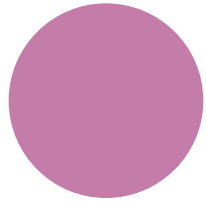
There is a lot of information packed into the City of LA's budget books. But there are some details that they leave out for various reasons. Below are some examples of information for which you would have to look beyond the budget books to obtain:

1 The budget accounts for change on a year-to-year basis. This means that there is a significant "base" of money that the budget does not describe. The budget does not go into detail about every dollar that departments are allocated - it only discusses the changes from the previous year. So there's no way to know just by looking at the budget books what exactly is in this base budget.

2 When allocating funds to departments or to specific programs, the city does not want to be overly proscriptive. That's why, generally, you won't be able to find via the budget books how much the city is spending on specific projects. For example, the budget can tell you how much the city is budgeting for the Vision Zero program as a whole, but how that money is spent beyond that is generally left up to departments as they implement projects throughout the year. The major exception is if the city "earmarks" funds for a specific project. Earmarking is when the city sets aside a certain amount of money in the budget for a specific project, typically giving it its own line item.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

The following sections of this handbook use the Mayor's Proposed Budget for the City of LA's FY2019-2020 to highlight important aspects of the budget. On the right side of each page you'll see an excerpt from the budget, and to the left you'll find annotations. These annotations will guide you through the process of reading the city's budget documents by providing definitions and explaining key concepts so that you can walk away confident to do your own budget analysis.



SECTION ONE

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Section 1 of the budget provides a very broad overview of how the budget is structured and how the process plays out. The parts that make up this section are generally short and fairly straightforward, relative to most of the budget’s materials. Reading these is a good place to start for one trying to get involved with the City’s budget process. In particular, the following sections are helpful:

- ▶ **Budget Process** – reviews in broad strokes the process that takes place over the course of the fiscal year in order to implement the budget.
- ▶ **Budget Presentation** – discusses the four books that the City uses to present the entirety of the budget materials (the Mayor’s budget summary, the Proposed Budget Book, the Detail of Department Programs (Blue/White Book), and the Revenue Outlook).
- ▶ **Fund Structure** – Goes over the four types of funds that make up the budget (General Fund, Special Funds, Reserve Fund, and Budget Stabilization Fund).
- ▶ **Performance Metrics** – Each Department is assigned “metrics” by which the Mayor’s budget priorities are measured. This section provides some insight into how the City views the impact of their dollars spent and how they view they measure the Mayor’s priority outcomes.

Section 2 of the budget is where the budget for each department is laid out summarily. The full, detailed description of each department’s budget is laid out in the Blue/White Books (i.e. the Detail of Department Programs). This is where you will find a summary of all of the funds each department is receiving for salaries and department expenses, as well as a summary of the sources of all of their funding (i.e. how much of their money is coming from the General Fund and how much is coming from any Special Funds).

The department budgets do not actually give a full picture of how each department works, however. For those interested in how the City spends money on our public rights-of-way, looking at the department budget for the Bureau of Engineering, the Bureau of Street Services, the Department of Transportation, etc. provides only a portion of the picture on how the City is allocating funding.

This is because the department budgets only provide information on that department's staff salaries and operating expenses (such as printing, uniforms, and supplies, among others things). Staff salaries are the City's biggest expense and can thus be important to review as a budget advocate.

However, for information on how the City is allocating money specifically towards building and maintaining its public rights-of-way outside of staff salaries, we must also look elsewhere.

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While each department is allocated a certain amount of funding to cover salaries and operating expenses, the City also allocates funding for other dedicated purposes. These are called Nondepartmental or Special Purpose Fund Appropriations.

One such Nondepartmental appropriation is the Capital Improvement Expenditure Program (CIEP), which provides money for the purchase, renovation, or upgrade of new and existing municipal facilities, sewers, and “**physical plant**” infrastructure. Here, “physical plant” means streets, street lighting, and stormwater projects.

In Section 3 of the budget, an important place to look for those interested in transportation and the City’s public rights-of-way is the Special Purpose Fund Schedules. This is where you will find the summary of revenue and appropriations for funds such as Measures M and R, Props A and C, and the Gas Tax (SB1).

Special Funds are laid out this way because they are restricted; they come a specific source and have to be spent in accordance with a particular purpose. Some of their revenue will be appropriated to Department budgets, but some of it will also be appropriated to Special Purposes. These Special Purposes could be specific programs such as Vision Zero or Complete Streets.

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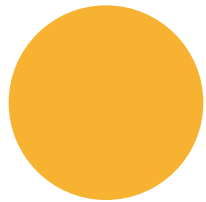
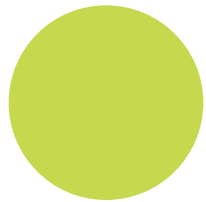
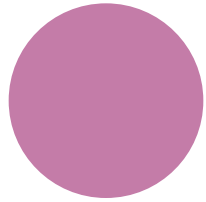
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At the end of the Proposed Budget Book in Section 7 there is a Glossary. This is a good place to start when any unclear terms are used throughout the budget. In particular, the Glossary includes a Table of Common Acronyms used throughout the budget and what is being indicated by those acronyms. Common examples include:

- ▶ EQ: Equipment
- ▶ EX: Expense
- ▶ SG: Salaries, General
- ▶ SOT: Salaries, Overtime

For the Police and Fire Departments, you will also see the acronyms "SW" and "SWOT." These stand for "Sworn Salaries" and "Sworn Overtime." The city differentiates the salaries of police officers and fire fighters – who have been "sworn" in – from the rest of the city's "civilian" personnel.



SECTION TWO

**Understanding
Department Budgets,
Part I**

Section Two, Part Two of the main budget book is where the city provides a high-level overview of the funds provided to each department. Here we're looking at the Bureau of Engineering's budget, which is one of many departments/bureaus across the city that impact public rights-of-way. Each department's budget begins with a brief summary of the functions of that department.

Bureau of Engineering

As the City's capital delivery organization for non-proprietary capital projects, with a mission and organization-wide commitment to be a national leader in the delivery of sustainable capital projects, the Bureau of Engineering annually delivers a diverse set of wastewater, municipal, recreation and park facilities as well as bridge and street improvements, streetscapes, and stormwater systems. Through data-driven performance management and the Bureau's vision to lead the transformation of Los Angeles into the world's most livable City, the Bureau continues to focus on delivering Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building projects and continuing its leadership role with Envision, a nationally recognized green assessment tool for civil engineering projects. In addition to the design, construction, and delivery of the City's capital projects, the Bureau provides the following services: fee-supported permits; pre-development and engineering services that are primarily related to infrastructure improvements within the public right-of-way; maintaining ownership records of real property within the City; maintaining and reproducing maps in support of various City services including Navigate LA; collecting, calculating and recording survey data; and conducting real estate and environmental assessments, investigations and research in support of Bureau operations and the City's capital projects.

