City of Portland

September 2026

Budget Process Feedback & Options for FY 2027-28

City Council Work Session

September 10, 2026

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Agenda

1. Introduction & background (10 mins)
   - Summary of budget process feedback
2. Discussion of options for changes (2.5 hours)
   - 4 themes: 2 rounds each (~30 mins of discussion per theme)
3. Next Steps (10 mins)
   - Example budget calendars for FY 2027-28
   - Returning to Council

🎉 *View the FY 2026-27 Adopted Budget Dashboard* 🎉

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Feedback on FY 2026-27 Budget Process

More robust feedback & after-action reflection than in prior years

Finance & Governance Committee of the Whole	Council survey & CFO meetings	Administrative staff / leadership survey & meetings
• June 24 • August 13	• Survey completed by council offices in July • Individual meetings with CFO July-Aug.	• Survey to directors, DCAs, all managers, budget staff • Budget staff retreat in June • Leadership team meeting in July

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Budget Feedback Themes

High-level desired outcomes

Better, earlier information & shared access

Better decision-making supports

Improved community engagement

Improved budget accuracy

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Theme 1: Information & access

Detailed Feedback

- Desire for information to be shared with Council **earlier in the process**, including before proposals are developed
- Enable visibility into **program changes and funding**, including breaking out one-time vs. ongoing funding and year-over-year changes
- Expanded access to **data and staff support** for Council
- More consistent reporting on **equity impacts and performance measures**
- Provide **less dense narrative** accompanied by spreadsheets

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Theme 1: Information & access

Options for Changes

A. Improve program offer data & reporting

- Include one-time and ongoing funding and year-over-year changes.
- Performance measures consistently tied to specific program offers (vs. broader bureau or service area level).
- Improve consistency in equity analysis.
- CBO provides guidance on format and reviews all program offers.
- Will require additional administrative effort to establish a **multi-year update plan**, to maintain accuracy and consistency, and to keep current.

Ease of Implementation: Medium

Primary/Lead: CBO

Implementation Partners:
- All service areas
- Performance Office
- Chief Equity Officer

Options for Changes

B. Conduct earlier budget information work sessions or other Council briefings.

- Work sessions by service area on funding sources, program offers, strategic priorities
- Consistent graphics with FY 2026-27 budgets, FTE details, 5-year lookback

Ease of Implementation: Medium

Primary/Lead: CBO

Implementation Partners:
- All service areas
- Council President
- Council Ops

Timing Options

Earlier: focus on FY 2026-27 data

Later: FY 2027-28 info available

Options for Changes

C. Improve Proposed Budget book materials

- Make narrative content more concise
- Report budget decisions (adds/reductions/realignments) for each bureau at the program offer level
    - Include one-time and ongoing funding distinctions, FTE impacts
- Publish a spreadsheet with all budgets by program offer at the commitment item level showing prior year(s), base budget (before Proposed changes), proposed changes, and totals

Ease of Implementation:
Easy

Primary/Lead: CBO

Implementation Partners:
- All service areas

Options for Changes

D. Expand Council access to staff support and budget data

- Increase coverage of CBO staff directly supporting City Council on budget, particularly during the Proposed to Adopted budget phases.
- Train Council staff on budget data and provide view-only access.
- Human resourcing and costs considerations TBD

Ease of Implementation: **Challenging** or **Medium**

Primary/Lead: CBO

Implementation Partners:
- City Council
- Council Ops

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Theme 1: Information & access

- When do you want service area budget work sessions to occur (before the Proposed release)?
- What staff support, data access, or other types of information would be most helpful this year?

Council Discussion

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Theme 2: Decision-making Support

Detailed Feedback

- Councilors want to see **add guidance as well as reduction guidance** even in a reduction year. Budget guidance should include **multiple scenarios**
- Include **Council legislative direction** (adopted ordinances, resolutions) in bureaus' budget submissions
- Disagreement about whether to issue a **CA report**; general agreement that it should not include balancing recommendations.
- Re-launch a **budget equity tool**
- Administrative staff desire for more **clarity about decision-making pathways** and communication of decisions
- Broader **employee input and engagement** on budget options
- Process for collecting priorities for amendments between **approved and adopted**

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Theme 2: Decision-making Support

Options for Changes

A. Give scenario-based guidance that is scaled up or down in connection with the relevant forecasts

- Include direction for requests of up to 3% **increases** that demonstrate specific priorities
- Guidance could be connected to policy priorities issued by the Mayor and/or Council

Ease of Implementation:
Easy

Primary/Lead:
Mayor/CA

Implementation Partners:
- All service areas

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Theme 2: Decision-making Support

Options for Changes

B. Issue a CA report before the Proposed that includes:

- Gaps/surpluses citywide
- High-level options or levers to pull if cuts are required with descriptions/examples

Ease of Implementation:
Medium

Primary/Lead:
CA

Implementation Partners:
- CBO
- Service area finance teams

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Theme 2: Decision-making Support

Options for Improvement

C. Require service areas to complete templates for prioritized options for any additions/reductions from CSL

- Decision Packages have not generally included different options.
- Attempted a decision-making framework in FY 2024-25 but did not have the time or supports to make it effective.
- Strategic budget practices require evaluating multiple tradeoffs against a set of priorities.

Ease of Implementation:
Challenging

Primary/Lead:
CA, CBO

Implementation Partners:
- Office of Equity
- All service areas

Options for Improvement

D. Re-launch a budget equity tool

- An explicit decision-making framework to evaluate trade-offs could include a new budget equity tool.
- The budget equity toolkit was partially updated last year, but still in progress under new Equity Officer.
- Include estimates of investments in items like translation, accessibility measures, and other supports for equity.

