

# City of Auburn FY2027 August 6 Budget Meeting

## Independent Research Notes

**Primary source:** City of Auburn FY2027 Mayor & Council Budget Presentation Binder

**Source pages:** Binder pages 35-56 / August 6 Budget Meeting

**Binder inspected:** August 31, 2026

**Status:** Independent companion notes based on preliminary / working budget material

These notes identify what the binder supports, where the presentation is useful, and where the available material leaves questions unanswered. A gap or inconsistency in the packet is not evidence of wrongdoing. Department totals, individual compensation, projections, actual expenditures, requests, contracts, and final adopted amounts are treated as different categories.

## What the binder documents clearly

- The August 6 packet contains projected FY2027 expenditure reports for twelve General Fund departments or functions.
- The twelve printed department totals add to approximately \$5.82 million in FY2027 projections, about \$480,946 or 9.0% above the same departments' FY2026 original budgets. This combined total is independently calculated from the packet.
- Police rises from \$2,773,356 to \$3,084,883, an increase of \$311,527 or 11.2%, the largest dollar increase among the departments shown.
- The Executive / Mayor department rises from \$275,888 to \$374,048, an increase of \$98,160 or 35.6%. The regular-employees line explicitly combines multiple positions: Mayor, City Manager, 83% City Clerk, and 50% Administrative Assistant.
- Financial Administration rises from \$755,852 to \$823,587 and includes a \$60,000 vehicle line labeled City Manager vehicle replacement.
- Data Processing falls by \$20,000 because computer hardware is reduced from \$30,000 to \$10,000 while the professional and technical lines remain unchanged.
- Planning and Zoning is nearly flat at \$372,849 projected, with \$220,000 remaining in professional services.
- Special Events rises by \$23,000 and includes a note stating that Auburn Ever After was formerly categorized under DDA and is corrected to the Events department for FY2027.

## Main gaps and weak points

- **Future-dated activity figures:** Every departmental report uses "YTD Expenditures (as of 9/30/2026)" even though the binder was inspected August 31. The packet does not explain whether the figures are actual activity through an earlier cutoff, projected year-end activity, or another reporting convention.
- **Meeting-date mismatch:** The source section is an August 6 meeting packet, but the individual budget reports repeatedly say "Prepared for Mayor and City Council Meeting - July 30, 2026." The packet does not explain which version of the reports is being presented or whether any values changed between the two meetings.
- **Executive / Mayor compensation:** The department rises \$98,160, but the binder does not provide a person-by-person compensation schedule. Because the regular-employees line combines four position allocations, the packet cannot support a claim that the Mayor personally received a \$98,160 raise.
- **Insurance assumptions:** Several departments contain notes referencing projected GMA insurance increases, often around 30%, but the resulting line changes vary substantially by department. The packet does not provide the underlying employee-enrollment assumptions or final premium schedule.
- **Police Flock note:** The Police page contains the note "INCREASE FOR ANNUAL FLOCK AGREEMENT" immediately below the Computer Hardware line and above Computer Software. The layout makes the exact line intended to carry the Flock cost less clear than it should be, and the packet does not include the agreement, term, camera count, or contract amount.
- **Police communications:** The communications line rises from \$5,100 to \$25,000, a 390% increase, but the packet gives no explanation on that line.
- **Finance vehicle classification:** A \$60,000 City Manager vehicle replacement appears in Financial Administration. That may simply be the City's accounting classification, but the packet does not explain why the vehicle is housed there rather than in Executive / Mayor or a fleet account.

- **Planning professional services:** Professional services remain \$220,000, about 59% of the projected Planning and Zoning budget. The packet provides no nearby scope, vendor list, contract schedule, or breakdown of that amount.
- **Special Events reclassification:** The binder says Auburn Ever After was formerly categorized under DDA and corrected to the Events department for FY2027. The packet does not provide a reconciliation showing how that move affected the DDA comparison or whether the event amount itself changed.

## What should not be concluded

- The \$98,160 Executive / Mayor increase should not be described as a \$98,160 raise for the Mayor. It is the increase in the full department budget.
- The Police Flock note should not be used to infer the exact annual Flock contract amount without the agreement or a clearer line-item allocation.
- The \$60,000 City Manager vehicle line should not be described as a purchase that has already occurred. It is a projected budget line.
- The YTD activity figures should not be treated as actual expenditures through September 30, 2026 until the City clarifies the reporting date.
- A line-item increase or reduction does not by itself establish whether service levels, staffing, or contractual obligations changed.

## Records most likely to resolve the open questions

1. The final adopted FY2027 budget and adopted department schedules.
2. The August 6 called-meeting packet, minutes, presentation, and any worksheets distributed at the meeting.
3. Clarification from City finance staff on why the reports say they were prepared for July 30 and whether the August 6 figures were revised.
4. Clarification of the actual cutoff and meaning of the figures labeled "YTD Expenditures (as of 9/30/2026)."
5. A personnel/FTE and compensation allocation schedule for Executive / Mayor showing the Mayor, City Manager, City Clerk allocation, and Administrative Assistant allocation separately.
6. The GMA employee-insurance premium and enrollment assumptions used for the FY2027 department projections.
7. The current Auburn Police Flock agreement, amendments, renewal terms, invoice schedule, and the accounting line used for the annual agreement.
8. Budget backup for the Police communications increase from \$5,100 to \$25,000.
9. Purchase request, quote, or replacement schedule supporting the \$60,000 City Manager vehicle line.
10. Planning and Zoning professional-services contracts or work authorizations supporting the \$220,000 projection.
11. A DDA-to-Special-Events reconciliation for the Auburn Ever After reclassification.

## Working assessment

This packet is useful because it provides department-level comparisons, percentage changes, and notes for a number of unusual line items. It also makes clear that some large-looking changes are department totals rather than individual compensation changes.

The strongest example is Executive / Mayor. The department increases 35.6%, but the binder itself identifies multiple positions inside the regular-employees line and shows large changes in insurance, payroll taxes, travel, and training. The record therefore supports discussion of a department increase, but not a conclusion about the Mayor's personal salary without a separate compensation schedule.

The packet's weakest documentation issue is version control. An August 6 meeting section contains worksheets labeled as prepared for July 30, and those same worksheets use a September 30 YTD date that had not yet occurred when the binder was inspected. Those labels do not prove the numbers are wrong, but they make it harder to determine the true data cutoff and which version of each projection Council was reviewing.

The Police section also creates a clear follow-up path. It identifies an annual Flock agreement somewhere in the technology lines, but the packet is not precise enough to establish the contract amount or terms from this budget page alone.

Source note: Primary record is the City of Auburn FY2027 Mayor & Council Budget Presentation Binder photographed during public inspection at Auburn City Hall on August 31, 2026. These notes are independently prepared and are not an official City of Auburn document.