



City Manager's Office

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Oscar Leeser

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District 2
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Emma Acosta

District 4
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District 5
Dr. Michiel R. Noe

District 6
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District 7
Lily Limón

District 8
Cortney C. Niland

City Manager
Tommy Gonzalez

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council
FROM: Tomás González, City Manager
DATE: June 20, 2016
SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Budget

It is my honor to present a balanced Fiscal Year 2016-2017 budget which continues to promote the Mayor & City Council's vision of having safe and beautiful neighborhoods, a vibrant regional economy, and exceptional recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities. El Paso has recently been named among the top 10 places to live in the United States for quality of life. According to a list of rankings from U.S. News & World Report, El Paso is ranked 9th when it comes to quality of life. U.S. News surveyed people across the country about what matters most when determining where they want to live. From the information gathered in the survey, rankings were compiled based on several factors like crime rates, quality and availability of health care, quality of education, well-being and average commute time.

This budget continues to build on the progress we have achieved and addresses key priorities identified by the Council. These priorities are public safety, quality of life, infrastructure network, healthy/sustainable communities, economic development, city employee compensation, and financial management. We have provided budget updates the last two months to provide a healthy background and discussion on the budget cost drivers. We have also shown how we have remedied some of the cost increases. A good example is the reduction of healthcare costs by \$3.2M, or 1 penny on the tax rate. If this innovational method to address our health care costs would not have been implemented, our tax rate would have increased by 4.86 cents, instead of the recommended 3.86 cents. The FY 2016-2017 budget does not include any major fee increases. The cost drivers for next year and other budget highlights include:

- Public Safety
 - 80 Police cadets (2nd year of a 10 year plan to increase the size of the force by 30 officers annually)
 - Fire and Public Safety Communicator academies
 - Collectively bargained pay increases
 - Police and Fire vehicle/equipment replacement
 - Addition of Rescue 7 (new ambulance service) in June 2017
- City Employees
 - 2.5% pay increase for those making less than \$50,000 annually

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"Delivering Outstanding Services"



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- 2.0% pay increase for those making between \$50,000 and \$100,000 annually
- 1.5% pay increase for those making over \$100,000
 - We are also considering other options regarding implementation
- Compensation increases for current part-time City employees earning less than \$10 per hour
- Revitalized healthcare plan options
 - Estimated that 70% of civilian participants will contribute the same or less than current year
 - Reduced total City & Employees out of pocket premium cost by \$3.2M (equivalent to one cent on the tax rate)
- Additional resources in critical function areas (grants, audit, open records requests, purchasing, contract compliance)
- Quality of Life
 - Operating and maintenance costs associated with capital projects
 - Restroom service for parks in each District
 - Debt service obligations
 - Water conservation grant
 - Additional restroom service for parks
- Animal Services
 - Additional staffing and supplies to continue the improvement towards a no-kill shelter
- Streets & Maintenance
 - Additional funding for crosswalk and lane striping, pothole patching materials)
 - Additional funding for ADA accessibility improvements
 - Funding for street resurfacing projects
 - Funding for construction of traffic signalization

We have managed to make significant progress in a short period of time; however it is imperative that in order for us to continue the evolution of growth we must be strategic and understand how the decisions made today will impact our future costs tomorrow and beyond. It was not that long ago that we were faced with depleting reserves, elimination or reduction of public safety academies, no compensation increases for civilians, skyrocketing healthcare costs, deferred maintenance on facilities, and limited replacement of vehicles and equipment. Over the past two years we have addressed these issues by 1) improving our ***fiscal management*** through realistic forecasting, realigning processes, and enhanced budget control, and 2) ***improving our processes*** through the full immersion of the Strategic Plan and the implementation of programs that bring efficiency and innovation to city government. As a result, we have been able to make significant improvements by reinvesting



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funding into the critical priorities. The FY 2016-2017 budget was developed to continue our growth by expanding the investments made in the services, needs, and capital improvements that are provided to our community. Finally, in order to ensure we are prepared for the future, in the Fall of 2015 I asked the Office of Management and Budget to build a Multi-Year Financial Outlook (MYFO) tool to chart a course for the City's finances. The forecast extends five years and is a valuable tool to see how decisions made in the current year or for next year's budget impact subsequent years.

