

Budget Check with Peck

Proposed Amendments by Amy Peck

Budget Amendment 6.01

If the Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund actual fund balance is higher than expected in the proposed budget, 1% of the difference shall be moved to the Budget Stabilization Fund.

Fiscal Note: General Fund decrease, but it is a decrease in unexpected funds. Increase to the Budget Stabilization Fund.

Budget Amendment 6.02

If the Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund actual fund balance is higher than expected in the proposed budget, 1% of the difference shall be used to pay for deferred maintenance on City facilities starting with public safety facilities.

Fiscal Note: General Fund decrease, but it is a decrease in unexpected funds.

Budget Amendment 6.03

If the Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund actual fund balance is higher than 7.5% of total expenditures excluding debt service and Pay-As-You GP (PAYGO), 1% of the difference shall be moved to the Budget Stabilization Fund.

Fiscal Note: This would not impact the required 7.5%.

Budget Amendment 6.04

If the Fiscal Year 2026 General Fund actual fund balance is higher than 7.5% of total expenditures excluding debt service and Pay-As-You GP (PAYGO), 1% of the difference shall be used to pay for deferred maintenance on City facilities starting with public safety facilities.

Fiscal Note: This would not impact the required 7.5%.

Budget Amendment 6.05

Solid Waste depositories shall be equipped to show real time waiting status so that customers are aware of waiting times. This information shall be placed online and on the HTX Collects app.

Fiscal Note: Savings. This could potentially reduce the number of people who are illegally dumping due to unexpectedly long waiting times. A reduction in illegal dumping will save the City money.

Budget Amendment 6.06

A study shall be conducted to determine the feasibility of implementing an optional fee for additional garbage, heavy trash, and/or recycling pickup from single family residences. This fee will only be charged to those who voluntarily choose to have an additional pickup day. The fee shall be voted on by City Council prior to implementation. If capacity is not sufficient to meet these needs, this service shall be contracted out to a private company.

Fiscal Note: Revenue

Budget Amendment 6.07

A pilot program shall be established in District A for a managed competition program for yard waste collection.

Fiscal Note: None. Savings anticipated

Budget Amendment 6.08

A pilot program shall be established for a “One Bin” program for the Solid Waste Department where all trash and recycling are collected in the same bin and separated in an environmentally positive way.

Fiscal Note: Possible Savings.

Budget Amendment 6.09

A study shall be conducted to determine the viability and potential cost savings of working with other agencies and/or retired officers to transport individuals to the Joint Processing Center.

A presentation shall be given at the Public Safety Committee within 120 days.

Budget Amendment 6.10

A Special Revenue Fund shall be established for the Houston Fire Department for reimbursement for work conducted by the Houston Fire Department Wildland Group. This special revenue fund shall be subject to claw back at the end of each fiscal year.

Fiscal Note: None. This money is being reimbursed to the department for work completed and money expended from the department.

Co-Author: Council Member Kamin

Budget Amendment 6.11

A Special Revenue Fund shall be established for the Houston Fire Department for the Houston Fire Marshal's Department. All fees and fines collected by the Fire Marshal's Department shall be allocated back to this Special Revenue Fund for ongoing needs within the Department. This special revenue fund shall be subject to claw back at the end of each fiscal year.

Fiscal Note: None. This money is being reimbursed to the department for work completed and money expended from the department.

Budget Amendment 6.12

The Houston Fire Department shall review options for new funding sources and cost recovery measures in instances where unnecessary resources are used. Options include but are not limited to:

- a. Charge to insurance companies to recoup costs for responding to vehicular accidents and aiding/blocking traffic.
- b. Charge to insurance companies to recoup costs for hazard material cleanup.
- c. Charge to insurance companies for incidents caused by the misuse of alcohol or any controlled substances, including vehicle accidents.
- d. Charge for water consumption to contain fires when arson or owner negligence is involved.
- e. "Fire Flow Fee" on properties that have gone through the abatement process.

Fiscal Note: None. Possible revenue.

Budget Amendment 6.13

The Human Resources Department shall evaluate the potential financial impact of hiring off duty fire fighters as 911 dispatch call takers at the Houston Emergency Center.