Actual Expenditures 2017-18	Adopted Budget 2018-19	Estimated Expenditures 2018-19	← Two previous budget cycles	Current budget cycle	→ Total Budget 2019-20
-----------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------------	----------------------	------------------------

EXPENDITURES AND APPROPRIATIONS

The four categories of expenditures and appropriations that departments can have in their budgets are: Salaries, Expenses, Equipment, and Special. Though not every department will have Equipment or Special categories, as BOE has no Special expenditures. As you can see, the vast majority of BOE's budget is spent on staff salaries. This is true for the majority of city departments.

Actual Expenditures 2017-18	Adopted Budget 2018-19	Estimated Expenditures 2018-19		Total Budget 2019-20
Salaries				
83,110,114	88,860,462	85,877,000	Salaries General	97,141,499
-	350,000	350,000	Salaries, As-Needed	350,000
564,176	1,267,246	1,266,000	Overtime General	1,267,246
585,829	462,500	690,000	Hiring Hall Salaries	462,500
257,500	187,500	187,000	Benefits Hiring Hall	187,500
-	-	122,000	Benefits Hiring Hall Construction	-
84,517,619	91,127,708	88,492,000	Total Salaries	99,408,745
Expense				
23,923	91,402	91,000	Printing and Binding	91,402
40,999	-	19,000	Travel	-
150,008	52,362	52,000	Construction Expense	52,362
1,421,544	2,195,990	3,904,000	Contractual Services	1,735,990
68,101	66,629	66,000	Field Equipment Expense	66,629
90,750	79,252	80,000	Transportation	80,752
1,095,669	1,053,394	1,054,000	Office and Administrative	1,127,645
198,299	206,085	207,000	Operating Supplies	206,085
3,089,293	3,745,114	5,473,000	Total Expense	3,360,865
Equipment				
-	-	-	Transportation Equipment	258,667
-	-	-	Total Equipment	258,667
87,606,912	94,872,822	93,965,000	Total Bureau of Engineering	103,028,277

Following the summary of appropriations, the next page of each department's budget will summarize the sources of all of the department's funding. This money can come from two different fund categories: the General Fund and the Special Purpose Funds. Because money that flows into the General Fund is unrestricted – meaning it can be used for any city purpose – the city does not have to account for these funds beyond saying that they come from the General Fund.

But for the rest of the department's revenue sources, which come from Special Purpose Funds, the city must provide more detail. That's why you'll see a line item for each Special Fund. If you then turn to the page in Section Three of the budget that lays out how the revenue in one of these Special Funds is being spent, you will see a line item for the Bureau of Engineering that matches the amount listed here.

The total funds listed at the bottom of this page will match the total expenditures listed on the previous page.

Bureau of Engineering

Actual Expenditures 2017-18	Adopted Budget 2018-19	Estimated Expenditures 2018-19		Total Budget 2019-20
-----------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------------	--	----------------------

SOURCES OF FUNDS

29,697,531	33,513,670	36,315,000	General Fund	36,778,029
4,216,353	4,523,220	2,837,000	Special Gas Tax Improvement Fund (Sch. 5)	4,714,621
3,108,549	3,895,234	3,587,000	Stormwater Pollution Abatement Fund (Sch. 7)	3,943,813
122,383	125,707	125,000	Mobile Source Air Pollution Reduction Fund (Sch. 10)	139,104
36,645,797	41,771,563	36,541,000	Sewer Capital Fund (Sch. 14)	44,658,246
88,592	99,979	100,000	Street Lighting Maintenance Assessment Fund (Sch. 19)	102,519
72,026	103,229	103,000	Telecommunications Development Account (Sch. 20)	108,969
112,245	168,630	168,000	Proposition A Local Transit Assistance Fund (Sch. 26)	-
7,637,315	7,042,055	6,991,000	Proposition C Anti-Gridlock Transit Fund (Sch. 27)	8,067,049
135,133	-	-	Bridge Improvement Program Cash (Sch. 29)	-
217,739	-	-	CRA Non-Housing Bond Proceeds Fund (Sch. 29)	-
306,460	-	350,000	GOB Series 2006A Animal Shelter Construction Fund (Sch. 29)	-
418,855	-	470,000	GOB Series 2006A Fire/Para Construction Fund (Sch. 29)	-
747,622	-	-	GOB Series 2008A Clean Water Cleanup Fund (Sch. 29)	-
431,267	-	-	GOB Series 2009 Clean Water Cleanup Fund (Sch. 29)	-
234,048	-	1,701,000	GOB Series 2011A Clean Water Cleanup Fund (Sch. 29)	-
378,272	-	-	MICLA Lease Revenue Commercial Paper (Sch. 29)	-
88,197	-	-	MICLA Lease Revenue Commercial Paper, Taxable B-1 (Sch. 29)	-
277,672	-	-	Seismic Bond Reimbursement Fund (Sch. 29)	-
735,931	-	1,050,000	Sixth Street Viaduct Improvement Fund (Sch. 29)	-
20,000	-	-	Local Transportation Fund (Sch. 34)	-
20,000	20,000	20,000	Building and Safety Building Permit Fund (Sch. 40)	20,000
18,625	-	-	Zoo Enterprise Trust Fund (Sch. 44)	-
-	298,096	298,000	Street Damage Restoration Fee Fund (Sch. 47)	707,678
422,763	454,888	453,000	Measure R Local Return Fund (Sch. 49)	447,436
1,086,976	1,649,792	1,650,000	Sidewalk Repair Fund (Sch. 51)	1,726,775
366,561	1,206,759	1,206,000	Measure M Local Return Fund (Sch. 52)	1,614,038
87,606,912	94,872,822	93,965,000	Total Funds	103,028,277

Beginning on the third page of the department's budget is what the city refers to as "Supporting Data." Simply put, this is where you will find the department's expenditures broken out slightly more by department activity.

For the purposes of the budget, the activities of each department are further broken down into "budgetary programs." Though not necessarily related to official divisions within the department, these budgetary programs help to give a better sense of how the department is allocating its funding across the many services it is tasked with providing.

The top section breaks down the department's four categories of expenditures - that is, Salaries, Expenses, Equipment, and Special - by budgetary program. None of BOE's budgetary departments have any expenditures under the category "Special," which aligns with what we observed on the first page of BOE's budget

The lower section is titled "Related and Indirect Costs" and covers the non-departmental costs related to each budgetary program that the city anticipates needing to cover. All of these line items represent portions of funds that are managed outside of the department, and which can be found in Section 2, Part 4 of the main budget book. This section describes all "Non-Departmental" budgets.