Budget & Operational Improvements

As the result of implementing programs that bring efficiency and innovation we were able to improve the services we provide to the community. Some examples of the service enhancements include:

- Streamlining pothole repair process
- Improving the Parks permitting process
- Enhancing the irrigation repair process
- Improve building safety inspection process

The prior year-end savings realized through budget discipline and efficiencies was able to be reinvested into Council's priorities:

- Replenish our reserves by \$5M
- Funding Spray Parks, and ADA improvements
- Replacement of playground equipment
- Funding needs of the Westside pool

General Fund Overview

As mentioned above, the 2016-2017 budget was developed based on our current demand and expected increase in needs, services, and capital improvements. Some of the key items included in the 2016-2017 budget are additional funding for public safety, animal services' initiatives, quality of life projects, and investments in City employees. While we were able to absorb a majority of these items into the budget, there is a recommended tax rate increase to cover the voter approved Fire Dept. collective bargaining impacts and quality of life bond projects (debt and operating costs). The FY 2017 budget does not include any major fee increases, employee layoffs, or service reductions.



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The FY2016-2017 budget includes balanced revenues and expenditures of \$386M, an increase of \$17.4M, or 4.7%. The revenue increase is being generated through property taxes, sales taxes, and franchise fees. The expenditure increases (Figure 1 - cost drivers) are primarily public safety collective bargaining, quality of life projects operating costs, utility increases, and healthcare costs.

Major Budget Cost Drivers

Police Collective Bargaining	\$5.0M
Fire Collective Bargaining	\$4.1M
Police & Fire Vehicle/Equipment Replacement	\$2.9M
Fire Station Restroom/Personnel	\$0.2M
911 District Relocation/Public Safety Radio Maint.	\$1.8M
Quality of Life projects (O&M)	\$1.3M
Utility Increases	\$1.5M
Healthcare Costs	\$0.9M
Total	\$17.7M

Figure 1

In addition to the \$17.4M increase in cost drivers, the FY 2016-2017 budget includes \$8.5M of additional staffing and service enhancements (Figure 2) that have been absorbed into the budget.

Additional Enhancements Included

Employee Compensation Increases (includes part-time)	\$1.9M
Animal Shelter	\$1.1M
Additional Staffing Resources	\$2.0M
Streets (Materials, ADA improvements, Signalization)	\$1.4M
Cyber Security (Hardware and Software)	\$0.3M
Capital Projects Subsidy (Engineering Charges)	\$0.8M
Parks - Water Conservation Grant and Restrooms	\$0.5M
Vehicle Replacement (Non-Public Safety Depts)	\$0.5M
Total	\$8.5M

Figure 2

The FY2016-2017 budget includes a total of 3,965.24 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions, representing an increase of 48.90 FTE positions, or a 1.2% (Figure 3) increase compared to the FY2015-2016 Adopted Budget. These new positions are included in Police, Parks, Zoo, and Office of the Comptroller.

FTE's	FY2013 ADOPTED	FY2014 ADOPTED	FY2015 ADOPTED	FY2016 ADOPTED	FY2017 PRELIMINARY
General Fund Total	4,161.50	4,076.40	3,987.42	3,916.34	3,965.24

Figure 3

Property Taxes

Property taxes are the largest source of revenue and account for approximately 42% of the total General Fund budget. The City receives preliminary property valuations in April and June and does not receive the certified valuations until the end of July. As a result of this timing, it is critical to formulate a projection that is realistic, while also not too conservative. The preliminary valuations historically decrease by 3.5% by the time we receive certified values due to appeals on property appraisals. The 3.5% historical average has been utilized when projecting next year's property valuations. Using the 3.5% discount factor, property valuations are projected to be \$33.5 billion, or 2.2% higher than last year. Last year commercial property valuations increased by \$433K, or 4.9%, well above the prior three year average of



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only 2.6%. Additionally, citizens over 65 or disabled will continue to receive the \$40,000 homestead exemption, which was increased by \$10,000 last year. The \$10,000 exemption increase, approved by City Council in 2012, is equal to \$3.3M a year, or one penny on the tax rate. If we did not fund this exemption increase the tax rate this year would be up by 2.86 cents versus the proposed 3.86 cents recommendation. However, we are firmly committed to this tax relief for seniors and disabled homeowners.

