



ENVISION RIVERSIDE - 2025

Finance/ Budget Engagement Commission

Purpose and Function

Riverside Municipal Code Section 2.90.020 provides the following **Purpose and Function** for the Budget Engagement Commission:

To advise the City Council on spending and policy priorities based on the information received through quarterly financial and performance reports, including revenues from transaction and use tax, to work with City staff to maximize public engagement on municipal budgetary issues and to provide input on performance measures and reporting programs. The Commission's advice shall in no way conflict with or supersede the powers of the Council or the budgetary and advisory powers of the City Charter created Boards and Commissions.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Ensure alignment of the Budget Engagement Commission
with the City of Riverside's Strategic Plan

Biennial and/or Annual Budget Development

Action Item:

The Commission serves as a crucial conduit for community engagement during the budget development process. As such, the Commission will receive reports throughout the budget development cycle that incorporate Commissioner and public input on spending priorities for City programs as well as fiscal sustainability strategies for the proposed budget presented for Council adoption.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

2.4. Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement, and build public trust.

2.5. Foster relationships between community members, partner organizations, and public safety professionals to define, prioritize, and address community safety and social service needs.

5.4. Achieve and maintain financial health by addressing gaps between revenues and expenditures and aligning resources with strategic priorities to yield the greatest impact.

Measure Z Reporting and Funding Recommendations

Action Item:

The creation of the Budget Engagement Commission was greatly driven by the passage of Measure Z, a 1% local sales tax. The Commission plays a critical role in advising the Council on the allocation of Measure Z revenue and spending priorities. It regularly receives quarterly reports detailing Measure Z spending and program statuses, which are included within the broader quarterly financial reports. Additionally, the Commission is presented with staff recommendations for the allocation of Measure Z funds and offers its input to the Council regarding these requests.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

2.4. Support programs and innovations that enhance community safety, encourage neighborhood engagement, and build public trust.

2.5. Foster relationships between community members, partner organizations, and public safety professionals to define, prioritize, and address community safety and social service needs.

5.4. Achieve and maintain financial health by addressing gaps between revenues and expenditures and aligning resources with strategic priorities to yield the greatest impact.

Outcome Reports

Action Item:

The Budget Engagement Commission requests and receives reports from staff that provide essential data and performance metrics related to the allocation of funds. This information can be used to drive decision-making, such as reallocating resources within the program or to more effective programs to promote equitable distribution of City resources.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

5.2. Utilize technology, data, and process improvement strategies to increase efficiencies, guide decision making, and ensure services are accessible and distributed equitably throughout all geographic areas of the City.

5.4. Achieve and maintain financial health by addressing gaps between revenues and expenditures and aligning resources with strategic priorities to yield the greatest impact.

Quarterly Financial Reporting

Action Item:

Quarterly financial reports enhance transparency in the City's financial performance and foster accountability in the responsible management of City finances. The Commission will receive these reports, which include budget-to-actual results for the City's major funds, including the General Fund, Measure Z, Electric, Water, Sewer, and Refuse funds. Together, these funds make up over 85% of the citywide budget.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

5.4. Achieve and maintain financial health by addressing gaps between revenues and expenditures and aligning resources with strategic priorities to yield the greatest impact.

Financial Performance Indicators

Action Item:

The Commission annually receives a Financial Performance Indicators report, offering valuable context on how the City's finances compare to those of its peers. These performance reports add an additional dimension to the Commissioners' comprehension of the City's financial situation, enriching their contributions to budget discussions.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

5.4. Achieve and maintain financial health by addressing gaps between revenues and expenditures and aligning resources with strategic priorities to yield the greatest impact.

Collaborative Commission & Staff Effort to Improve Public Engagement

Action Item:

The Chair and Vice-Chair will work with City staff to improve public engagement via the Budget Engagement Commission. These efforts would include social media, attendance at community meetings, and informal engagement of the Chair and Vice-Chair with other meeting bodies.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

5.3. Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.