At the bottom of each budgetary program column is the number of "regular authority" employees who work within that program. However, this number does not reflect the total number of employees in the program because it leaves out employees whose positions are governed by "resolution authority." Section Four of this handbook discusses the difference between these two types of positions within the city.

Bureau of Engineering
SUPPORTING DATA
DISTRIBUTION OF 2019-20 TOTAL COST OF PROGRAMS

	BD7804 Development Services and Permits	BF7803 Clean Water Infrastructure	CA7805 Mobility	CA7812 Sidewalks and Complete Streets	FH7807 Public Buildings and Open Spaces
Budget					
Salaries	18,283,256	40,207,678	16,230,418	2,743,897	13,255,917
Expense	219,381	697,742	995,764	12,750	158,933
Equipment	-	78,667	180,000	-	-
Special	-	-	-	-	-
Total Departmental Budget	18,502,637	40,984,087	17,406,182	2,756,647	13,414,850
Support Program Allocation	2,081,270	5,391,636	884,949	65,552	1,540,467
Related and Indirect Costs					
Pensions and Retirement	6,238,473	16,161,084	2,652,579	196,487	4,617,452
Human Resources Benefits	2,219,719	5,750,295	943,817	69,912	1,642,941
Water and Electricity	155,252	402,188	66,013	4,890	114,911
Building Services	95,483	247,355	40,599	3,007	70,673
Other Department Related Costs	1,435,343	3,718,329	610,303	45,208	1,062,380
Capital Finance and Wastewater	1,565,809	4,056,309	665,777	49,317	1,158,945
Bond Interest and Redemption	2,857	7,400	1,215	90	2,115
Liability Claims	73,514	190,441	31,258	2,315	54,412
Judgement Obligation Bond Debt Service	58,663	151,969	24,943	1,848	43,420
Other Special Purpose Allocations	-	-	-	-	-
Non-Department Allocations	36,397	94,288	15,476	1,146	26,939
Subtotal Related Costs	11,881,510	30,779,658	5,051,980	374,220	8,794,188
Cost Allocated to Other Departments	-	-	-	-	-
Total Cost of Program	32,465,417	77,155,381	23,343,111	3,196,419	23,749,505
Positions	127	329	54	4	94

Depending on how many budgetary programs a department/bureau has their Supporting Data section may take up several pages, or it may just take up one or two. BOE only has six budgetary programs and so its Supporting Data only requires two pages.

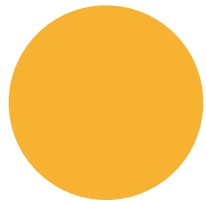
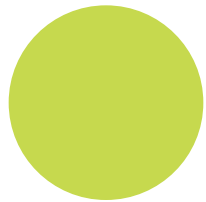
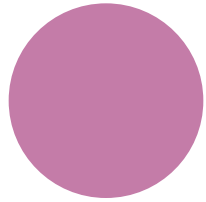
The total departmental budget will match the "total expenditures and appropriations" and the "total funds" from pages 1 and 2 of BOE's budget.

The total cost of all programs is higher than the department's funding, but again, this is because \$56M is being covered by non-departmental funds.

The last line of the department/bureau's budget indicates the total number of regular authority employees that the department/bureau has.

Bureau of Engineering
SUPPORTING DATA
DISTRIBUTION OF 2019-20 TOTAL COST OF PROGRAMS

	CA7850 General Administration and Support	Total
Budget		
Salaries	8,687,579	99,408,745
Expense	1,276,295	3,360,865
Equipment	-	258,667
Special	-	-
Total Departmental Budget	9,963,874	103,028,277
Support Program Allocation	(9,963,874)	-
Related and Indirect Costs		
Pensions and Retirement	-	29,866,075
Human Resources Benefits	-	10,626,684
Water and Electricity	-	743,254
Building Services	-	457,117
Other Department Related Costs	-	6,871,563
Capital Finance and Wastewater	-	7,496,157
Bond Interest and Redemption	-	13,677
Liability Claims	-	351,940
Judgement Obligation Bond Debt Service	-	280,843
Other Special Purpose Allocations	-	-
Non-Department Allocations	-	174,246
Subtotal Related Costs	-	56,881,556
Cost Allocated to Other Departments	-	-
Total Cost of Program	-	159,909,833
Positions	71	679



SECTION THREE

**How to Read a Special
Fund**

Much of the City's transportation funding comes in the form of "Special Funds." As opposed to the General Fund, these are funds that are established to be used for a specific purpose. As such, the city must account for them in greater detail, which it does through fund schedules.

Each Special Fund is assigned to a schedule number, by which you might see it referred to elsewhere.

Every fund schedule includes a brief description at the top that indicates its source and broadly outlines what it can be used for.

Every fund details its revenues, which tells us where the money comes from. Unsurprisingly, for Measure M, we see that most of the \$84M in this fund comes from "Local Return." This is the portion of the money raised via the countywide sales tax that Metro gives to each city within the county on a per-capita basis.

Next comes expenditures and appropriations. At the top are those funds being allocated to departments. This is money that departments use for general operating expenses. The line item here for BOE matches the amount we saw in Section Two of this handbook where BOE's departmental budget listed Measure M as one of its sources of funds.

Listed under "Special Purpose Fund Appropriations" are those specific programs receiving dedicated money from this fund. While these appropriations are still generally overseen by the same departments as listed above, these funding amounts must be spent directly on their specified program. Here we see recognizable programs such as Vision Zero, Complete Streets, and Great Streets. As well as some that seem more obscure, such as "CIEP - Physical Plant."

► CIEP stands for Capital Improvement Expenditure Program and is the City's general capital improvement program. "Physical Plant" is one of three categories within the CIEP and includes stormwater, street, and street lighting projects.

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUND SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 52

MEASURE M LOCAL RETURN FUND

Public Utilities Code Section 130350 provides that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Commission (Metro) may adopt a sales tax within the County, provided that it is approved by a majority of the electors. In 2016, the voters in Los Angeles County approved an increase of one-half of one percent (.5%) to the Sales Tax within Los Angeles County (County). The Sales Tax will increase to one percent (1%) on July 1, 2039, when the Measure R tax of one-half of one percent (.5%) tax imposed by Metro by Ordinance number 08-01 expires. Sales Tax revenue shall be used to meet the goals of improving freeway traffic flow; accelerating rail construction and building rail lines; enhancing local regional and express bus service, bike and pedestrian connections; improving transportation system connectivity, streets and intersections; addressing transit and highway safety; providing more accessibility, convenience, and affordability of transportation for seniors, students and the disabled; and incorporating modern technology in the transportation system.

