

August 03, 2021

Suzy Kou
Finance Director
City of La Marque
1111 Bayou Road
La Marque, TX 77568

Dear Ms. Kou:

We are pleased to inform you, based on the examination of your budget 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. Information about how to submit an application for the Distinguished Budget Program application is posted on GFOA's website.

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 receive a brass medallion that will be mailed separately. First-time recipients will receive an award plaque within eight to ten weeks. 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:

Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) presented a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award to **City of La Marque, Texas**, for its Annual Budget for the fiscal year beginning **October 01, 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, flowing style.

Michele Mark Levine
Director, Technical Services Center

Enclosure

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 03, 2021

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 La Marque, Texas**, 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:

- a policy document
- a financial plan
- an operations guide
- 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 1,700 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 21,000 members and the communities they serve.



GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

*Distinguished
Budget Presentation
Award*

PRESENTED TO

**City of La Marque
Texas**

For the Fiscal Year Beginning

October 01, 2020

Christopher P. Morill

Executive Director



**The Government Finance Officers Association
of the United States and Canada**

presents this

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION FOR BUDGET PREPARATION

to

**Finance Department
City of La Marque, Texas**



The Certificate of Recognition for Budget Preparation is presented by the Government Finance Officers Association to those individuals who have been instrumental in their government unit achieving a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award. The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, which is the highest award in governmental budgeting, is presented to those government units whose budgets are judged to adhere to program standards

Executive Director

Christopher P. Morill

Date: **August 03, 2021**

BUDGET REVIEW COMPOSITE RATING FORM
GFOA Distinguished Budget Presentation Awards Program
For budgets beginning before January 1, 2021

Agency: **City of La Marque TX**

Fiscal Year beginning: **1-Oct-20**

Document number: **B9944200**

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)

Reviewer: R953
Name of Entity: La Marque, TX
REC 125622001
DOCB9944200

- C1. Mandatory: The document shall include a table of contents that makes it easier to locate information in the document. **4 - Comments:** *The table of contents is good: the alignment adds to the visual presentation.*
- P1.** The document should include a coherent statement of organization-wide, strategic goals, and strategies that address long-term concerns and issues. **4 - Comments:** *Good discussion of strategic plan, goals, and strategies that address the long-term issues and concerns of the government.*
- P2.** The document should describe the entity's short-term factors that influence the decisions made in developing the budget for the upcoming year. Put the grade and comments here. **3 - Comments:** *Good discussion of the factors that influence the government's budget decisions, much of which is contained in the budget message.*
- 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 (e.g., transmittal letter, budget summary section). **3 - Comments:** *The budget message is good, as it highlights the issues, concerns, and priorities.*
- 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 (e.g., executive summary) or integrated within the transmittal letter or as a separate budget-in-brief document. **4 - Comments:** *Good overview of significant budgetary items and trends.*

Financial Structure, Policy, and Process

- O1. Mandatory: The document shall include an organization chart(s) for the entire entity. **3 - Comments:** *The organizational chart is good.*
- F1. The document should include and describe all funds that are subject to appropriation. **3 - Comments:** *Good discussion of funds the government currently maintains.*
- O2. The document should provide narrative, tables, schedules, or matrices to show the relationship between functional units, major funds, and non-major funds in the aggregate. **4 - Comments:** *Good use of comparative fund data..*

F2. The document shall explain the basis of budgeting for all funds, whether cash, modified accrual, or some other statutory basis. **3 - Comments:** *The discussion on basis of budgeting is good.*

P4. Mandatory: The document should include a coherent statement of entity-wide long-term financial policies. **3 - Comments:** *Good discussion of organization-wide long-term financial policies.*

P5. Mandatory: 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. **3 - Comments:** *Good discussion of the budget process, including the calendar.*

Financial Summaries

F3. Mandatory: The document shall present a summary of major revenues and expenditures and other financing sources and uses to provide an overview of the total resources budgeted by the organization. **3 - Comments:** *Good summary of revenues and expenditures.*

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. **3 - Comments:** *Good summary that includes historical information.*

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 no governmental funds are included in the document). **3 - Comments:** *Fund balance change is included.*

F6. Mandatory: The document shall describe major revenue sources, explain the underlying assumptions for the revenue estimates, and discuss significant revenue trends. **3 - Comments:** *Discussion of major revenue sources.*

F7. The document should explain long-range financial plan and its effect upon the budget and the budget process. **2 - Comments:** *No discussion of any long-range financial plan and/or its effect on the budget and the budget process; however, there is a definition on page 134 that provides basic information. The document needs to present it within the framework of a long-range financial plan.*

