



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Aug. 28, 2018

Contact:

Phil Pitchford

Public Information Officer

951-826-5975

ppitchford@riversideca.gov

New Online Budget Portal Allows Residents to Learn More About City Finances

Latest effort at increasing transparency gives the public a wide range of new tools to visualize data

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Riverside residents who want to better understand the City of Riverside’s finances can now use a new online Budget Portal to create easy-to-understand visualizations of spending trends, how much money has been allocated to upcoming projects, and more.

The City of Riverside utilizes a two-year budget within the context of a five-year plan. That budget, including both the operating budget and the capital budget, comes to \$1.08 billion in 2018/19 and \$1.12 billion in 2019/20.

The Budget Portal utilizes the OpenBook technology from Questica to make budget information more easily digestible by the general public. This effort is in keeping with the “Promises Made, Promises Kept” theme that was discussed extensively in budget presentations to the public earlier this year before the Riverside City Council approved the budget on June 12.

“Riverside embraces transparency, and this online tool will give residents and business owners the opportunity to become more informed about the budget document whenever they choose,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said. “By making information easier to understand and available 24 hours per day, Riverside is taking budget transparency to a new level.”

Using the portal, residents explore everything from the number of funded personnel in a department to the five-year Measure Z spending plan. An interactive map shows where planned capital projects are located throughout the city, including how much the project is expected to cost and how much money has been allocated to date to each project.

The portal pulls data from the City’s actual budget document. That data can be sorted visually to demonstrate how City funds are budgeted, such as by department or on a specific project, then that information can be shared on social media.

The portal is available at www.engageriverside.com and can be accessed by clicking on the “Budget & Finance” tab, then the “Budget Portal” button. A video explaining the portal can be found at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DM1zbR2B0U>.

“The budgets of large organizations, be they cities or Fortune 500 companies, can be daunting for average people who are just trying to figure out how things are being run,” Mayor Pro Tem Chuck Conder said. “This new online tool will help people visualize our finances in a place that is ‘always open’ online.”