



CITY OF HOUSTON

Interoffice

Correspondence
Council Member Sallie Alcorn
At Large Position 5

To: Mayor John Whitmire
All Council Members

From: Sallie Alcorn
Council Member At Large Position 5

Date: May 28, 2025

Cc: Marta Crinejo, Agenda Director
Troy Lemon, Interim City Secretary

Subject: FY 2026 Budget Amendments

Amendment Number	Amendment	Council Member
5.01	<p>Dedicate \$10 million from the General Fund Ending Fund Balance – Unassigned to establishing an Other Post Employment Benefits (OPEB) trust.</p> <p>Note: In January 2022, the city reformed its health and disability benefits for new employees and existing employees depending on their length of service, mainly by eliminating or reducing subsidies for certain benefits. These reforms were projected to bring a looming \$9.1 billion liability in 2048 down to \$4.5 billion.</p> <p>To accompany these reforms, City Council passed as part of its FY24 budget ordinance a \$10 million contribution to establish an OPEB trust. The initial amount was to escalate over time and earn investment returns to further bring down the growing OPEB liability. This trust, while funded in the FY24 and FY25 budgets, was never established. The total OPEB liability per the March 31, 2025, Monthly Financial Report is \$1.9 billion.</p>	Alcorn (5)
5.02	<p>Explore the feasibility of expanding shared services between the City of Houston's Health Department and Harris County Public Health. The community-wide coordinating council shall present progress on the existing interlocal agreement to the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee within 90 days.</p> <p>Note: City and county health departments have very</p>	Alcorn (5)

	<p>similar operations with several overlapping services offered including: childhood lead poisoning prevention and lead abatement programs; food safety inspections and permit services; food manager and food handler certification programs; pool and water inspection services; immunization program; HIV/STD prevention program; diabetes prevention programs; services promoting healthy nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco cessation; health clinics and family planning services; public health preparedness services; oral health and dental services; planning development functions; and administrative and financial services.</p> <p>An interlocal agreement between the two health agencies establishing a community-wide coordinating council to explore areas for potential collaboration was passed by City Council in February 2023. City Council passed a data sharing agreement between the two agencies in May 2025.</p> <p>The Kinder Institute for Urban Research released a report “A Tale of Two Departments: Public Health in Harris County and the City of Houston” in December 2021. The report looked at service overlaps between the agencies and identified options to reduce overlaps and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the public health delivery system. The report’s recommendation was to have the city and county undertake a feasibility analysis of pursuing a Memorandum of Understanding or, alternatively, creating a health district.</p>	
5.03	<p>Explore the feasibility of having the Houston Public Works Department provide staff and/or funding to assist the Houston Parks and Recreation Department with mowing Houston’s 7000 esplanade islands. HPW and HPARD shall report to the Government Operations Committee on this matter within 90 days.</p> <p>Note: Esplanades are part of the street right-of-way, and Houston Public Works already services areas behind the curb line, roadside ditches, and drainage easements. To the extent feasible, Houston Public Works could supplement Houston Parks and Recreation’s esplanade mowing responsibilities.</p>	Alcorn (5)
5.04	<p>Add \$134,000 to BARC Special Revenue Fund to fund two additional animal enforcement officers.</p>	

	<p>Transfer funding from:</p> <p><u>General Fund</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$28,000 – management consulting services • \$38,000 – miscellaneous support and services • \$12,000 – paper and printing • \$ 8,000 – General Government contingency <p><u>Central Service Revolving Fund</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$35,000 – management consulting services • \$13,000 – discontinue print edition of City Savvy publication <p>Note: Additional animal enforcement officers (AEOs) are needed to address critical gaps in field response capabilities. Currently, BARC responds to just over 50% of all calls for service, with a low response rate of approximately 14% for Priority 4 and 5 calls. While Priority 1, 2, and 3 calls are largely addressed, the most critical Priority 1 and 2 calls have seen increases of 10% and 40% respectively over the past two years. While an additional 17 AEOs are needed, adding two AEOs would be a small step toward improving call response and addressing public safety concerns.</p>	
5.05	<p>The Finance Department shall present quarterly updates on overtime usage in the Houston Police, Houston Fire, and Solid Waste Departments to the Budget and Fiscal Affairs Committee.</p> <p>Co-author: CM Ramirez</p>	