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Column

## Budget balances services, savings

*By Darin Atteberry*

*In the city*

Last Friday, I delivered the city manager's 2010-11 recommended budget to the mayor and City Council.

This budget has been a challenge. Revenue to the general fund, which covers services such as police, fire and parks, is down 7.5 percent. In the midst of lower revenues, city staff has worked hard to minimize service reductions to the public and to maintain existing services where possible.

The budget, which you can find at [www.fcgov.com/budget](http://www.fcgov.com/budget), is built on community and City Council priorities. We asked the community to help prioritize seven community goals: economic health, environmental health, neighborhood livability, safety, cultural and recreational opportunities, transportation and high-performing government. Feedback collected through the citizen survey, public meetings and online tools shows that safety, transportation and economic health are high priorities. As a result, the 2010-11 recommended budget funds:

- > Police and fire services at the same level as 2009.
- > Key transportation services such as snow removal and programs to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion.
- > Environmental initiatives that help the community reach goals established in the Climate Action Plan.
- > Current economic health initiatives such as support of industry clusters, the Rocky Mountain Innovation Initiative and downtown maintenance.

The 2010-11 recommended budget includes several additional cost containment strategies, including:

- > Reorganization to streamline staff.
- > No merit-based pay increases for city employees in 2010.
- > Limited layoffs, reduction in hourly work force and elimination of 32 vacant positions.
- > Reduced travel and training across all departments.

The 2010-11 recommended budget keeps most city services intact. However, it does include some reductions. There are significant decreases to the Pavement Management Program. Several neighborhood repaving programs will be eliminated and remaining resources will be focused on arterial streets. Neighborhood code enforcement efforts will decrease 10 percent to 20 percent, and there are cuts to parks maintenance and recreation.

I believe we've done a good job in developing this recommended budget with the resources that are available.

Over the coming weeks, the mayor and City Council will consider the recommendations, seek input, make changes and approve the final budget. Your input is a vital part of this process; visit [www.fcgov.com/yourvoice](http://www.fcgov.com/yourvoice) or attend a public hearing. All City Council meetings take place at City Hall, 300 LaPorte Ave., and start at 6 p.m. Attend in person, watch live on cable Channel 14 or watch online at [www.fcgov.com/cable14](http://www.fcgov.com/cable14).

- > Sept. 15 – Budget public hearing
- > Oct. 6– Budget public hearing
- > Oct. 20 – First reading of budget appropriations
- > Nov. 3 – Second reading of budget appropriations

Council will also discuss the recommended budget at work sessions Tuesday and Sept. 22, 29 and Oct. 13.