



GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

*Distinguished
Budget Presentation
Award*

PRESENTED TO

City of Branson

Missouri

For the Fiscal Year Beginning

January 1, 2020

Christopher P. Morill

Executive Director

August 4, 2020

Jamie Rouch
Finance Director
City of Branson
110 W. Maddux St. Ste 200
Branson, MO 65616

Dear Ms. Rouch:

We are pleased to inform you, based on the examination of your budget document by a panel of independent reviewers, that your budget document has been awarded the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) for the current fiscal period. This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting. Its attainment represents a significant achievement by your organization.

The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award is valid for one year. To continue your participation in the program, it will be necessary to submit your next annual budget document to GFOA within 90 days of the proposed budget's submission to the legislature or within 90 days of the budget's final adoption. A Distinguished Budget Program application is posted on GFOA's website. This application must be completed and accompany your next submission. (See numbers 12 and 13 on page 2 of the application for fee information and submission instructions.)

Each program participant is provided with confidential comments and suggestions for possible improvements to the budget document. Your comments are enclosed. We urge you to carefully consider the suggestions offered by our reviewers as you prepare your next budget.

When a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award is granted to an entity, a Certificate of Recognition for Budget Presentation is also presented to the individual(s) or department designated as being primarily responsible for its having achieved the award. Enclosed is a Certificate of Recognition for Budget Preparation for:

Finance Department

Continuing participants will find a brass medallion enclosed with these results. First-time recipients will receive an award plaque that will be mailed separately and should arrive within eight to ten weeks. Also enclosed is a camera-ready reproduction of the award for inclusion in your next budget. If you reproduce the camera-ready image in your next budget, it should be accompanied by a statement indicating continued compliance with program criteria.

The following standardized text should be used:

Jamie Rouch

August 4, 2020

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Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) presented a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award to **City of Branson, Missouri**, for its Annual Budget for the fiscal year beginning **January 1, 2020**. In order to receive this award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, as a financial plan, as an operations guide, and as a communications device.

This award is valid for a period of one year only. We believe our current budget continues to conform to program requirements, and we are submitting it to GFOA to determine its eligibility for another award.

A press release is enclosed.

Upon request, GFOA can provide a video from its Executive Director congratulating your specific entity for winning the Budget Award.

We appreciate your participation in this program, and we sincerely hope that your example will encourage others in their efforts to achieve and maintain excellence in governmental budgeting. The most current list of award recipients can be found on GFOA's website at www.gfoa.org. If we can be of further assistance, please contact the Technical Services Center at (312) 977-9700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michele Mark Levine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

Michele Mark Levine
Technical Services Center

Enclosure

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 4, 2020

For more information, contact:

Technical Services Center

Phone: (312) 977-9700

Fax: (312) 977-4806

E-mail: budgetawards@gfoa.org

(Chicago, Illinois)--Government Finance Officers Association is pleased to announce that **City of Branson, Missouri**, has received GFOA's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its budget.

The award represents a significant achievement by the entity. It reflects the commitment of the governing body and staff to meeting the highest principles of governmental budgeting. In order to receive the budget award, the entity had to satisfy nationally recognized guidelines for effective budget presentation. These guidelines are designed to assess how well an entity's budget serves as:

- n a policy document
- n a financial plan
- n an operations guide
- n a communications device

Budget documents must be rated "proficient" in all four categories, and in the fourteen mandatory criteria within those categories, to receive the award.

When a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award is granted to an entity, a Certificate of Recognition for Budget Presentation is also presented to the individual(s) or department designated as being primarily responsible for having achieved the award. This has been presented to **Finance Department**.

There are over 1,600 participants in the Budget Awards Program. The most recent Budget Award recipients, along with their corresponding budget documents, are posted quarterly on GFOA's website. Award recipients have pioneered efforts to improve the quality of budgeting and provide an excellent example for other governments throughout North America.

Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) advances excellence in government finance by providing best practices, professional development, resources and practical research for more than 20,500 members and the communities they serve.

