



## Office of the Mayor

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Date: June 3, 2019  
To: Department and Division Heads  
From: Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway  
Subject: 2020 Operating Budget Instructions and Policy Goals

Madison has always been a creative and innovative city. From the research-to-market efforts of the UW Institutes for Research and Discovery, Wisconsin Institutes of Medical Research, WARF and the UW Research Park, to the growth and success of Epic Systems and Exact Sciences, and through the bold ideas of our small entrepreneurs and cooperatives, to our world-class creative sector, we have sought out new approaches to our challenges. Our city government is no different – we have been at the forefront of innovation in neighborhood services, sustainability and culture.

As with previous budgets in this era of declining federal support, stagnant state aid and limited local control, projected expenditures for current services exceed allowable revenue growth. The estimated shortfall for 2020 is \$9.5 million. While this presents challenges, it also offers us opportunities to innovate, collaborate and identify efficiencies. Keeping in mind my priorities of affordable housing, rapid transit, addressing climate change impacts and eliminating disparities with a focus on racial equity, I call on each of you to be creative in developing your budget requests to maximize results with limited resources.

Across the board City staff are working hard to provide a stellar level of service to our residents and visitors. The reality of our budgetary outlook is that we may have to prioritize and rethink the way we are approaching areas of our service delivery to bring our budget into balance. This year I am taking a different approach to how we think about budget requests. For each of your services, I ask that you present a base scenario, an increase scenario, and a decrease scenario.

- Base Scenario -- explain any changes you are proposing by service within your agency target.
- Increase Scenario – identify discrete service expansions or enhancements that could be achieved with a 2.5 percent increase to the service's expenditure budget.
- Decrease Scenario – identify viable and reasonable options to make services more efficient or to provide a different level of service that continues to deliver results if the service's budget was reduced by 2.5 percent.

These increase and decrease scenarios will take the place of supplemental proposals or savings ideas. Any supplemental requests you plan to bring forward should be presented within an increase scenario for one of your services.

Collaboration between agencies to deliver results in more efficient ways is encouraged. Agencies are also encouraged to suggest revenue increases specific to the program or service delivered as an option to help

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close the projected gap in the General Fund budget.

As you prepare your requests for the 2020 operating budget you should develop those proposals through the lens of our Citywide Elements of Imagine Madison and the strategies called for within each of those elements. In your operating budget requests, you should use data in concrete ways to help better understand the problems we are seeking to solve and the ways specific service investments will solve those problems. Please also use an equity lens to help prioritize your requests.

I look forward to working with you and the Finance Department in the coming weeks to build a 2020 operating budget that is balanced and delivers the results that Madison residents expect.