

City Revenues, Expenditures and Budgets

Revenues

The city provides many services to its residents. To pay for these services, the city must raise money, called revenues.

Some of the ways Florida cities raise revenues are through:

- 📖 Property taxes on homes and businesses.
- 📖 User fees (charges for services). For example, residents might be charged for water and garbage service, and some recreation activities.
- 📖 Fines, such as fines for disobeying city laws (ordinances).

Expenditures

The revenues a city receives are, in turn, used by the city. A city must pay for the services that it provides to the residents, and there are costs to run a government. The money that is spent is called an expenditure.

Expenditures pay for the salaries of employees; roadway construction and maintenance; recreation programs, such as ball fields and community centers; garbage pick-up, etc. Some of the biggest expenditures for Florida cities are police and fire services.

Budgets

A city budget is a plan for the city government. It is a guide of how money will be spent (expenditures) and where money will come from (revenue). Citizen input helps direct the budget. Once the city council adopts the budget, the city staff must spend the money as the budget states.

Student Activities

2nd Grade

- 📖 Students can examine what resources they have through their families. How does the family get money? How is it budgeted? How do they budget an allowance? Do they need to perform a service in order to get the allowance?



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- 📖 Students can choose an item that they want to buy that is beyond their normal allowance. Students should then develop a budget and decide how they would save their money to purchase the item. How long would it take to save the money?

3rd Grade

- 📖 Students can continue budgeting activities. (See 2nd grade.) Students can be given an imaginary amount of money with specific items/services they must purchase. They must establish a budget. Students can create graphs indicating where their money goes.
- 📖 Students can research how cities get and spend their money.

4th Grade

- 📖 Students can interview their parents and others (with permission) on their budgetary habits. Students can create their own budget.
- 📖 Students can research how specific city departments have developed budgets. Invite personnel from a city department for a discussion with the class about the process.

5th Grade

- 📖 Contact the city to obtain a budget and discuss it with the class. To illustrate the budget, students can create different forms of graphs. Students can review the costs of running a specific department (i.e., police department). To carry this action further, students can compare the costs of different government items to items that they are familiar with. For example, how much does a police car cost? Compare that to how many bicycles can be purchased with the same amount of money.
- 📖 Have the city's budget director or a budget analyst from the city come and talk with students about the city's budget and their role in developing the budget.
- 📖 Hold a mock city council meeting/public hearing to discuss the proposed city budget. Students can play the role of the city council, city staff and citizens who present arguments for funding for specific programs. Given a set amount of revenues, students must select between funding for various programs and reach a balanced budget.

Student Questions:

1. Do you have a budget for how you spend your allowance or any money that you receive? Why is it important for a city to have a budget?
2. How does your city get its money? What is a tax? Why do governments have to use taxes as a source of revenue? (upper grades)