Actual 2017-18	Estimated 2018-19	2 previous budget cycles	current budget cycle	Total Budget 2019-20
REVENUE				
210,704	37,378,483			32,566,483
-	-			
210,704	37,378,483			15,046,114
42,332,447	58,000,000		58,000,000	58,000,000
-	3,000,000			10,858,691
66,402	400,000			408,800
42,609,553	98,778,483			84,313,605
EXPENDITURES				
76,384	52,000			
-	-			
-	801,000			
366,561	1,206,000		1,614,038	1,614,038
92,051	160,000			1,066,824
2,284,444	11,700,000			11,827,082
186,428	2,914,000			7,901,549
112,511	9,079,000			9,589,870
-	1,000,000			-
-	3,838,000			-
1,148,303	3,040,000			-
-	100,000			-
-	9,000,000			5,333,000
-	200,000			300,000
-	28,000			-
-	500,000			1,500,000
-	500,000			500,000
-	4,500,000			7,566,777
91,557	1,408,000			1,000,000
-	200,000			-
-	3,000,000			-
-	-			1,000,000
-	-			750,000
-	-			400,000
-	1,500,000			-
-	1,100,000			-
APPROPRIATIONS				
				215,797
				66,643
				2,716,245
				1,614,038
				1,066,824
				11,827,082
				7,901,549
Special Purpose Fund Appropriations:				
				9,589,870
				-
				-
				-
				-
				5,333,000
				300,000
				-
				1,500,000
				500,000
				7,566,777
				1,000,000
				-
				-
				1,000,000
				750,000
				400,000
				-
				-

SPECIAL PURPOSE FUND SCHEDULES

SCHEDULE 52

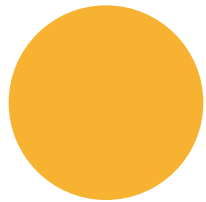
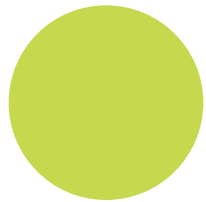
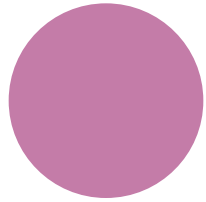
MEASURE M LOCAL RETURN FUND

Typically, new programs can be identified because they will have no appropriations for the previous two years. Dedicated funding for alley paving and for the Concrete Streets Repair Plan are both new in the 2019-2020 budget cycle.

At the bottom of these line items, "Total Appropriations" for the current budget cycle will match the value for "Total Revenue" listed above.

Actual 2017-18	Estimated 2018-19		Total Budget 2019-20
-	-	Alley Paving	3,000,000
-	-	Concrete Streets	2,000,000
-	17,000	Traffic Surveys	-
-	1,402,000	Open Streets Program	1,500,000
-	-	Paint and Sign Maintenance	1,170,588
411,828	523,000	Speed Hump Program	1,890,095
-	150,000	Vision Zero Contracts, Speed Surveys, Outreach Campaign	-
461,003	8,294,000	Reimbursement of General Fund Costs	21,405,097
<hr/>	<hr/>	Total Appropriations	84,313,605
5,231,070	66,212,000		
<hr/>	<hr/>	Ending Balance, June 30	-
37,378,483	32,566,483		

Funding from the Complete Streets account is designated for projects that began in 2017-18.



SECTION FOUR

Understanding Department Budgets, Part II

- ▶ **Detail of Department Programs**

The first three sections of this handbook have focused on the main budget book. The next two sections turn to the supplement, the Detail of Department Programs, which is issued in two volumes due to length. These two volumes are also known as the Blue Books. The Blue Books provide more in-depth information on many of the line items that were presented in the main budget document.

Here we are looking at the first page of BOE's budget, which is in Volume II of the Blue Books. The first page of every department/bureau budget in the Blue Books contains these charts and graphs that compare different aspects of the budget. The first graph shows the five year history of the total budget and employment numbers for BOE. Employees across the city are divided into two main categories of position types:

- ▶ **Regular Authority** - Long-term, permanent positions in the City, which are authorized by an ordinance adopted by the Council and Mayor.
- ▶ **Resolution Authority** - Limited-term, temporary positions, which are authorized by Council resolutions. These positions must be re-authorized for each fiscal year that they continue.

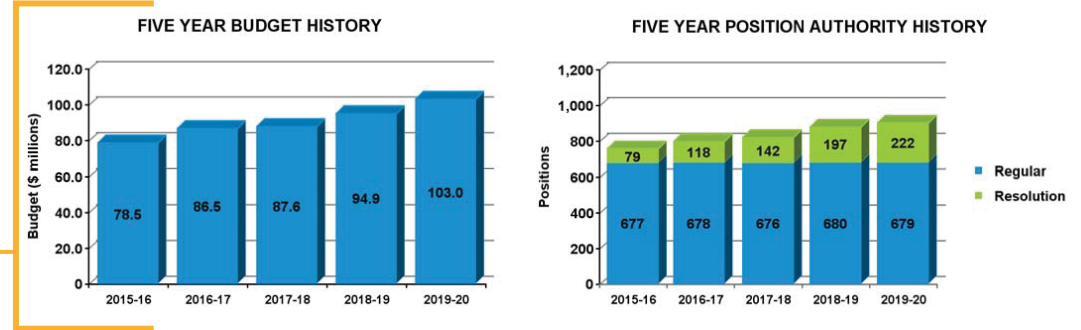
The pie chart breaks down the Bureau's funding distribution by budgetary program. Note that these are the same six budgetary programs that we encountered in the "Supporting Data" section from BOE's budget in the main budget book.

The next two pages in the Blue Book provide a summary of BOE's "Expenditures and Appropriations" and "Sources of Funds," which match the first and second pages, respectively, of BOE's budget in the main budget book. For the purposes of this handbook, these two pages of the Blue Book have been left out. Return to Section Two of the handbook if you would like to review this information.