Fiscal Note: None, but it would help fill a vacancy need with individuals who are already trained to handle difficult situations.

Budget Amendment 6.14

The City shall attempt to recover costs from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for any city funds spent cleaning homeless encampments under TxDOT overpasses.

Fiscal Note: Savings.

Budget Amendment 6.15

The City shall attempt to recover costs from the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) for the lights on TxDOT freeways. (GL 522715, Freeway Lighting, Interfund Electricity)

Fiscal Note: Savings of \$981,100.

Budget Amendment 6.16

The City shall attempt to recover costs from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) for inspections of concrete batch plants.

Fiscal Note: Savings.

Budget Amendment 6.17

The Houston Library System shall provide information about signing up for AlertHouston to individuals who apply for a library card.

Fiscal Note: None. Many people applying for a library card are new Houstonians, and this is important information that they may not know about.

Budget Amendment 6.18

A Special Revenue Fund shall be established for Houston Public Works (HPW). All fees and fines collected that are related to HPW inspection matters shall be allocated back to the Special Revenue Fund for ongoing needs within the Department. This Fund shall be subject to claw back at the end of each fiscal year.

Fiscal Note: None

Co-Author: Mayor Pro-Tem Castex-Tatum

Budget Amendment 6.19

A Special Revenue Fund shall be established for Houston Public Works (HPW) for dangerous building demolitions. When the City demolishes a dangerous building and places a lien on the property, all funds received from payment of said lien shall be allocated into this Special Revenue Fund. This Fund shall be subject to claw back at the end of each fiscal year.

Fiscal Note: Note.

Budget Amendment 6.20

The Strategic Procurement Department shall determine the financial benefits of eliminating option years in contracts and instead negotiating a longer term of the contract. A report shall be given to the Budget & Fiscal Affairs Committee at the end of Fiscal Year 2026

Fiscal Note: Possible Savings.

Budget Amendment 6.21

The Administration and Regulatory Affairs (ARA) Department shall consolidate all 311 call centers including but not limited to Health, Department of Neighborhoods, and BARC.

Fiscal Note: Possible Savings.

Budget Amendment 6.22

All call takers at 311 shall be given read-only access to INFOR and City Works to expedite callbacks from the public and for better calling experience.

Fiscal Note: None.

Budget Amendment 6.23

The Administration and Regulatory Affairs (ARA) Department shall explore the possibility of referring all non-emergency HPD calls from 311 directly to HPD. Currently, calls on HPD matters are being closed in 311 and not referred.

Fiscal Note: None.

Budget Amendment 6.24

The City shall discontinue the requirement of printing Google Map images/directions for mileage reimbursement requests. There is no need to take this additional step.

Fiscal Note: This will result in time savings for employees.

Budget Amendment 6.25

The General Services Department shall evaluate the potential cost savings of consolidating the Real Estate Management Division with the Legal Department and Houston Public Works.

Fiscal Note: Potential cost savings.

Budget Amendment 6.26

Houston Public Works shall evaluate the financial impact (for the City and private industry) of allowing private, certified engineers to conduct certain inspections instead of the City of Houston. The City shall also evaluate the impact of charging a potential fee for this expedited service.

Fiscal Note: Potential revenue.

Budget Amendment 6.27

The Planning & Development Department shall evaluate the financial impact (for the City and private industry) of allowing builders to sign plats electronically instead of in person.

Fiscal Note: Potential cost savings.

Budget Amendment 6.28

The Municipal Courts Department shall create a voluntary fund where jurors can donate their \$6 payment to either the Houston Police Foundation or the Houston Fire Fighters Foundation.

Fiscal Note: None.

Budget Amendment 6.29

The Houston Parks and Recreation Department (HPARD) shall study the potential revenue impact of offering concession contracts with vendors at HPARD swimming pools during summertime.

Fiscal Note: Potential revenue.

Budget Amendment 6.30

The City shall work with County Commissioners to share responsibilities, when available, for park and road maintenance.

Fiscal Note: Savings.