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REVENUE PROJECTIONS
Current Process
- Revenue projections are prepared using a combination of Microsoft Excel, Access, and One Solution.
- ASD staff exports current fiscal year (FY) revenue data from One Solution into Microsoft Excel. The worksheets are formatted to identify the projections needed – current FY plus forecasts for the next two fiscal years. Formulas are added to calculate the change from the original estimate. The worksheets are then distributed to the departments.
- Within their respective internal process, department budget coordinators analyze and prepare the revenue projections. As subject matter experts, they see the day-to-day activity and are aware of upcoming projects and other events that will impact revenues.
- ASD staff is responsible for preparing estimates that are Citywide such as sales tax, property tax, and interest income. ASD consults with third party consultants as appropriate.
- Staff is responsible for providing explanations for the variances +/- 5%.
- The updated revenues are the starting point to determine estimated ending fund balances for the current fiscal year plus incoming resources for the next fiscal year.
- Throughout the budget process, revenue revisions are submitted to ASD as new information becomes available and before the budget is finalized. Changes can be received via multiple sources such as e-mail, updated Excel worksheets, and verbal communications.

How can budget software improve revenue projections?
- Reduce ASD staff time spent to prepare the revenue estimate worksheets.
- Through linking directly with actual activity in One Solution, reduce the need to run additional revenue reports as the information would be visible on the same screen as revenue projections are entered.
- Allow for department staff to collaborate in a cloud-based platform while maintaining version control and reporting accurate data derived from a uniform source.
- Provide revenue modeling options that can improve accuracy.
- Changes can be made with explanations and sent through a workflow approval process which will automatically update the calculations for fund balance and the financial forecast.

SALARY/BENEFIT BUDGETS
Current Process
- The salary and benefit budgets are prepared for each department using Microsoft Excel, with a total 18 different files that contain the full-time and part-time personnel information.
- The current fiscal year worksheets are used as a base and updated for the upcoming fiscal year.

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- Items specific to each position and employee are manually updated in Excel, based on One Solution reports that provide each employee's position title, current salary step, hire date, tier, heath plan, workers' compensation code, any additional compensation items as authorized by each respective MOU agreement, and the employee's funding distribution.
- Each budgeted position is reviewed and manually updated for any changes that have occurred since the last review. Excel formulas have been implemented to automate calculations as much as possible, but it is still a very manual process.
- ASD staff works with department budget coordinators to get information on changes needed. After the personnel information is revised, the salary/benefit budgets are uploaded in One Solution. Once in One Solution, departments can run reports that reflect the staffing budget by line item.
- Changes may occur during department budget review meetings with the City Manager or as service level changes are approved. As many as 22 versions may exist for a department as changes take place during the budget process. Revisions are made in the primary worksheets and the information is uploaded or manually entered in One Solution.

Negotiation Calculations, as needed
- Through the negotiation process with bargaining units, the Excel salary/benefit worksheets are manually updated to current data, using One Solution reports.
- Calculations are then performed either through formulas or manually, depending on the proposed item. COLA increases or health plan changes are straightforward, however, other requests that are more complex in nature take hours of manual effort, even days, to analyze and calculate accurately.

How can budget software improve salary/benefit budgets?
- Through linking with the payroll system, the information in the salary/benefits module can be updated through an automated process.
- Reduces amount of ASD staff time to prepare the salary/benefit spreadsheets.
- Updates can be done more often, before budgets are finalized, to provide more accurate costs for the upcoming fiscal year.
- Can quickly run 'what-if' scenarios.
- Can easily forecast labor and benefit costs for multiple years.

OPERATING BUDGET/SERVICE LEVEL CHANGES
Current Process
- The operating line item budget is prepared in Microsoft Excel, once the current data has been exported from One Solution.
- Department staff prepares a line item budget with a breakdown of what is included in each line item, as well as explanations for changes from one year to the next.
- Formulas can get accidentally over-written or changed during this process.

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- Version control is extremely important to ensure the final version is submitted to ASD for the department's proposed budget package.
- ASD staff reviews and analyzes the submitted operating budget figures and communicates with the departments to clarify items that need additional information to support the requested budget amount.
- The operating budgets are consolidated into an Excel 'Master File' as One Solution does not have the capacity to hold the narrative on the object code details or explanation of the changes.
- Operating budget changes may occur during department budget review meetings with the City Manager or as service level changes are approved.
- Service level changes are prepared in Microsoft Access. These are requests for new programs, new positions, or other significant changes as compared to the prior fiscal year. These requests are considered for approval separately from the regular operating budgets, after review of available fund balances.
- Service level change database files are merged into one file to review totals by funding source.