BUREAU OF ENGINEERING

2019-20 Proposed Budget

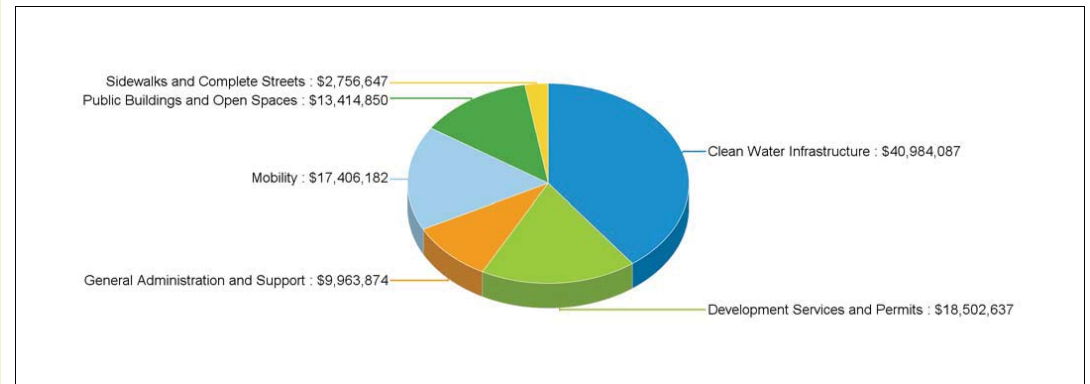
FIVE YEAR HISTORY OF BUDGET AND POSITION AUTHORITIES



SUMMARY OF 2019-20 PROPOSED BUDGET CHANGES

	Total Budget			General Fund			Special Fund				
		Regular	Resolution		Regular	Resolution		Regular	Resolution		
2018-19 Adopted	\$94,872,822	680	197	\$33,513,670	35.3%	244	91	\$61,359,152	64.7%	436	107
2019-20 Proposed	\$103,028,277	679	222	\$36,778,029	35.7%	244	101	\$66,250,248	64.3%	435	121
Change from Prior Year	\$8,155,455	(1)	25	\$3,264,359		-	10	\$4,891,096		(1)	15

2019-20 FUNDING DISTRIBUTION BY PROGRAM



MAIN BUDGET ITEMS

	Funding	Positions
* Environmental Management Group Support	\$144,723	-
* Support of Active Transportation Program Projects	\$360,912	-
* Affordable Housing Sustainable Community Grant Program	\$242,971	-
* Failed Streets Reconstruction	\$625,474	-
* Electric Vehicle and Solar Power Engineering Support	-	-
* Civic Center Master Plan Environmental Impact Study	\$90,903	-

The next portion of the Detail of Department Programs is called "Changes Applicable to Various Programs." Here is where the city outlines changes to each department/ bureau's budget that affect all or multiple of its budgetary programs.

There are 11 different categories of budgetary changes, though not every department will have changes of all 11 types every year. The first change category is "Obligatory Changes." These are changes that must be made in order to comply with established policies, such as a funding change to reflect a shift in the number of working days for the coming fiscal year.

For a description of each of the terms used to describe the changes made under "Obligatory Changes," see Section Three of the Introduction to the Blue Books, titled "Selected Budgetary Terms."

Budget Reading Tip: In accounting, parentheses are used to indicate a negative number. So remember that anytime you see numbers in parentheses in the budget, that is money being subtracted from the budget total.

The next change category, "Deletion of One-Time Services," covers the removal of any expenses or positions from the budget that stemmed from a one-time funding source or resolution. For BOE, most of this change category encompasses the deletion of funding for resolution authority positions, which are non-permanent positions that must be re-evaluated each fiscal year.

Here we see that there were 197 resolution authority positions in the 2018-2019 budget, and that 193 of these positions are to be continued in the 2019-2020 budget. These positions must be "deleted" and re-added to the budget if they are to continue receiving funding.

Changes Applicable to Various Programs

The following changes involve two or more budgetary programs. These changes are explained below and apportioned as single entries in the affected programs. Single-program changes are shown only in the programs involved.

Program Changes	Direct Cost	Positions	Total Cost
Changes in Salaries, Expense, Equipment, and Special			
Obligatory Changes			
1. 2018-19 Employee Compensation Adjustment Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$4,991,061 Related Costs: \$1,555,216	4,991,061	-	6,546,277
2. 2019-20 Employee Compensation Adjustment Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$673,876 Related Costs: \$209,979	673,876	-	883,855
3. Change in Number of Working Days Increase funding to reflect two additional working days. Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$563,399 Related Costs: \$167,104	563,399	-	730,503
4. Full Funding for Partially Financed Positions Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$602,493 Related Costs: \$178,699	602,493	-	781,192
5. Salary Step and Turnover Effect Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: (\$1,383,055) Related Costs: (\$410,215)	(1,383,055)	-	(1,793,270)
Deletion of One-Time Services			
6. Deletion of One-Time Expense Funding Delete one-time Salaries, As-Needed, Overtime, Hiring Hall Salaries, Hiring Hall Benefits, and expense funding. SAN: (\$350,000) SHH: (\$462,500) SHHFB: (\$187,500) SOT: (\$300,973) EX: (\$1,167,050)	(2,468,023)	-	(2,468,023)
7. Deletion of Funding for Resolution Authorities Delete funding for 197 resolution authority positions. An additional two positions were approved during 2018-19. One position was moved from off-budget to on-budget. Resolution authorities are reviewed annually and continued only if sufficient funding is available to maintain the current service level. Related costs consist of employee benefits. 193 positions are continued: Support for Plan Check Activities (Six positions) Support for Expedited B-Permit Reviews (Seven positions)	(17,831,844)	-	(25,429,260)

Program Changes**Direct Cost Positions Total Cost****Changes in Salaries, Expense, Equipment, and Special****Deletion of One-Time Services**

Above Ground Facilities Support (Six positions)
 Support for Sidewalk Dining (One position)
 Citywide B-Permit Case Management Group (Nine positions)
 Public Right of Way Reservation System Support (One position)
 Utility Permit Warranty Program (One position)
 LAWA Landside Access Modernization Program (Six positions)
 Clean Water Capital Improvement Program Support (Eight positions)
 Design Construction Management for Treatment Plants (Two positions)
 Construction Management for Sewers (Four positions)
 Emergency Sewer Repair and Rehabilitation Projects (10 positions)
 Enhanced Watershed Projects (Five positions)
 Clean Water Program Support (One position)
 Metro Annual Work Program (28 positions)
 Transportation Grant Annual Work Program (22 positions)
 Active Transportation Program (Six positions)
 Pavement Preservation Program Support (Seven positions)
 Transportation Construction Traffic Management (One position)
 Vision Zero (Two positions)
 Traffic Signals Program (Three positions)
 Survey Support for Street Improvement Projects (Four positions)
 Street Improvement Projects (Three positions)
 Sidewalk Repair Program (Eight positions)
 Complete Streets Program (Six positions)
 ADA Coordinator for Sidewalk Repair Program (One position)
 Construction Management for Street Reconstruction (Two positions)
 City Hall East Electrical Upgrades (One position)
 Electric Vehicle and Solar Power Engineering (One position)
 Los Angeles River Design and Project Management (Three positions)
 Sixth Street Viaduct Engineering Projects (Two positions)
 Recreation and Parks Project Support (One position)
 Los Angeles Street Civic Building (Seven positions)
 Pio Pico Library Pocket Park (One position)
 City Homeless Facilities Services (Two positions)
 Bridge Homes Program (Three positions)
 Potrero Canyon Park Project Support (Two positions)
 Asphalt Plant (One position)
 Fire Operations and Animal Shelter Project Support (Six positions)
 Construction Management Staffing (Two positions)
 Engineering Database Enhancement (One position)

This page contains the rest of the list of 193 resolution authority positions that are being deleted from the budget will be re-added. Each line lists the program/project that the positions work with, followed by the number of positions being deleted/re-added.

