

Your local budget, in one page

City of Memphis + Shelby County | FY2026 adopted books used as examples

A budget is a plan for what government will fund. Reading it can help you ask whether public spending matches what your community needs. This guide explains how to read the plan; it does not endorse a spending choice.

Two governments, two sets of services

Memphis funds city police, fire, city streets, parks and libraries. Shelby County funds the Sheriff's Office, courts, public health and county roads. Memphis residents live in both jurisdictions. Both fund some services, such as parks, in different ways.

What is inside - and outside

An operating budget plans ongoing services, staff and supplies. Capital plans cover longer-lived projects. A City or County General Fund view is only part of that government's all-funds budget; other funds may be restricted or used for other purposes. Do not add different views together.

School districts, MATA transit and MLGW utilities have their own budgets. Local governments may still contribute funding to a separate entity: for example, County education funding is not the school district's full budget.

Read the label before the number

PROPOSED = the mayor's request, still subject to change. ADOPTED = the plan approved by the City Council or County Commission. ACTUAL = spending recorded after or during the year, not the approved plan. Compare the same fiscal year, fund, stage and category before claiming a change.

Who decides - and what you can do

The Memphis Mayor proposes a City budget; the City Council reviews and adopts it. The County Mayor proposes a County budget; the County Commission reviews and adopts it. Check the current meeting agenda for a public-comment opportunity; bring one specific service request and why it matters.

Try this: Which service needs more investment where you live? Choose City or County, then compare that service in the explorer before trying a different priority in the simulator.

Explore: <https://moralbudget.com/budget-review>

Try priorities (no account needed): <https://moralbudget.com/budget-simulator/select-path>

Sources / scope: City of Memphis FY2026 Adopted Budget Book; Shelby County FY2026 Adopted Budget. Read current documents and meeting details at:

City budget books: <https://www.memphistn.gov/government/finance/>

County budget books: <https://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/397/Budget>

These are FY2026 adopted examples, not current-year totals or proof of actual spending. Learn more, or speak up for investments your community needs.