How can budget software improve the operating budget and service level changes?
- Through the integration with One Solution, the information in the operating budget can be updated through an automated process and reflect accurate financial data.
- Using a data entry screen that shows historical information, allow for staff to collaborate in a cloud-based platform while maintaining version control.
- Attach documents such as quotes, e-mails, etc. to line items to support the budget requested. All the supporting items are saved in one location.
- Can easily notate if items are one-time requests.
- Can easily breakdown budgets by quarterly, monthly, or annual amounts depending on the line-item. This is extremely helpful for seasonal activity to track water usage and summer program expenses, for example.
- Eliminates risk of inadvertently over-writing formulas during updates.
- Provides the information to ASD in a consistent format.
- Approval is submitted through a workflow process, from department entry staff to manager, department director, ASD, and City Manager. The budget proposal status is easily visible to all, maximizing transparency.
- Quickly compiles the budget data once approved through the workflow process, updating fund balance and financial forecast information.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN BUDGET
Current Process
- The capital improvement plan budget is prepared in Microsoft Access.
- Current fiscal year information is exported from One Solution and uploaded into Access.

- The database file also includes future projects that were submitted during the previous budget cycle.
- Each department has developed their own internal process for development and approvals of the capital improvement plan budget, depending on the complexity of the projects and funding sources.
- Department staff is responsible to review the current projects, as well as their 5-year plan. Staff updates the information in Access before submitting to ASD.
- The databases files are merged into one file to review totals by funding source.
- Changes may occur during department budget review meetings with the City Manager, as service level changes are approved, and as fund balances are being reviewed.

How can budget software improve the capital improvement plan budget?
- Through the integration with One Solution, the information in the capital improvement plan budget can be updated through an automated process and be real-time.
- Using a data entry screen that shows historical and current fiscal year information, allows for department staff to collaborate in a cloud-based platform while maintaining version control.
- The capital improvement plan budget can be included in the same data source as the operating and salary/benefits budget.
- Approval is submitted through a workflow process, from department entry staff to manager, department director, ASD, and City Manager. The budget proposal status is easily visible to all, maximizing transparency.
- Quickly compiles the budget data once approved through the workflow process, updating fund balance and financial forecast information.
- Data visualization tools will provide opportunities for improved communication with the public with project details including location, timeline, and costs.

FUND BALANCE CALCULATIONS
Current Process
- As mid-year revenue projections are received, fund balance calculations for the current fiscal year are calculated in Microsoft Excel.
- Throughout the budget process, ASD staff adds the revenue projections, operating budgets, and capital improvement plan budgets. Fund balances are reviewed to ensure there is funding available to pay for the proposed items.
- As changes occur, version control is extremely important for the decision-making process.

How can budget software improve fund balance calculations?
- Through the integration with One Solution, revenue, salary/benefits, operating, and capital budget information can easily be incorporated through the workflow process, updating the available fund balances with real-time data.

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5-YEAR FINANCIAL FORECAST
Current Process
- The General Fund 5-year financial forecast is prepared in Microsoft Excel. The upcoming budget year data is updated using revenue and expenditure budget information as explained above under other budget components.
- Formulas are included in the future years to calculate projections for revenues, expenditures, and transfers in/out. The formulas are based on a variety of factors such as historical trends and upcoming rate changes.
- When changes occur in any of the other components previously noted, the information must be carried over into the financial forecast worksheet.
- The forecast is prepared for the General Fund only at this time.

How can budget software improve the 5-year financial forecast?
- A budgeting software solution has forecasting models already established. Parameters and business rules can be established for multiple forecasting scenarios.
- Through the integration with One Solution, revenue, salary/benefits, operating, and capital budget information can easily be incorporated through the workflow process, updating the forecast with real-time data
- Forecast information can be prepared for the General Fund as well as additional funding sources.

DEPARTMENT NARRATIVES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES
Current Process
- The department narratives are prepared in Microsoft Word. The narratives include mission statements, divisional responsibilities, goals and objectives. Messages are exchanged between ASD and departments as updates are made to data, compromising multiple versions of documents.
- The performance measures are prepared in Microsoft Excel. The performance measures table is then copied and pasted into the Word document.

How can budget software improve department narratives and performance measures?
- The performance module can be used to set the standards by establishing programs, measures, and scorecards to track budget and key performance indicators (KPIs).
- The department narratives can be saved in the budget software program, providing all the information in one place. A central location reduces room for error and provides a reliable tracking source.
- Through the integration with the budget software, the narrative information and performance measures can be easily imported into the adopted budget document.

BUDGET DOCUMENT PREPARATION – OPERATING AND CIP
Current Process
- The budget document is prepared using Microsoft Word. Information from other programs such as Excel, Visio, and One Solution are incorporated into the Word document.
- The CIP document is prepared using Microsoft Excel and Word.
- The budget information is saved in the various files and worksheets, therefore, updates are a very manual and time-consuming process.

How can budget software improve the budget document preparation?
- A document management tool will integrate with One Solution and the budget system.
- It will allow staff to create, collaborate, edit, approve, and publish a document that is compliant with the budget awards standards established by the Government Finance Officers Association, or GFOA.
- Changes can be made and will flow throughout the entire document without the complications of multiple spreadsheets, version control issues, and the need to duplicate charts, graphs, tables, and images.