Program Changes

Direct Cost Positions Total Cost

Changes in Salaries, Expense, Equipment, and Special

Deletion of One-Time Services

Two positions approved during 2018-19 are continued:
 Broadway Streetscape Plan (One position)
 Zelzah Avenue Improvements Project (One position)

One position is moved from off-budget to on-budget:
 Seventh Street Streetscape Project (One position)

Three positions are not continued:
 Fire Operations and Animal Shelter Projects Support (Two positions)
 LA Street Car and Destination Crenshaw Projects (One position)

One vacant position is not continued:
 Asphalt Plant (One position)

SG: (\$17,831,844)
Related Costs: (\$7,597,416)

Restoration of Services

8. Restoration of One-Time Expense Funding

Restore funding in the Overtime General, Contractual Services, Transportation, Office and Administrative, and Operating Supplies accounts that were reduced on a one-time basis in the 2018-19 Adopted Budget.
SOT: \$50,000 EX: \$297,893

347,893 - 347,893

Efficiencies to Services

9. Expense Account Reductions

Reduce funding in the Overtime General (\$50,000), Contractual Services (\$188,537), Transportation (\$20,000), Office and Administrative (\$52,356), and Operating Supplies (\$37,000) accounts on a one-time basis to reflect anticipated expenditures, which include savings achieved due to Departmental efficiencies and expenditure reductions.
SOT: (\$50,000) EX: (\$297,893)

(347,893) - (347,893)

10. One-Time Salary Reductions

Reduce funding in the Salaries General Account, as a one-time budget reduction, to reflect savings generated by positions filled in-lieu maintaining vacancies, and anticipated attrition. Related costs consist of employee benefits.
SG: (\$317,653)
Related Costs: (\$98,981)

(317,653) - (416,634)

The next change category is "Restoration of Services." These changes typically reflect additions made to reinstate service levels that had been decreased or removed in prior years. Often the city will implement Restoration of Services changes once the economy has started to recover after an economic downturn.

The next change category is "Efficiencies to Services." These changes result from productivity improvements in service provision, which usually decrease costs. Typically the budget does not go into much detail about what these efficiencies actually are.

Below the description for each change the department/bureau is making, there will be acronyms in italics. On this page of BOE's budget, we see the acronyms "SG," "SOT," and "EX." These stand for "Salaries, General;" "Salaries, Overtime;" and "Expenses," respectively. For any other acronyms that you don't recognize, you can refer to the Table of Common Acronyms in the Glossary of the main budget book.

The purpose of these is to break down the Total Cost of the change into different accounts. The Total Cost also includes any "Related Costs" of the change. Related Costs are those costs, such as employee benefits, that are not covered in the department/bureau's budget. They are Non-Departmental costs. Thus, Related Costs are a part of the Total Cost of the change, but not a part of the Direct Cost of the change to the department/bureau.

The last change category that BOE has in this portion of its budget is "Other Changes or Adjustments." The city uses this as a miscellaneous category for change types that either fit into multiple of the prescribed categories, or that do not fit neatly into any of them.

This portion of BOE's budget included five different change categories. There are six other categories that the city uses to classify budgetary changes, which you may see in other departmental budgets:

- ▶ **Continuation of Services** – Discussed on the following page of this handbook.
- ▶ **Increased Services** – Funding increases intended to augment existing services levels.
- ▶ **Reduced Services** – Funding decreases due to a reduction in service levels. These may come as a result of shifting priorities, or they are particularly common in budgets made during economic downturns.
- ▶ **New Services** – Additional funding provided within a department/bureau's budget for them to provide a new service.
- ▶ **New Facilities** – Changes that reflect funding or position increases needed to support the opening of a new city facility, such as a police station or rec center.
- ▶ **Transfer of Services** – Changes that reflect a transfer of funding or positions between city departments.

Program Changes	Direct Cost	Positions	Total Cost
Changes in Salaries, Expense, Equipment, and Special			
Other Changes or Adjustments			
11. Position Adjustments Add funding and regular authority for five positions consisting of one Management Analyst, one Management Assistant, and three Civil Engineering Associate IIs. Delete funding and regular authority for six positions consisting of one Principal Civil Engineering Drafting Technician, one Administrative Clerk, one Reprographics Supervisor I, one Civil Engineering Drafting Technician, and two Engineering Designer Is. These position adjustments reflect the current operational needs. These positions are partially funded by the Sewer Construction and Maintenance Fund and Special Gas Tax Improvement Fund. Related costs consist of employee benefits. <i>SG: (\$6,791)</i> <i>Related Costs: (\$13,647)</i>	(6,791)	(1)	(20,438)
12. Pay Grade Adjustments Upgrade two Structural Engineering Associate IIs to Structural Engineering Associate IIIs, one Mechanical Engineering Associate II to Mechanical Engineering Associate III, one Systems Programmer I to Systems Programmer II, and one Engineering Geologist II to Engineering Geologist III. The incremental salary cost increase will be absorbed by the Bureau.	-	-	-
TOTAL CHANGES APPLICABLE TO VARIOUS PROGRAMS	(15,176,537)	(1)	

After accounting for the Changes Applicable to Various Programs, the department/bureau's budget moves on to those changes that are applicable to individual budgetary programs. Here we're looking at one of BOE's six budgetary programs, "Sidewalks and Complete Streets." Each program's budget will start with a brief description of the program and the services it provides, as well as which of the Mayor's "Priority Outcomes" this program helps to achieve.

For FY 2019-2020, Mayor Eric Garcetti had four Priority Outcomes. These were:

- ▶ A Safer City
- ▶ A Livable and Sustainable City
- ▶ A Prosperous City
- ▶ A Well-Run City Government

For more description of these goals, see the Mayor's Budget Summary. City departments must ensure that all of their budgetary items align with one of these priority outcomes.

At the top of the Program Changes is the portion of the change that was described in the previous section (Changes Applicable to Various Programs) that applies to this particular program.

The only change category that the Sidewalks and Complete Streets program's budget has is called "Continuation of Services." Changes in this category are needed in order to continue the department/bureau's existing level of service. Many of the changes you'll see under this category will be for continuation of funding and resolution authority for the positions that were deleted from the budget in the previous section. For example, all of the "changes" for BOE's Sidewalks and Complete Streets program are actually just continuations of existing positions that support the program.