The property tax rate for the FY 2016-2017 budget includes a 3.86 cent increase (Figure 4. 2.11 cents

	FY2016	FY2017	Increase
O&M Tax Rate	0.478130	0.495630	0.017500
Debt Tax Rate	0.251595	0.272680	0.021085
Tax Rate	0.729725	0.768310	0.038585

Figure 4

for debt and 1.75 cents for O&M). This rate increase is necessary to cover the debt obligations associated with the quality of life and street bonds, voter approved Fire Dept. pay increases, and operating and maintenance costs associated with the quality of life projects. The average value home in the City of El Paso increased by \$947, or

Average Net Taxable Home Value
(After \$5,000 Homestead Exemption)

	Average Valuation	Tax Rate	Property Tax Levy
FY 2016	\$126,643	0.7297	\$924.15
FY 2017	\$127,590	0.7683	\$980.29
Increase	\$947	0.0386	\$56.14

Figure 5

0.7%. This increase in valuation, combined with the recommended tax rate will result in an increase of \$56.14 to a resident with an average value home (Figure 5). The recommended debt rate stays well below the authorized cap of 30 cents and is in-line with the debt modeling presented by Dr. Mark Sutter on March 22, 2016.

Sales Taxes

Sales taxes are the second largest source of revenue and account for approximately 23% of the total General Fund budget. Another indicator that our economy is heading in the right direction is the performance of our sales tax collections. Through the first eight months of current collections in FY 2015-2016 we have experienced an increase of 5.16%, well above the prior three year average of 3.40 percent. Additionally, we have seen month

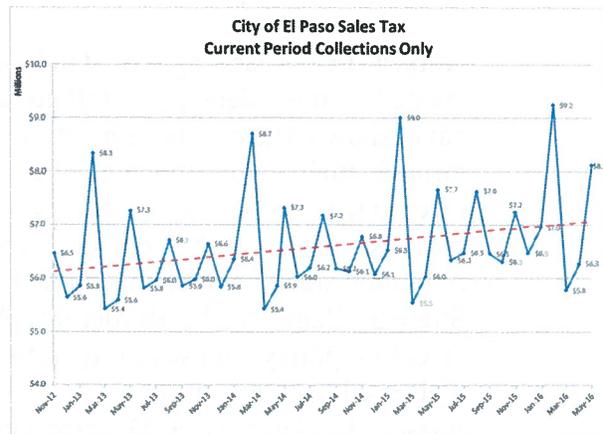


Figure 6



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to month increases in our current collections for 24 consecutive periods (Figure 6). This positive performance is occurring during the same time that 40% (8 out of 20) of the largest cities in Texas have experienced year to date decreases in collections.

The FY2016-2017 budget includes an increase of \$4.65M, or 5.6% compared to the FY2015-2016 budget. The projection for next year was based on the current year projection and factored in a negative \$1.18M in State audits that were refunded in the current year. We believe that these State audit refunds were one-time events and will not occur in the following year.

Franchise Fees

Franchise fees are the third largest primary revenue source and account for approximately 14% of the total General Fund budget. The FY2016-2017 franchise fees are projected to increase by \$3.3M, or 6.46%. The El Paso Water Utilities and Electric Company franchise fees are the primary increases as the result of growth and utility rate increases.

Miscellaneous Revenues

There are two notable decreases in General Fund revenues collected through fines and forfeitures, and engineering charges to capital projects. Fines and forfeitures are decreasing by \$1.2M as the result of the amnesty period included in the current year budget that will not occur next year. Additionally, the amount of engineering salary costs being applied to capital projects is decreasing by \$841K. This decrease is the result of the underfunding of capital projects which will be subsidized by the General Fund.

Economic Development

Almost two years ago a stand-alone Economic Development Department was created to have dedicated staff focus on these efforts. The Mayor & City Council have shown their commitment to stabilizing and expanding El Paso's tax base through their commitment to the Open for Business campaign and willingness to incentivize businesses to stay or relocate to El Paso through the use of various incentive tools. In November 2015 the City enhanced its strategic approach to its economic development incentive policies by aligning the program with the City's Strategic Plan and the Borderplex Alliances' Regional Strategic Plan. The revised incentive policy focuses on quality of life, veteran employment, higher wages, and higher education partnerships. Additionally, last year the Aviation Department revised the Air Service Development Incentive Program that was approved by the City Council to encourage new non-stop air service and competition at El Paso International Airport. This program provides temporary financial relief to an airline



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beginning new non-stop passenger service to a destination currently not served, funding for marketing the new service, and the temporary waiver of airline landing fees. Earlier this year the City of El Paso and Allegiant Air announced new, nonstop flights from El Paso to Las Vegas, San Diego, and Orlando.

