

January 1, 2008

Dear Citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish:

The purpose of this pamphlet is to provide a brief summary of selected highlights from the operating budgets for the year 2008.

The legal framework for financial management of the City of Baton Rouge and Parish of East Baton Rouge (City-Parish) is largely established in the *Plan of Government* approved by local voters in 1947. That plan requires the adoption of annual operating budgets for various governmental functions. In accordance with this Plan of Government, the local government in December 2007 adopted annual operating budgets for the year 2008. At that time, a \$278 million general operations budget was approved, along with a number of budgets for special operations, for a grand total of \$679 million, excluding transfers from other funds. All of the annual budgets referred to above are published in a document entitled *2008 Annual Operating Budget*, which is available for review by the public at parish libraries and at the City-Parish Finance Department – Budgeting Division located at 222 St. Louis Street, Baton Rouge, Room 452 (phone 389-3067). The budget document is also available online at www.brgov.com/dept/finance.

The City-Parish has separate budget processes for some state and federal grant programs, as well as for capital improvement programs such as street construction and public building construction. Summaries of the capital improvement programs and certain recurring grant programs are included in the *2008 Annual Operating Budget*.

THE BUDGET PROCESS

Allocation of revenues is determined through the budget process. This process begins with the presentation by the Mayor-President (Mayor) of his goals and objectives for the City-Parish. Departments then formulate departmental goals consistent with those of the City-Parish as a whole and submit their budget requests to the Mayor. The Mayor reviews these requests with his staff, department personnel, and representatives of the Metropolitan Council (Council). After considering the needs of the community, established policies, current financial conditions, and the forecasted economy, the Mayor formally proposes operating budgets to the Council for all operations that require such budgets. The Council then considers the Mayor's proposals, holds public hearings, and enacts final budgets, which may be different from those originally proposed by the Mayor. These annual budgets become effective on January 1.

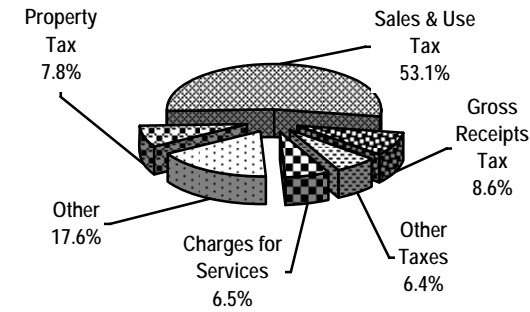


Responsibility for the administration of the annual operating budget is shared by the Mayor, through the Chief Administrative Officer, the Finance Director, and the staff of the Finance Department-Budgeting Division; and the Metropolitan Council, through the Council Administrator-Treasurer and the Council Budget Officer.

GENERAL OPERATIONS (GENERAL FUND)

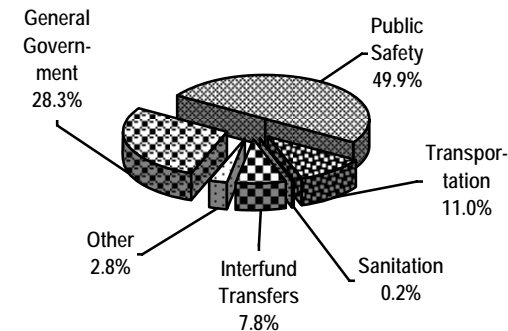
As shown in the chart below, the 2008 budget for general operations, amounting to \$278 million, is financed primarily through sales, property, and gross receipts taxes on public utilities:

SOURCE OF FUNDS



The following chart shows the functions for which general operations money will be spent in 2008:

USE OF FUNDS



SPECIAL OPERATIONS (SPECIAL FUNDS):

About 41% of the spending authorized in the annual operating budgets relates to the budget for general operations discussed in the preceding section. The remaining authorized spending pertains to the smaller budgets for special operations or activities. The most common reason for having separate budgets for these activities is that the revenues supporting them are legally dedicated to a specific purpose. Programs funded through these special budgets include:

- Fire protection for rural areas
- Pay enhancements for City firefighters
- Downtown Development District
- Mosquito Abatement and Rodent Control
- Operation of the Library system
- Street maintenance programs
- Emergency Medical Services
- EBR Parish Communications District
- Road lighting for rural areas
- Animal Control Center
- Operation of the Baton Rouge River Center and parking facilities
- Repayment of long-term debt
- Operation of sewerage systems
- Solid waste collection
- Operation of the sanitary landfill
- Operation of the local Airport
- Support for the City Constable
- Provision of social services
- Employment training and opportunities
- Community and economic development
- Gaming enforcement services
- Equipment repair and maintenance
- Equipment replacement
- Employees' retirement funds
- Crime prevention districts