Sidewalks and Complete Streets

Priority Outcome: Create a more livable and sustainable city
 This program provides the following services: administration and management of the City's Sidewalk Repair Program and administration and management of the Complete Streets projects.

Program Changes	Direct Cost	Positions	Total Cost
Changes in Salaries, Expense, Equipment, and Special			
Apportionment of Changes Applicable to Various Programs	(1,884,442)	-	(2,672,669)
Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: (\$1,858,192) EX: (\$26,250) Related Costs: (\$788,227)			
Continuation of Services			
54. Sidewalk Repair Program	866,563	-	1,243,027
Continue funding and resolution authority for eight positions, consisting of one Civil Engineer, one Management Analyst, one Civil Engineering Associate II, two Civil Engineering Associate IIIs, one Geographic Information Systems Specialist, one Survey Party Chief I, and one Land Surveying Assistant to support the Sidewalk Repair Program. Continue one-time funding in the Office and Administrative Account. Funding is provided by the Sidewalk Repair Fund. Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$860,563 EX: \$6,000 Related Costs: \$376,464			
55. Complete Streets Program	798,151	-	1,126,687
Continue funding and resolution authority for six positions, consisting of one Principal Civil Engineer, one Senior Civil Engineer, one Civil Engineer, one Senior Management Analyst I, one Civil Engineering Associate II, and one Environmental Supervisor I to support the Complete Streets Program. Continue one-time funding in the Office and Administrative Account. Funding is provided by the Measure M Local Return Fund. See related Department of General Services, Bureaus of Contract Administration and Street Services, and Department of Transportation items. Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$793,651 EX: \$4,500 Related Costs: \$328,536			

Sidewalks and Complete Streets

Program Changes	Direct Cost	Positions	Total Cost
Changes in Salaries, Expense, Equipment, and Special			
Continuation of Services			
56. ADA Coordinator for Sidewalk Repair Program Continue funding and resolution authority for one Senior Architect to serve as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator for the Pedestrian Right of Way for the City's Sidewalk Repair Program. Continue one-time funding in the Office and Administrative Account. Funding is provided by the Sidewalk Repair Fund. Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$151,596 EX: \$750 Related Costs: \$60,776	152,346	-	213,122
57. Construction Management for Complete Streets Continue funding and resolution authority for two positions consisting of one Civil Engineer and one Civil Engineering Associate II to provide construction management and delivery oversight, coordination, and reporting for the Complete Streets Program. Continue one-time funding in the Office and Administrative Account. Funding is provided by the Measure M Local Return Fund. Related costs consist of employee benefits. SG: \$230,221 EX: \$1,500 Related Costs: \$98,814	231,721	-	330,535
TOTAL Sidewalks and Complete Streets	164,339	-	-
2018-19 Program Budget	2,592,308	4	
Changes in Salaries, Expense, Equipment, and Special	164,339	-	
2019-20 PROGRAM BUDGET	2,756,647	4	

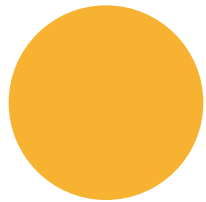
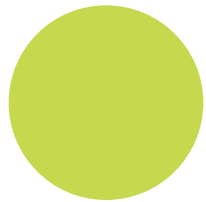
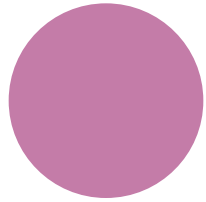
The description of each change will include information about which funding source(s) the money for this change comes from.

The Total Direct Cost of the Sidewalks and Complete Streets program is equal to the sum of all of this program's changes and its portion of the Changes Applicable to Various Programs (which in this case is a negative number). So based on everything we've seen in BOE's budget, we know that this \$164,339 increase in the Program Budget mainly covers the costs of any increases to salaries for these resolution positions, with a small amount of it going towards position-related expenses.

The city uses the previous fiscal year's program budget as the "base" budget. As such, the budget does not go into any details about how the money in this base budget is being spent. The budget only breaks down changes from the previous year.

If you now compare the 2019-2020 Program Budget total listed here back to the "Total Departmental Budget" listed for the Sidewalks and Complete Streets program in the "Supporting Data" section of BOE's budget in the main budget book (Section Two of this handbook), you can see that these numbers match.

The budget only counts the total number of regular authority positions in its position counts. So the total number of four positions listed for this program means there are four regular authority positions, which we see are accounted for in the base budget. But the resolution authority positions that were just continued via this portion of the budget are not counted.



SECTION FIVE

Additional Information About Special Funds

- ▶ **Detail of Department Programs**

This Section of the handbook presents the Special Purpose Fund Schedule for the Measure M Local Return Fund. Not every Special Fund in the city has a dedicated passage in the Detail of Department Programs, but several of the funds that transportation advocates are usually interested can be found there. These include Measure R, Prop A, Prop C, the Sidewalk Repair Program, and the Special Gas Tax Improvement Fund.

Similar to the difference between how BOE's budget was presented in the main budget book compared to the Blue Book, the Blue Book version of Measure M's fund schedule provides more in-depth description and detail behind all of the line items that were summarized in the main budget book.

Each non-departmental fund in this portion of the Blue Books begins with a more detailed description of how that fund originated and what are the restrictions on how its revenue can be spent.

MEASURE M LOCAL RETURN FUND

BASIS FOR THE PROPOSED BUDGET

The 2019-20 Proposed Budget for Measure M Local Return Fund relates to current year funding as follows:

	Amount	% Change
2018-19 Adopted Budget	\$ 46,776,991	
2019-20 Proposed Budget	\$ 84,313,605	
Change from 2018-19 Budget	\$ 37,536,614	80.2 %

In November 2016, the voters in Los Angeles County approved the Los Angeles County Traffic Improvement Plan that imposes an additional one-half cent sales tax within Los Angeles County, with an increase to one percent on July 1, 2039, to:

- Improve freeway traffic flow, reduce bottlenecks, and ease traffic congestion;
- Expand the rail and rapid transit system, accelerate rail construction and build new rail lines, enhance bus service, and improve system connectivity;
- Repave local streets, repair potholes, synchronize signals, improve neighborhood streets and intersections, and enhance bike and pedestrian connection;
- Keep the transit and highway system safe, earthquake-retrofit bridges, enhance freeway and transit system safety, and keep the transportation system in good working condition;
- Make public transportation more accessible, convenient, and affordable and provide better mobility options for our aging population;
- Embrace technology and innovation to incorporate modern technology, new advancements, and emerging innovations into the local transportation system;
- Create jobs, reduce pollution, and generate local economic benefits; and,
- Provide accountability and transparency.