BUDGET REVIEW COMPOSITE RATING FORM
GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program

Agency: **Branson, MO**

Fiscal Year beginning: **January 2020**

Document number: **B9942389**

At least 2 of the three reviewers must rate the document "proficient" or "outstanding" on all four overall categories and all mandatory criteria in order for the document to receive the award

Information Not Present (1)			Does Not Satisfy (2)			Proficient (3)			Outstanding (4)			
R1	R2	R3	R1	R2	R3	R1	R2	R3	R1	R2	R3	
												Introduction and Overview
								✓	✓	✓		* C1 Table of contents (mandatory)
								✓	✓	✓		P1 Strategic goals & strategies
						✓	✓	✓				P2 Short-term organization-wide factors influencing decisions
						✓	✓	✓				* P3 Priorities and issues (mandatory)
								✓			✓	* C2 Budget overview (mandatory)
												Financial Structure, Policy, and Process
						✓		✓		✓		* O1 Organizational chart (mandatory)
							✓		✓		✓	F1 Fund descriptions and fund structure
						✓	✓	✓				O2 Department/fund relationship
						✓	✓	✓				F2 Basis of budgeting
						✓	✓	✓				* P4 Financial policies (mandatory)
						✓	✓	✓				* P5 Budget process (mandatory)
												Financial Summaries
						✓	✓	✓				* F3 Consolidated financial schedule (mandatory)
						✓		✓		✓		* F4 Three (four) year consolidated & fund financial schedules (mandatory)
						✓	✓	✓				* F5 Fund balance (mandatory)
						✓	✓	✓			✓	* F6 Revenues (mandatory)
				✓		✓	✓	✓				F7 Long-range financial plans
												Capital & Debt
							✓	✓	✓			* F8 Capital expenditures (mandatory)
							✓	✓	✓			F9 Impact of capital investments on operating budget
						✓	✓	✓				* F10 Debt (mandatory)
												Departmental Information
						✓	✓	✓				* O3 Position summary schedule (mandatory)
						✓	✓	✓				* O4 Department descriptions (mandatory)
						✓	✓	✓	✓			O5 Unit goals and objectives
						✓	✓	✓				O6 Performance measures
												Document-wide Criteria
						✓	✓	✓			✓	C3 Statistical/supplemental section
						✓	✓	✓				C4 Glossary
						✓	✓	✓	✓			C5 Charts and graphs
						✓	✓	✓				C6 Understandability and usability
												Overall
						✓	✓	✓				Overall as a policy document
						✓	✓	✓				Overall as a financial plan
						✓	✓	✓	✓			Overall as a operations guide
						✓	✓	✓	✓			Overall as a communications device

N Special Capital recognition (three "outstanding ratings on F8 and F9)
N Special Performance Measure recognition (three "outstanding" ratings on O6)

Name of Entity: Branson, MO

Reviewer: R953

Introduction and Overview

C1-MANDATORY Table of Contents- The Document shall include a table of contents that makes it easier to locate information in the document-The table of contents is included and meets the criterion.

P1-The document should include a coherent statement of organization-wide, strategic goals and strategies that address long-term concerns and issues. The city has developed goals and strategies. Strategic planning is included in the budget document. Outstanding.

P2-The document should describe the entity's short-term factors that influence the decisions made in the development of the budget for the upcoming year-The short-term initiatives and goals are included. They link effectively with the long-term strategic planning.

P3 MANDATORY-The document shall include a budget message that articulates priorities and issues for the upcoming year. The message should describe significant changes in priorities from the current year and explain the factors that led to those changes. The message may take one of several forms (*transmittal letter, budget summary section*).

The budget summary information is included. Priorities and issues are indicated throughout the document. The discussion given to the reader provide a strong explanation for the development of the budget.

