

Chicago Budget Message (excerpt)

2013 Budget overview

Summary of Proposed Budget

Introduction

One year ago, the City presented a 2012 budget that began the difficult process of addressing its structural deficit. The 2012 budget closed a \$635 million budget gap by reforming City government while maintaining the programs and services most important to the people of Chicago.

This process involved many tough choices, but by working with aldermen, residents, and community organizations, the City was able to implement key initiatives that saved taxpayer dollars, significantly reduced the City's long-term structural deficit, improved the quality of City services, and increased the efficiency of City government. These initiatives ranged from changing the way the City picks up garbage to expanding healthcare options for Chicago communities to implementing a wellness program for City employees.

This year, because of the choices made last year and the structural reforms put into place, the City faced the smallest budget deficit since the 2008 recession. The proposed 2013 budget builds on this progress.

This budget balances the City's finances without raising a single tax or introducing a single new fee. It encourages job growth by completely eliminating the employee head tax by the end of 2013. It also makes a significant investment in programs that enhance the health, safety, and education of the children of Chicago, making this a children-first budget. Further, it makes important investments in programs that enhance the quality of life for Chicagoans, promote small business development, and increase public safety.

In addition, because of the reforms made over the past year, the City is able to continue to build its reserves in order to enhance its long-term financial stability. The 2013 proposed budget makes a \$15 million investment in the City's reserves, following up on the \$20 million investment made last year.

Budget Overview

Total net appropriations under the 2013 proposed budget are \$6.54 billion across all local funds. With an additional \$1.81 billion in anticipated grant resources, the total proposed City budget for 2013 is \$8.35 billion. The City's proposed corporate fund budget for 2013 is \$3.16 billion.