

CM Flannigan Motion Sheet

Part IV. Cost of Living & Ensure Basic Needs Are Met ~~Doing Business in Austin~~

The City can directly affect affordability through taxes, utility bills, and fees that are determined by the City Council each year through the budget process. The cumulative impact of all local government taxes, bills, and fees is a significant cost for Austin families. According to the City of Austin, City property taxes have increased 29.2% from 2012 to 2017, while income has only increased 3.7%. It is important that the City balance address the growing needs of the City with the rising costs of City services for renters, homeowners and businesses.

A. ~~Property Tax Bill~~ Transparency in Budgeting

Present separate budget illustrations that show a growth-neutral budget, including utility rates and fees, that supports existing City employees and benefit increases for those employees and a separate budget illustration that includes the expansion of additional City staff and programs (in accordance with the biennial budgeting outcomes has no increase to property tax bills for Austin businesses, property owners, and homeowners. By presenting a budget illustration at the effective tax rate, which includes the same amount of property tax revenue as the previous fiscal year, plus all additional revenue associated with growth, which allows homeowners and business owners to benefit from growth paying for itself the “growth dividend” and pay the same amount in property taxes as in the previous fiscal year. This will allow City Council and the community to clearly understand the impact of external and internal cost drivers on individual departments separate from the impact of Council-approved program and capital expansion. The City Council always retains the authority to further reduce or may choose to prioritize additional expenditures in the General Fund based on the outcome of the biennial budgeting and department review process.

B. Prioritize Health & Human Service Contracts

Prioritizing contracts with basic health and social services providers strengthens a safety net for those in the community with limited incomes and resources. Prioritize funding necessary, based on performance measures, for increases to Health and Human Services Department

contracts in each of the next 4 years. Establish performance metrics for each expenditure in order to align those with the City Council's strategic outcomes.

~~C. Utility Rates and Fees~~

~~Present a budget illustration that has no increase to Austin Energy and Austin Water utility rates (Austin Energy, Austin Water, Austin Resource Recovery) or the major City of Austin fees (Drainage Fee, Transportation User Fee, and Clean Community Fee).~~