These efforts have led to over \$309 million in capital investment and the creation of 4,268 jobs and retention of 6,092 jobs. According to the Texas Workforce Commission, the El Paso unemployment rate in April 2016 was 4.4%, which is below the State rate, 4.5%, and National rate, 5.0%. Additionally, last year commercial property valuations increased by 4.9%, well above the previous three year average of 2.6%. Some examples of the key economic projects include:

1. **Hotel Indigo**
 - a. Hotel located downtown - increase number of hotel beds by 100
 - b. \$13 million investment
2. **Courtyard El Paso Downtown – Convention Center Hotel**
 - a. \$18 million investment
 - b. 151 rooms, a 107-space parking garage, swimming pool, bistro and bar
3. **Allegiant**
 - a. Non-stop, year round service to Orlando, Las Vegas, and San Diego
4. **Fred Loya Insurance**
 - a. \$9.75 million investment
 - b. 562 jobs created and 176 jobs retained by the year 2025
5. **Enviro Water Minerals (EWM)**
 - a. New construction of water production and chemical manufacturing facility will add over 722 million gallons of drinking water per year
 - b. \$36.5 million investment
 - c. City of El Paso received a \$2 million Defense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant (DEAAG) towards the construction of this project
6. **Charles Schwab & Co. Inc.**
 - a. 21.6 million investment
 - b. 445 jobs created by the year 2022
7. **ADP**
 - a. \$41 million investment
 - b. 1,100 jobs created by the year 2020
8. **Tenet Hospital**
 - a. Construction of a medical facility, medical office building and will also serve as a teaching hospital
 - b. \$120 million investment
 - c. 300 jobs created and 2,392 jobs retained



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Public Safety

El Paso has received numerous recognitions and is well-known as the safest City (population over 500,000) in the United States. The current year budget included significant investments towards public safety and next year's budget will continue to build on these investments. The FY 2017 budget includes continued funding for the 911 Communication positions added in current year, as well as 80 new Police cadets for the second consecutive year to achieve a net increase of 60 Officers in the two years of increasing the Police force. As mentioned, next year will be the second year of a ten year program to increase the size the Police force by 30 Officers annually.

Additionally, the voter approved collective bargaining impacts are included in the budget, which include 3% pay increases, in addition to "step" increases, and limited



healthcare cost increases for uniform personnel. In regards to Police Officer salaries, a wage comparison of seven cities is done on an annual basis to ensure we are paying at least the average salary. The result of this year's wage comparison is a 2.5% increase for Police Officers, which is in addition to the "step" pay increases received by uniform personnel. Additionally, in order to attempt to retain our experienced Officers, a forward-drop plan was approved by council a few months ago. The plan was created as an incentive to retain experienced veterans and allows Police and Fire members to retire from the defined plan and save their retirement pension in the fund as they continue to work. We believe this plan, combined with the Shape it Up wellness program, are ways to keep our veterans on the force longer. Finally, we have included additional funding to address critical vehicle and equipment replacement needs. The funding for next year will provide for 20 new Police vehicles, two ambulances, one pumper, and one quint.

Quality of Life

In November 2012 the voters overwhelmingly supported a \$473 million bond package for quality of life projects. Over the past few months City Council participated in several discussions regarding the timing and rollout of the quality of life bond projects, in particular the three signature projects. These discussions culminated in the decision on date to move forward with the debt modeling to keep the debt tax rate below the 30 cent cap, condensing rollout from 15 years to 10 years, and moving up the signature projects to earlier years. In addition to the debt associated with the quality of life projects, there are corresponding operating and maintenance costs associated with these projects as they come online. There are 9 projects anticipated to come online in FY 2017, in addition to the 45 projects already completed. The operating costs included in the FY 2017 budget are \$1.25M which



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includes additional staff, supplies, materials, and maintenance costs. Some of the projects expected to be operational and completed in FY 2017 include:

- New flat fields, trailheads, and sports lighting
- 8 spray parks (one in each District)
- Wildlife Theater
- Event Tent
- Education Animal Holding
- Aviary Update
- African Wild Dog Exhibit
- Richard Burges Library Expansion
- Argal Park
- Polly Harris Senior Center