C2 Mandatory The document should provide an overview of significant budgetary items and trends. An overview should be presented within the budget document either in a separate section or integrated within the transmittal letter or as a separate budget-in-brief document. The document helps readers to quickly understand major budgetary items and trends (revenues, expenditures, and capital). Highlighting, indentation, bullet points, outlines, tables, or graphs help in communicating this information. Outstanding.

Financial Structure, Policy and Process

O1The document shall include an organization chart(s) for the entire entity. – The organizational chart provides information on the departmental level and assists legislators in understanding the structure of the governmental entity.

F1-The document should include and describe all funds that are subject to appropriation- The structures of the funds and the narratives included in this document provide the description and the fund information that is subject to appropriation. You have identified the major funds for your entity. It is a simple presentation but it provides the information effectively.

O2-The document should provide narrative, tables, schedules or matrices to show the relationship between functional units, major funds, and non-major funds taken together. Relationship between the funds is included. This is easy to understand. Outstanding.

F2-The document shall explain the basis of budgeting for all funds, whether cash, modified accrual, or some other statutory basis. - The basis of budgeting is included.

P4 Mandatory-The document should include a coherent statement of entity-wide long-term financial policies.-Financial policies guide the day-to-day operations of any governmental entity. Other policies are important in the governmental structure. This document offers the required policies for effective governance.

P5 Mandatory-Budget Process The document shall describe the process for preparing, reviewing, and adopting the budget for the coming fiscal year. It also should describe the procedures for amending the budget after adoption. The document offers a concise description of the budget process.

Financial Summaries

F3-Mandatory-The document shall present a summary of major revenues and expenditures, as well as other financing sources and uses, to provide an overview of the total resources budgeted by the organization. Major revenues and expenditures are presented in this document.

F4-Mandatory- The document must include summaries of revenues and other financing sources and of expenditures and other financing uses for the prior year actual, the current year budget and/or estimated current year actual, and the proposed budget year. - The revenues and expenditures are defined and the sources are substantiated.

F5-Mandatory-The document shall include projected changes in fund balances as defined by the entity in the document, for appropriated governmental funds included in the budget presentation (fund equity if not governmental funds are included in the document). Any change in fund balance should always be included. The criterion requires at the beginning and ending fund balances, as defined by the entity in the budget document, be shown for the budget year, as well as revenues, expenditures, and other financing sources/uses.

F6-Revenues-The document shall describe major revenue sources, explain the underlying assumptions for the revenue estimates, and discuss significant revenue trends. Analytical information is included for each revenue related section. Make sure that all sources are identified and described.

F7-Long Range Financial Plans—Long-term planning is an important part of any budget document. Future councils are not bound by future planning. As you know, a budget is a “living, breathing” document subject to legislative change. The information is included in two separate sections. I suggest that you use either portrait or landscape and that you combine the information together. It will create a contiguous information source.

Capital and Debt

F8Mandatory-The document should include budgeted capital expenditures, whether authorized in the operating budget or in a separate capital budget. - The document provides good information on the capital plan.

F9 The document should describe if and to what extent significant nonrecurring capital expenditures will affect the entity's current and future operating budget, and future operating budget and the services that the entity provides. - The criterion has been satisfied with this budget.

F10 Mandatory-The document shall include financial data on current debt obligations, describe the relationship between current debt levels and legal debt limits, and explain the effects of existing debt levels on current operations. - Debt information is included in this document.

O3 Mandatory-A schedule or summary table of personnel or position counts for prior, current, and budgeted years shall be provided. Full-time equivalent personnel are included in this document as well as various personnel required to carry on the core services.

O4 Mandatory-The document shall describe activities, services or functions carried out by organizational units- The document includes information on the functions carried out by each organizational unit. These activities and services provide the core essential services for your entity to the community and stakeholders. Just a suggestion: In some cases, the presentation overshadows the information. This could be just as effective with smaller graphics and additional verbiage.

O5-The document should include clearly stated goals and objectives of organizational units (e.g., departments, divisions, offices, or programs). The goals and objectives provide measurements that will give the legislators and administrators a way of determining the level of service that should be provided by your entity.