Ease of Implementation:
Medium

Primary/Lead:
Office of Equity

Implementation Partners:
- CBO
- All service areas

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Theme 2: Decision-making support

- What would be most helpful to include in a CA report?
- What information is most helpful for decision-making when considering budget changes?

Council Discussion

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Theme 3: Community engagement

Detailed Feedback

- Conduct community engagement **earlier in the process**, including before budget proposals have been released.
- Gather **input on priorities** before discussing specific budget proposals.
- Improve **outreach and awareness** regarding community engagement events as well as timing of budget testimony and votes.
- Bring back some version of **Budget Advisory Committees**.

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Theme 3: Community engagement

Options for Changes

A. Re-establish budget advisory committees for the new form of government.

- Set up budget advisory committees at the service area and/or citywide levels.
- Determine staffing, appointments and direction for committees.
- Clarify how and when their input will be used for decision-making.

Ease of Implementation:
Medium

Primary/Lead:
Engagement office

Implementation Partners:
Council operations
All service areas

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Theme 3: Community engagement

Options for Changes

B. Separate Mayor's engagement to inform his Proposed Budget from Council engagement.

- Mayor conducts separate engagement earlier in the year to inform the Mayor's Proposed Budget.

Ease of Implementation:
Easy

Primary/Lead:
Mayor's office & engagement office

Implementation Partners:

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Theme 3: Community engagement

Options for Changes

C. Use the Insights survey results (expected Jan. 2027) to inform priority-level feedback

- 2026 Insights survey data will provide information on broad priorities and themes, as well as data on some funding priorities.
- Engagement could ask for more input on those priorities and how they **could** be impacted by the budget.
- Insights data availability somewhat TBD.

Ease of Implementation:
Easy

Primary/Lead:
Mayor's office & engagement office

Implementation Partners:

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Theme 3: Community engagement

Options for Changes

D. Expand informational meetings/engagement with community-based organizations regarding the City's budget

- Conduct small informational meetings with various community partners to give a brief presentation on the City's budget and do Q&A

Ease of Implementation:
Medium

Primary/Lead:
Mayor's office & engagement office

Implementation Partners:
CBO/CFO

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Theme 3: Community Engagement

- How do you want to evolve BACs?
- When and how do you want to conduct budget community engagement sessions?

Council Discussion

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Theme 4: Budget accuracy

Detailed Feedback

- **Inaccurate, unclear or late-to-be-updated data** in the budget books and/or communications erode trust in the products and process.
- Councilors want to see **reliable data on potential service impacts** of budget changes under discussion.
- Budget staff want to avoid mistakes and would like **more predictable schedules** with built-in time for adequate QA/QC.

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Theme 4: Budget accuracy

Options for Changes

A. Set a budget development schedule sooner, including internal deadlines within the administration.

- Set deadlines internally for developing budget concepts and decision packages.
- Agree on major deliverables ahead of time to avoid short turnaround times and surprises.

Ease of Implementation:
Medium

Primary/Lead:
CA/CFO

Implementation Partners:
- City Council

Options for Changes

B. Build in additional time for QA/QC of the budget book materials.

- Could include an "embargo" period where the materials are available internally only for a final check before public release.

Ease of Implementation:
Easy

Primary/Lead: CBO

Implementation Partners:
- Mayor
- Communications

Options for Changes

C. Increase frequency of training for budget staff citywide and set standards of work centrally.

- Once the schedule and deliverables are set, CBO can provide more training to budget staff citywide to ensure clear expectations.

Ease of Implementation: Easy

Primary/Lead: CBO

Implementation Partners:

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Theme 4: Budget Accuracy

- What does Council need to decide on a relatively consistent budget process and deliverables, still allowing for continuous improvement?

Council Discussion

Budget Process Timeline Requirements

November → **June**

Preparation & Requests

Early December

- Update base budget expenses for inflation
- Revenue forecast update

Mayor's Proposed

By May 5th

- Charter requirement for Mayor's Proposed. (Article 1 Section 2-128)

Immediately following Proposed Budget Release

- Deliver Proposed budget to Budget Committee (ORS 294.426)

Approved Budget

Early May

- Budget Committee deliberations occur.

By May 20th

- Last date for Approved Budget

By May 21st

- Approved budget submission to TSCC (ORS 294.428, 294.431)

Adopted Budget

Week of June 8th

- TSCC hearing, 1st reading of Adopted Budget

By June 18th

- Adopt budget

Example Calendar 1: Early Work Sessions

Legend
- Externally driven or difficult to move next year
- Example options

NOVEMBER
Budget guidance issued

Tax revenue data receipt complete

DECEMBER
Base budget data available (personnel cost forecast, IA rates, etc.)

Revenue and expenditure forecasts completed

Begin budget work sessions

JANUARY
Continue budget work sessions

Internal budget submission deadline

FEBRUARY
CA report released

Community engagement for Mayor's Proposed

MARCH
Decision-making for Mayor's Proposed Budget

APRIL
Proposed Budget released and budget message delivered to Council 4/21

Council community engagement events

MAY
Budget approval by May 20th

JUNE
TSCC hearing June 8th

Adopted budget 1st reading June 10th

Adopted budget 2nd reading June 17th

Example Calendar 2: Early Engagement, No CA Report

Legend
- Externally driven or difficult to move next year
- Example options

NOVEMBER
Budget guidance issued

Tax revenue data receipt complete

DECEMBER
Base budget data available (personnel cost forecast, IA rates, etc.)

Revenue and expenditure forecasts completed

Community engagement events

JANUARY
Internal budget submission deadline

FEBRUARY
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