Capital & Debt

- F8. Mandatory: The document should include budgeted capital expenditures, whether authorized in the operating budget or in a separate capital budget. **3 - Comments:** *Good discussion of capital improvement projects, projected costs, and funding sources.*
- 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 the entity's services. **2 - Comments:** *Good graphic representation of the impact the capital expenditures will have on current and future operations of the government.*
- 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. **3 - Comments:** *Good discussion of debt policy, debt obligations, payment schedule, and legal debt.*

Departmental Information

- O3. Mandatory: A schedule or summary table of personnel or position counts for prior, current, and budgeted years should be provided. **3 - Comments:** *Good summary of position counts; covers the requisite years.*
- O4. Mandatory: The document shall describe activities, services, or functions carried out by organizational units. **3 - Comments:** *Good summary of activities, services, and functions, as carried out by various government units.*
- O5. The document should include clearly stated goals and objectives of organizational units (e.g., departments, divisions, offices, or programs). Put the grade and comments here. **3 - Comments:** *Good discussion of goals, objectives and accomplishments.*
- 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. **1 - Comments:** *Performance measurements are not included in the document.*

Document-wide Criteria

- C3. The document should include statistical and supplemental data that describe the organization, its community, and its population. It should also furnish other pertinent background information related to the services provided. **3 - Comments:** *Good supplementary details on the government and the community it serves.*

- C4. A glossary should be included for any terminology (including abbreviations and acronyms) that is not readily understandable to a reasonably informed lay reader. **3 - Comments:** *The glossary of terms is good; nice, and clear.*
- C5. Charts and graphs should be used, where appropriate, to highlight financial and statistical information. Narrative interpretation should be provided when the messages conveyed by the graphs are not self-evident. **3 - Comments:** *Good mixture of graphs and charts.*
- 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. **4 - Comments:** *Formatted correctly and provides the required criteria to receive The Distinguished Budget Presentation Award.*

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

For: CITY OF La MARQUE, TX

Fiscal year: 2020-21

Introduction and Overview:

The City of La Marque presented a linked table of contents, their mission, vision, goals, 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. A departments-to-funds matrix with basis enhanced O2 and F2. The budget process was enhanced with a detailed calendar.

Financial Summaries:

Mandatory criteria were rated at least proficient. Fund balances were projected and discussed. Revenues were enhanced with trend charts. To further enhance F7 (and F3 & F4), see page 170 (and 127-129) of the GFOA publication, Building A Better Budget Document, 2nd edition, by John Fishbein on forecasts incorporated with multi-year summaries.

Capital and Debt:

Mandatory criteria were rated proficient. Capital was presented, but I did not locate quantified operating impacts. Debt information was provided.

Departmental Information:

Most criteria were rated at least proficient. Departments presented description, objectives, accomplishments, multi-year FTEs which enhance O3, multi-year financial data summary and line-item detail. Develop and present multi-year measures projected through the proposed budget year linked to the objectives. Performance measures become a mandatory criterion effective with budgets beginning on or after January 1, 2021.

Document-Wide Criteria

All criteria were rated at least proficient. Some economic and demographic information was provided. Add arbitrage, audit, CARES, EDC, fiduciary fund, full-time equivalent, GFOA, GLO, major fund, non-major fund and sinking fund to the glossary that includes some acronyms. Charts and graphs were effectively presented.

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: B9944200

Record #125622001

Reviewer: S411

AUG 2021

Reviewer ID V888
Name of Entity City of La Marque
Record Number 125622001

Document Number B9944200
State/Province TX
Order Rec'd Number

Introduction

Content entries linked to relevant pages. Good use of bookmarks to allow people to navigate the document easily. The discussion of impact of changes to state law and impacts of construction on sales tax was very helpful in understanding the context for this budget. Executive summary provides high-level overview of major budget changes and projects for each fund.

Financial Structure, Policy, and Process

Good overview of the various funds and their purposes. Many of the financial policies have an excellent level of specificity and detail (e.g., the Budget Contingency Plan), but others are quite vague (e.g., Debt Management). Detailed explanation of budget process, although the format calendar on p. 23 makes it look like the Council passes the budget before the public hearings.

Financial Summaries

While the 3-year summary has very detailed information, it's hard to read. Some lines or shading separating the funds and the FY's would make it a little easier to follow without having to use a ruler.

Capital & Debt

5-year CIP lists projects by priority, but does not estimate actual plan for when projects will be implemented. There is no impact on operating costs indicated that I could find. Good detail on debt, with helpful colorful charts and graphs.

Departmental Information

Department overviews are cursory, with most objectives and accomplishments related to basic operations rather than strategic goals. There are detailed charts showing appropriated expenditures and positions, though revenue is only detailed at the fund level.

Document-wide Criteria

Glossary contains some entries that do not appear in budget book (e.g., RFP or TIRZ). The document contains a lot of charts and graphs, some of which are very engaging, although some can be hard to read.