Sound Governance and Fiscal Management

In December 2015 the City Council was presented with the FY 2015 results which showed a year-end savings of almost \$9.6M. This surplus was wonderful news and the result of many positive changes throughout the organization. This surplus was used to replenish our General Fund reserves that had been reduced by approximately \$8.9M over the two prior years (FY 2013 and FY 2014). During the current year, City Council has authorized the use of \$5.9M of this surplus to be used towards replacing playground equipment at 15 parks, supplementing quality of life projects (Westside pool and three spray parks), ADA improvements, and pool repairs. In addition to the FY 2015 surplus, City Council approved \$1.3M in the FY 2016 budget to go towards replenishing reserves. This sound fiscal management resonated positively with the bond rating agencies as reflected by them confirming our ratings at AA. The bond raters commented that they view the City's management as very strong with solid financial policies and practices. Our proven financial results also resulted in the upgrading of the ballpark debt to AA-. The Mayor & City Council recently approved the change in how debt is issued; from reimbursing funding to a more traditional method of funding in advance. This change will allow the City to take advantage of the low interest rate market. Additionally, the FY 2016 2nd Quarter presentation showed that we are again projecting to end the year with a surplus. This year we anticipate a surplus of \$1.5M.

The FY 2017 budget includes additional resources to address critical function areas that have been identified as needing improvements. Some of the key items included in the budget are: additional positions to assist with our grants monitoring and reporting, an additional position to assist with open records requests, a new contract compliance manager position, an additional lead auditor position, plus additional



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funding to conduct external audits. Implementing these additional resources into the budget will allow us to focus on becoming proactive towards meeting the financial requirements and inspections of grants, as well as state and federally funded programs.

Infrastructure

In addition to the \$473 million Quality of Life bond approved by voters in 2012, the City Council approved \$210 million in certificates of obligation to be used toward street improvements. Over the last few months there have been several work sessions to discuss the rollout schedule of the street and quality of life projects, while also staying within the City's current debt rate cap of 30 cents. As mentioned earlier, the FY2016-2017 tax rate includes a 2.11 cent tax rate increase to cover the project rollout schedule approved by the Council.

As part of the FY2015-2016 budget the City Council included funding for new equipment in the Streets and Maintenance Department; in particular new pothole patchers. During the current year, a Lean Six Sigma project was presented to the City Council in which efficiencies were identified in the pothole patching process. As a result of the investment in equipment and process efficiency identified, we have included additional funding in the FY2016-2017 budget for additional pothole patching materials. Additionally, we have included funding for thermoplastic striping materials to be used for crosswalks and lane striping. In 2015 the Streets and Maintenance Department purchased a thermoplastic striping machine which allows the function to be done in-house and results in a longer lasting product. Also included is \$500,000 for the construction of two traffic signalizations. Finally, we have included \$250,000 for ADA accessibility improvements. This is in addition to the \$500,000 that City Council approved during the current year. To this end, on June 25th of this year we will be hosting the 1st Annual Accessibility Summit. This will be an educational and informative conference where we can all come together and be part of an effort to become a more accessible city and a more inclusive community.

The Capital Improvement Department budget includes additional resources for managing all of the large number of on-going capital projects. Some of the key staffing changes include the addition of the new Deputy City Manager for Public Works, Senior Executive position in Quality of Life and Economic Development, seven Construction Superintendents, a Civil Engineer, a landscape architect, and two Accountants.



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Healthy, Sustainable Community

On January 25, Council approved establishing a stand-alone Animal Services Department and funding it at a higher level to achieve a No Kill status. The enhanced funding for staff, materials, and capital started during FY 2016 and continues into FY 2017. The animal shelter now employs four veterinarians compared to only one previously and other positions have also been added to provide additional care to the animals.

Employees

The priority in the development of the FY2016-2017 budget was to develop a compensation plan for our employees that provide annual increases. You may recall that last year we were able to fund the one-time payments after receiving favorable certified property valuations. In next year's budget we have included pay increases for non-uniform staff based on their annual salary:

- 2.5% pay increase for those making less than \$50,000 annually
- 2.0% pay increase for those making between \$50,000 and \$100,000 annually
- 1.5% pay increase for those making over \$100,000 annually
- Classified employees, with a least a year of service at time of increase

