

Socrata Open Budget – Operating Budget Schema

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Introduction

Socrata's Open Budget allows you to visualize the revenues and expenses of your Operating Budget and Capital Budget / Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The interface of Open Budget is automatically generated from your data.

Open Budget is flexible to the desires of your organization and the story you want to tell. The table below shows what data is needed to visualize the different aspects of your budget.

Open Budget Feature	Dataset(s) to Enable Feature
Operating Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operating Expenses Dataset
Operating Revenues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Operating Revenues Dataset
Capital Budget / CIP	This is covered in a separate document .

For your Open Budget to work, each dataset must be organized into a flat-file. You can think of this as having all your data on a single tab in Microsoft Excel. This document will explain each of these datasets in detail.

Operating Expenses and Operating Revenues Dataset

Open Budget expects a separate dataset for your Operating Expenses vs. Operating Revenues. The descriptions below apply to both datasets, although the contents can be different.

Recommended Column Name	Type	Value	Notes
fiscal_year	Required	Number	Used to distinguish entries across multiple years.
Hierarchy / Chart of Accounts (up to 6 levels)			
priority / service / department / program / division / etc. (up to 6 levels)	Required	Text	1st level of detail presented. <i>(Ex. Public Safety, Safer Streets.)</i>
	Optional	Text	2nd level of detail presented. <i>(Ex. Police Department, Fire Department)</i>
	Optional	Text	3rd level of detail presented. <i>(Ex. Administration, Operations)</i>
Line-Item Details			
description	Recommended	Text	A detailed description for the item.
item_category	Optional	Text	The type of revenue or expense—usually a generic name. <i>(Revenue Ex.: Taxes, Charges for Service, Licenses and Permits)</i> <i>(Expense Ex.: Operating Expense, Personnel Cost)</i>
Amounts (1 primary amount + 2 comparisons)			
approved_amount / actual_amount / recommended amount (up to 3 amounts)	Required	Number	The primary amount to show, most likely the amount approved in the budget.
	Optional	Number	A comparison to show against the primary amount, most likely the YTD actual.
	Optional	Number	A second comparison to show, most likely the proposed or recommended amount.
Fund Details			
fund	Recommended	Text	The name of the fund that the money flows into or out from.
fund_type	Optional	Text	A high-level classification of funds, if needed. <i>(Ex. General, Intergovernmental, Enterprise)</i>

Flat-File Example

The following table is provided for illustration purposes and not reflective of your organization. Open Budget is flexible to the chart of accounts and naming conventions of your organization, which we will discuss in more detail.

Period	Hierarchy / Chart of Accounts			Line-Item Details		Amounts			Fund Information	
fiscal_year	service	department	program	description	item_category	recommended_amount	approved_amount	actual_amount	fund	type
2015	Public Safety	Police	Equipment Replacement	Uniforms	Equipment	12000	10000	9727	Public Safety	General
2015	Public Safety	Police	Equipment Replacement	Cameras	Equipment	500000	500000	500000	Police Transparency	Federal Grant
2015	Public Safety	Police	Salaries and Wages	Salaries	Personnel	1750000	1750000	1800000	Public Safety	General
2015	Public Safety	Police	Salaries and Wages	Benefits Contribution	Personnel	1000000	990000	998209	Public Safety	General
2015	Public Safety	Fire	Equipment Replacement	Hose Valves	Equipment	10000	10000	9800	Fire Upgrade	State Grant

Period

Open Budget visualizes multiple years of data on a timeline view. Customers that use biennial budgets should pick one year to represent both. Inside the Open Budget app, the text shown can be customized for biennial budgets.

Hierarchy / Chart of Accounts

Open Budget guides constituents through the hierarchy of your operating revenues and expenses. This hierarchy will likely mirror your chart of accounts. Open Budget supports 1 to 6 levels of hierarchy.

Best Practices:

- Ensure the hierarchy chosen will be easily understood by constituents. This may mean showing less detail or more friendly naming conventions. Remember, your underlying dataset can include as much detail as you need for internal use.
- Don't include the account numbers from your chart of accounts. "Public Safety" is better than "006 - Public Safety".

Recommended Column Name	Type	Value	Notes
priority / service / department / program / division / etc.	Required	Text	1st level of detail presented. (Ex. Public Safety, Safer Streets.)
	Optional	Text	2nd level of detail presented. (Ex. Police Department, Fire Department)
	Optional	Text	3rd level of detail presented. (Ex. Administration, Operations)
	Optional	Text	4th level of detail presented. (Ex. Technology, Travel)
	Optional	Text	5th level of detail presented.
	Optional	Text	6th level of detail presented.

Line-Item Details

As constituents explore through the budget, they will eventually get to the deepest level at detail where they will see individual line items for an account.

Optionally, providing an “item_category” may be helpful to classify revenues and expenses into broader buckets than that in chart of accounts. Many organizations already do this to create pie charts in newsletters or posters intended for constituents. In the future, Open Budget may allow customers to do similar high-level visualizations on the homepage.

Amounts

Open Budget visualizes the data using a primary amount (most likely the one approved in your budget), plus comparisons of up to two other amounts (most likely actuals and recommended). If included in your dataset, the first comparison is shown by default.

Fund Information

Open Budget shows customers the flow of money through the various funds used in your organization. In most cases, this information will come from the chart of accounts. Open Budget expects the names of funds used on the Operating Revenues and Operating Expenses to be the same. Optionally, for organizations with a granular fund structure, we recommend providing a “fund_type” to group funds into broader buckets better understood by constituents.