



Ramsey County Budget Biennial Process

Saint Paul City Council- May 2026



Topics and Presenters

Topics:

- Background
- Ramsey County Budget Process
- Overall Budget Calendar
- Considerations

Presenters:

- Ling Becker, County Manager
- Alex Kotze, Deputy County Manager/Chief Operating Officer

Background

- Ramsey County has over 20 years of experience using a biennial (two-year) budget cycle. Ramsey County started this structure in the 2006-2007 budget.
- Transition has afforded many opportunities that are positive but there are some limitations. Will discuss these considerations and more toward end of the deck.
- Ramsey County Budget
 - Stable revenue streams (property taxes, predictable state aid).
 - Want to reduce staff workload and budget fatigue.
 - Emphasize strategic, long-range planning.
 - Time and focus on evaluation and performance.
 - Allows leadership to focus more on implementation rather than constant planning.

Ramsey County Biennial Budget Process

Odd Years	Even Years
Year 2 (2027)	Year 1 (2028)
Performance and Supplemental Year	Biennial Budget Year
County Manager presents a budget (either a two year biennial budget or one year supplemental budget) to the County Board.	
County Board passes a maximum levy before September 30 and a final levy in December.	
<p>In the Performance and Supplemental year, the levy typically remains the same as was passed in the prior year budget plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exception during COVID. • Fiscal conditions may make upward or downward moves more likely in future budgets. 	<p>In the Biennial Budget year, the County Board adopts new levies for both years.</p>
Departments present to county board with focus on performance metrics.	Departments present to the county board with focus on spending priorities.
The Addenda process allows for changes to the budget at any point in the process between September and December.	
County Board hosts a Truth in Taxation and then adopts final levy in December.	

2027 Supplemental Budget Timeline

What	When
Performance Measures Due	June 30
Departments present Performance Measures to Core Budget Team for feedback, preparing for Board presentations in August & September	July 8, 9, 10, 13
County Manager Budget Presentation	August 25
Budget Performance Measures Presentations to the County Board	August 27, August 28, Sept 1, Sept 3, and Sept 10
Public Hearing	September 10 at 5:00 pm
Joint Property Tax Advisory Committee	September 14
County Board passes the max levy	September 22
Budget Addenda	November 10
Truth in Taxation	December 3 at 6:00 pm
Final budget and levy approvals	December 15

Biennial Budget Year Process for the County Manager Budget

What	When
<p>Initial Budget Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and County Manager work to set parameters and targets • Internal Service Departments work on rates (IT, Property Management etc.) • County Manager meet with Exec Team and Leaders • Finance write budget instructions • Finance and County Manager work to set parameters and targets • Internal Service Departments work on rates (IT, Property Management etc.) • County Manager meet with Exec Team and Leaders • Finance write budget instructions 	<p>December – February</p>
<p>Department/Service Team Budget Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department staff work to make recommendations within the County Manager parameters and target • Submit and present to the County Manager in May 	<p>February - May</p>

Biennial Budget Year Process for the County Manager Budget cont.

What	When
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Manager Budget Process • Meetings in May; Decisions in June/July • Presents County Manager Proposed Budget to the Board in August 	<p>May - August</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Board Budget Process • Presentations in September • Set maximum levy amount by September 30 • October and November – Addenda process • Late November or Early December – Truth in Taxation • December – Final vote on the budget 	<p>September - December</p>

Considerations

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stronger Long-Term Planning• Reduce Administrative Burden• Fiscal Stability• More Time for Oversight & Evaluation (Performance Metrics)<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensures focus on outcomes and metrics• More planful and aligns with the state budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less flexibility<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Levy is set two years ahead and may not reflect current economic conditions• Estimating bargaining and state budget impacts can be harder

Questions and Discussion