2008 FUNDING HIGHLIGHTS

Among the more noteworthy features of the 2008 budgets are the following:

- The largest single revenue source for the City-Parish is its sales and use tax; the 2008 budget assumes a 4% hurricane-adjusted increase in collections of this tax. Total City-Parish revenues are projected to increase by \$70.2 million, or approximately 10%.
- In 2008 the monthly solid waste user fee is being increased from \$15.50 to \$19.00 per household. This is the final phase of the conversion of the solid waste program to a full user fee basis. However, in recognition of the needs of the lower-income residents of the parish, a subsidy will be provided to households that meet federal low-income eligibility requirements.
- Public safety remains a top priority in 2008. The budget funds pay enhancements and additional employees for Police, Fire, and Public Works. In fact, 54% of new employee positions in 2008 are dedicated to those departments. Funding has also been included for vehicles, equipment, and two fire stations.
- Traffic enforcement cameras will be installed at problem intersections to record vehicles that run red lights. This initiative will result in increased safety for the motoring public.
- In order to address citizens' concerns relating to the animal population in the parish, plans are currently underway to expand the existing animal control facility and provide space to house dangerous animals. An additional 10 positions, capital items, and other related costs have been funded to accommodate this expansion. With these enhancements, daily hours of service will increase, and faster response to calls will be possible.

- Cultural and quality of life of citizens are addressed with funding for a number of agencies and events, including the Baton Rouge Blues Festival; the Debbie Allen Community Performance Residency; Fest-for-All; the Louisiana Art & Science Museum; the Baton Rouge Symphony; the Knock Knock Children's Museum; and Opéra Louisiane.
- The Green Light Plan, a long-term program of transportation improvements, is well underway. It provides for the construction of new streets and roads, rehabilitation of existing streets, and beautification and street enhancements, funded by a ½% sales tax.

CONCLUSION:

The high quality of our budget is evidenced by our receipt of the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award of the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) for our budgets for each year from 1991 through 2007. This is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting, and we hope to win this honor again in 2008.

I would sincerely appreciate any comments from the citizens of our community relative to the budget. All citizens are invited to attend the budget hearings held in November and December of each year. Anyone interested in attending should contact the Finance Department at 389-3061 or the Council Budget Office at 389-3051 in early November of each year to obtain the schedule.

Sincerely yours,

Melvin L. "Kip" Holden
Mayor-President

QUICK REFERENCE PHONE NUMBERS

City-Parish Call Center (Complaints/Requests/Information)	311
Alcoholic Beverage Control Bd.	389-3364
Airport	355-0333
Animal Control Center	774-7700
City Constable	389-3004
City Court	389-5279
Communications District	389-2911
Community Development	389-3039
Constituent & Neighborhood Srv.	389-7871
Coroner	389-3047
Council Administrator-Treasurer	389-3123
Council Budget Officer	389-3051
District Attorney	389-3400
District Court	389-4700
Downtown Development District	389-5520
Emergency Medical Services	389-5155
Emergency Preparedness	389-2100
Family Court	389-4680
Finance Department	389-3061
Finance – Revenue Division:	
Business Lic. / Sales Tax Assist.	389-3084
Finance – Service Fee Business	
Office (Solid Waste/Sewer Bills)	389-5378
Fire Department	354-1400
Human Development and Services	358-4583
Human Resources (Personnel)	389-3141
Information Services	389-3070
Juvenile Court	354-1250
Juvenile Services	356-4471
Library–Main Branch	231-3700
Mayor-President's Office	389-3100
Mosquito Abatement and Rodent Control	356-3297
Parish Attorney	389-3114
Planning Commission	389-3144
Police Department	389-3800
Public Information Office	389-3121
Public Works Department	389-3158
Purchasing	389-3259
Recycling	389-5194
Registrar of Voters	389-3940
River Center Box Office	389-4940

2008

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

CITY OF BATON ROUGE PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

MELVIN L. "KIP" HOLDEN
MAYOR-PRESIDENT

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL MEMBERS January 1, 2008

Ulysses Z. Addison, Jr.
David J. Boneno
Lorri Burgess
Wayne Carter
Pat Culbertson
Joseph "Joe" Greco
Charles Kelly
Darrell P. Ourso
Byron Sharper
Mickey Skyring
Martha J. Tassin
J. Michael "Mike" Walker