Again, we are considering several options on how to rollout the program – all in one year or over a three year period. Regardless of method, the costs are approximately \$1.5M. In addition to pay increases, we will be rolling out our revitalized healthcare plan options, which have been redesigned to not only limit possible increases, but also offer the opportunity to save health care costs for our employees. Without a change in the plan design, all civilian plan participant contribution rates would have increased by 29.3%, or between \$528 and \$3,432 depending upon their plan. The new plan design will include a four-tier deduction strategy, additional wellness incentive, health savings account (HSA) contribution if in the consumer driven plan, and includes a high performance network to lower out of pocket costs. It is estimated that 70% of civilian participants **will contribute the same or less** with the new plan design options! As mentioned earlier, the plan redesign reduced out of pocket premium costs for the City and non-bargained employees by \$3.2M, or 1 penny on the tax rate. Finally, the funding for incentives such as perfect attendance and driver safety that were approved in the FY2015-2016 budget continues in the FY2016-2017 budget. The budget for next year also includes \$300,000 for the tuition assistance program.



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Non-General Fund Overview

The FY 2016-2017 Non-General Fund budget is increasing by \$34.6M, or 8.2%, excluding interfund transfers. The Non-General Fund budget consists of the enterprise funds (Airport, Environmental Services, International Bridges, Tax Office, and Mass Transit), internal service funds (Internal Services and Self Insurance), debt service, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Capital Projects, and Special Revenue Funds (Federal, State, and Local funding).

Enterprise Funds

Proprietary funds are generally used to account for services for which the City charges customers - either outside customers or internal cost centers of the City. The City maintains two types of proprietary funds: enterprise funds and internal service funds. The Airport budget is increasing by \$1.2M due primarily to the addition of seven new positions and compensation increases. The Environmental Services Department budget is increasing by \$9.1M and is primarily due to the costs necessary to open four new cells at the City landfill. The Mass Transit Department budget is increasing by \$1.5M and is primarily related to an increase in the funding for bus parts i.e. engines and transmissions, as well as an increase in the fleet maintenance to address the condition of the mid-life fleet.

Debt Service

The debt service fund includes resources that are restricted, committed, or assigned to expenditure for principal and interest. The debt service funds are increasing by \$8.7M, or 10%, due to the Council approved debt modeling for the Quality of Life and Street bond projects. In addition to adjusting the rollout schedule for these projects, the Council also approved changing the method of debt issuance from a reimbursement funding to a more traditional method of funding in advance.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The CDBG funds include monies approved by the Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for community development projects. The FY 2016-2017 budget for CDBG is decreasing by (\$1.6M). The decrease is primarily due to a \$1.2M one-time funding source that was included in FY 2015-2016 for CDBG – Housing Revolving loan funds. The remaining decrease is due to a decline in HUD Entitlement Funds.



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Capital Projects Funds

The Capital Projects funds include items for Destination El Paso, Vehicle Replacement, Information Technology, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Destination El Paso has increased their capital expenditures budget for next year by \$1.7M in order to address necessary repairs to facilities that they manage. The vehicle replacement fund is increasing by \$2.9M due to an increase in the purchase of public safety vehicles and equipment. Finally, the Information Technology capital fund is increasing by over \$900K due to the City's costs related to the new 911 District facility.

Special Revenue Funds

This category includes funding from the Federal, State, and local government bodies as well as local agencies. Some examples included in this category are: Public Health grants, Police and Fire Department grants, Environmental Fee Fund, Animal Service Department, and Zoo. The Police Department grants are increasing by \$5.4M due to the decision to include recurring grants in the budget process instead of waiting until the grant is awarded. There is no net anticipated change to the actual grants awarded. There is also an increase of \$1.8M in the Environmental Fee fund that will be used to purchase three new street sweepers for the Streets & Maintenance Department and additional capital items for Environmental Services Department. Finally, the Economic Incentive Impact Fund is increasing by \$700K for various economic incentive, multi-family, infill, and impact fund agreements.

CONCLUSION

I am pleased to present a budget that is balanced and is directly aligned to the Mayor & City Council's strategic goals. We have enhanced our organizational alignment and increased resources that will enable us to continue our evolution of growth towards addressing the needs and services for our great City.

Finally, I would like to thank the Office of Management of Budget, the Executive Leadership team, department directors and all the business managers within each department that assisted in assembling this budget. They were all instrumental in developing these budget recommendations. This budget as presented will fund the continuation of transforming the manner in which we deliver services.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tomás González", is written over the printed name.

Tomás González