O6-The document should provide objective measures of progress toward accomplishing the government's mission as well as goals and objectives for specific units and programs Effective measurements of progress are valuable for any governmental unit. As legislators look at measurements, they will be able to develop a funding source for the valuable services offered by any governmental unit. **Not all departments include this information.**

C3-The document should include statistical and supplemental data that describe the organization, its community, and population. It should also furnish other pertinent background information related to the services provided. - Statistical and demographic information is supplied. The profile of the community is clearly presented in an interesting manner.

C4-A glossary should be included for any terminology (including abbreviations and acronyms) that is not readily understandable to a reasonably informed lay reader. The glossary provides supportive information for the document. Make sure that this is updated annually, and that it includes all changes.

C5-Charts and graphs should be used, where appropriate, to highlight financial and statistical information. Narrative interpretation should be provided when the message conveyed by the graphs are not self-evident. The charts and graphs are well done and informative. They add to the narrative and numerical information provided in this budget.

C6-The document should be produced and formatted in such a way as to enhance its understanding by the average reader. It should be attractive, consistent, and oriented to the reader's needs. The document is informative and easy to navigate.

The document shows that you understand the requirements and criterion. The information that you have included meets the criterion. There are always ways to improve. However, I am happy to recommend the City of Branson, MO as a recipient of the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. I want to congratulate the entire staff on this submission.

GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION
DISTINGUISHED BUDGET PRESENTATION AWARDS PROGRAM
BUDGET REVIEWER'S COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

For: CITY OF BRANSON, MO

Order #2327

Fiscal year: 2020

Introduction and Overview:

The City of Branson presented a linked table of contents, their mission, strategic plan goals and objectives, issues and challenges that guided them in the budget development process and provide the framework for future budgets.

Financial Structure, Policy and Process:

All criteria were rated at least proficient. Departments presented organization charts to enhance the overall chart. Charts of funds with departments enhanced O2.

Financial Summaries:

Mandatory criteria were rated at least proficient. Multi-year categorized summaries by fund with fund balances were presented. See page 170 of the GFOA publication, Building a Better Budget Document, 2nd edition, by John Fishbein on forecasts incorporated with multi-year summaries.

Capital and Debt:

All criteria were rated proficient. Capital was presented. Operating impacts were addressed. Debt information was provided.

Departmental Information:

All criteria were rated proficient. Departments presented organization chart, description, multi-year financial data, prior accomplishments and budget year objectives. Develop and present multi-year measures linked to the objectives of workload (output), efficiency and/or effectiveness. Present a one line multi-year total of FTEs within the departments to earn outstanding on O3 from this reviewer.

Document-Wide Criteria

All criteria were rated proficient. Some economic and demographic information was presented. Add CAFR and fiduciary fund to the glossary.

Comments/Suggestions:

The GFOA publication, Building a Better Budget Document, 2nd edition, by John Fishbein (mentioned above) and the GFOA website under Best Practices are valuable resources available to assist you in further enhancing your budget document. Staff is to be commended for their efforts.

Control: B9942389

Record #300047601

Reviewer: S411

JUL 2020

Document Name –City of Branson, MO

Document Number – B9942389

RECORD Number - 300047601

Reviewer ID Number – V554

Thank you for the opportunity to review your budget. The budget was visually stunning! Whoever pulls this document together should be commended for how well it looks. I have a few comments below which are suggestions on how to improve an already well done document.

- Consider preparing a consolidated schedule that combines all funds which would look holistically at the City and present total revenues less total expenditures/expenses.
- Consider preparing a revenue schedule which mirrors the expense/expenditure format on page 72.
- Consider a consolidated fund balance schedule which would highlight all of the City's fund balances on one page. This would be more of an "at-a-glance" format.
- I thought the department summaries were good. You might consider some performance measures which are more quantifiable (# of permits issued, # of payroll checks processed, etc). Most of the information presented focuses only on accomplishment of goals.