

Budget

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The City Council adopted the City of Clearwater's \$396 million Annual Operating and Capital Improvement Budget for fiscal year 2006-07 on September 21, 2006. The ad valorem tax rate of 5.2088 mills is a 9.5% decrease from last year's rate.

The General Fund provides money for city operations of a non-proprietary nature. Major revenue sources for this fund include property taxes, franchise and utility fees, and communications and sales taxes. The major operating activities supported by the General Fund include the public safety operation

budgets for police and fire services; quality of life service budgets for parks and recreation, the city libraries, and Pier 60; public works budgets for transportation and engineering services; and the operational budgets for planning, development, neighborhood services, and city administrative functions.

The General Fund budget of \$121.9 million represents an increase of 9.4% over the previous year. A strong 23.3% increase in taxable property values over the last year will yield an estimated additional \$5.4 million for the General Fund. The citywide budget reflects a net increase

of 2.9 new positions to fund additional Fire Department personnel.

Public safety remains the city's highest priority with budgets for Police and Fire operations representing approximately 49% of the total General Fund budget. Major issues impacting the city's budget include rising energy and fuel costs, property and liability insurance, and required pension contributions.

New capital improvement projects for fiscal year 2006/07 include the replacement of fire ladder truck equipment, air packs, personal protective equipment, water vehicles, radio equipment, and a thermal camera for the Fire Department. An expansion of the city's Sailing Center is planned to provide for additional classroom spaces for this facility. Additional funding includes \$43.7 million devoted to utility infrastructure projects; \$13.5 million of general government capital projects that support the police, library, and street and intersection maintenance, and city recreational needs; and \$4.8 million for the replacement and maintenance of city vehicles, computers, radios, and telephones. The total budget for the city's Capital Improvement Program for fiscal year 2006/07 is \$62.7 million.