Collection of Measure M sales tax receipts began on July 1, 2017, and the first disbursement of funds to the City occurred in October 2017. Measure M Funds must be used to augment, not supplant, other City programs. Funds will be audited on an annual basis and the use of those funds will be overseen by a seven-member panel known as the Measure M Independent Taxpayers Oversight Committee of Metro.

The City receives an allocation from a 17 percent share of the revenue collected based on the City's percentage share of the population of Los Angeles County. These Local Return Funds can be used for a wide variety of eligible activities supporting the maintenance and construction of public roads. These uses include, but are not limited to: major street resurfacing, rehabilitation, and reconstruction, pothole repair, road maintenance, left turn signals, bikeways, pedestrian improvements, streetscapes, signal synchronization, related stormwater improvements, and transit.

Measure M also requires the City to provide Metro with three percent of the costs for the Metro Regional Capital Projects within the City limits. Should the City not do so, the County may withhold Local Return Funds for up to 15 years or until the three percent threshold is satisfied. The amount of this obligation is estimated (in 2015 dollars) to be approximately \$490 million over 35 years from 2022 through 2057.

Just like the summary of Measure M's fund schedule presented in the main budget book, the Blue Book's presentation has two sections: Departmental Appropriations and Special Purpose Fund Appropriations. Each of the line items presented here in detail matches with a line item presented in the main budget book.

For the Bureau of Engineering's allocation, the description notes that this funding is intended for support and administration of the Complete Streets Program, among other things. This aligns with what we saw in BOE's departmental budget (Section Four of this handbook), where funding for two positions providing "Construction Management for Complete Streets" was stated as coming from Measure M.

	2018-19 Adopted Budget	2019-20 Proposed Budget
DEPARTMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS		
General Services. Funds are provided for materials testing and warehouse services supporting the Complete Streets Program.	\$ 52,232	\$ 215,797
Personnel. Funds are provided for human resources support for eligible programs and initiatives coordinated by the Department of Transportation.	--	66,643
Bureau of Contract Administration. Funds are provided to support inspection and contract compliance for street projects including traffic signal construction.	801,786	2,716,245
Bureau of Engineering. Funds are provided for traffic signal and left turn signal project design and for support and administration of the Complete Streets Program.	1,206,759	1,614,038
Bureau of Street Lighting. Funds are provided for traffic signal design work and street lighting elements of the Complete Streets and Vision Zero programs.	160,524	1,066,824
Bureau of Street Services. Funds are provided to support the Complete Streets Program, for bicycle lane repair and maintenance, and for contractual services funding for median island landscape maintenance.	4,688,493	11,827,082
Transportation. Funds are provided for staffing for the Complete Streets and Vision Zero programs, the Great Streets Initiative, and other Active and Sustainable Transportation initiatives.	2,914,832	7,817,181
Subtotal Departmental Appropriations	\$ 9,824,626	\$ 25,323,810
SPECIAL PURPOSE FUND APPROPRIATIONS		
Alley Paving. Funds are provided for paving alleys in Council Districts 5 and 9 (\$2 million) and across the City (\$1 million).	--	3,000,000
Autonomous Vehicles Program. Funds were provided for contractual services to proactively engage in modeling scenarios, design thinking, and community engagement with connected and autonomous vehicle experts.	1,000,000	--
Camarillo Street Traffic Study. Funds were provided for a traffic study at Camarillo Street.	100,000	--
Capital Improvement Expenditure Program – Physical Plant. Funds are provided for the design and construction of various street and transportation projects.	4,543,839	9,589,870
Concrete Streets. Funds are provided for the reconstruction of concrete streets.	--	2,000,000
Complete Streets Projects. Funds are provided for the completion of six projects that were originally funded in 2017-18. This item was previously titled Street Reconstruction/Vision Zero Projects.	9,000,000	5,333,000

Some descriptions provide more details than others. But the city does not want to be overly proscriptive when allocating funding. So typically you will not see individual projects being given a certain amount of funding, but rather programs or general activities. The city leaves it up to departments to determine how to prioritize projects when spending this money. For this reason, it can be hard to trace this money in the Special Purpose Fund Appropriations any further. Additionally, the line between Departmental Appropriations and Special Purpose Appropriations can be nebulous, as demonstrated by the line item for "Median Island Maintenance."

	2018-19 Adopted Budget	Measure M 2019-20 Proposed Budget
Cypress Park Pedestrian Bridge. Funds are provided for work on the Cypress Park Pedestrian Bridge project.	\$ 200,000	\$ 300,000
Expanded Mission Hills Median Study. Funds were provided for a median study in Mission Hills.	200,000	--
LA Riverway (San Fernando Valley Completion). Funds were provided for the LA Riverway Project.	1,500,000	--
Median Island Maintenance. Funds were provided for the maintenance of median islands Citywide. For 2019-20, funds are provided in the Bureau of Street Services departmental appropriation.	1,100,000	--
MLK Streetscape. Funds are provided for the MLK Streetscape Project.	--	750,000
Open Streets Program. Funds are provided for continued Open Streets events throughout the City.	1,401,604	1,500,000
Paint and Sign Maintenance. Funds are provided to support the purchase of paint and sign maintenance equipment and supplies for striping and pavement markings for City streets. Funds are also provided in the Proposition C Anti-Gridlock Transit Fund (\$100,000) and Measure R Traffic Relief and Rail Expansion Fund (\$1,729,312).	--	1,170,588
Speed Hump Program. Funds are provided for the installation of speed humps across the City.	--	2,000,000
Traffic Studies. Funds are provided for traffic studies in Council District 4 (\$150,000) and Council District 8 (\$250,000).	--	400,000
Transportation Technology Strategy. Funds are provided to support consultant services to continue implementation of the Department of Transportation's technology strategy.	500,000	1,500,000
Unimproved Median Island Maintenance. Funds are provided for the maintenance of unimproved median islands citywide.	--	1,000,000
Venice Boulevard Great Streets Enhancements. Funds are provided for Great Streets Program improvements on Venice Boulevard.	500,000	500,000
Vision Zero Corridor Projects. Funds are provided for street safety projects along Vision Zero High Injury Network (HIN) corridors, including speed feedback sign installation and maintenance and pedestrian refuge island implementation as needed.	4,500,000	7,566,777
Vision Zero Education and Outreach. Funds are provided for Vision Zero safety education, outreach, and project engagement.	1,000,000	1,000,000
Reimbursement of General Fund Costs. Funds are provided to reimburse the General Fund for employee benefits.	11,406,922	21,379,560
Subtotal Special Purpose Fund Appropriations	\$ 32,408,526	\$ 58,989,795
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	\$ 36,952,365	\$ 84,313,605