

## EngageRoseville

The City of Roseville was at a crossroads.

Like all California cities, Roseville was facing considerable financial stress due to changing consumer spending habits, increasing costs, and deferred maintenance needs. **Without a new source of revenue, the City would be forced to make significant cuts to city services.** If the City were to maintain its current levels of service while also fully funding its long-term liabilities, infrastructure, and deferred maintenance expenses, the General Fund budget would realize a \$10+ million annual deficit.

To **educate our residents on these issues and to learn their priorities in city services**, the City initiated an **18-month, multi-platform public outreach effort called EngageRoseville**. Our challenge was to illustrate the reality of declining municipal revenues in a city known for a high quality of life during a growing economy.

Our guiding principles were: **Engage everyone, simplify, educate, and listen.**

To **give every Roseville resident, visitor, and worker multiple opportunities to provide input**, we looked for varied and inventive ways to gather data. We asked our residents to **"tell us what matters"** in person and online, through surveys and budget gamification, on billboards and flyers, during multiple community meetings and a nine-month, in-depth community-priorities advisory committee. *(A complete list of outreach tactics is below.)*

**Our goal was to present the City Council and staff with as much informed input as possible** to help us make well-reasoned decisions about service reductions and/or revenue enhancements. And then to educate our residents about those decisions.

### Research and Planning

**We conducted primary, secondary, and formal research before and during the EngageRoseville effort.** Godbe Research conducted primary research through statistically valid polls to assess public opinion on our behalf in 2014 and 2017. We conducted online and in-person surveys, and read case studies and industry articles on budget outreach best practices.

We also **participated in several community engagement workshops and courses with the Institute for Local Government and the Davenport Institute for Civic Leadership and Public Engagement.** The purpose was to gauge the community's perception of City services and awareness of priorities and budget issues, so we could focus our strategy. We learned:

- While the community was not enthusiastic about paying more for new services, they were keenly interested in preventing any erosion of services they value.
- Many people didn't realize how significantly businesses & visitors subsidized services our community receives.
- There was an assumption that all of the taxes paid went to the directly to the City; in actuality, 85 percent of the sales and property taxes go to the State and County.

We recognized from the beginning that **the go-to government approach of forming a committee to study the issues and provide recommendations was not sufficient** for an issue that affects the cherished quality of life of 130,000 residents and 70,000 people in our daytime population. **We looked to implement broad, radically transparent outreach to educate and get input from as many as possible - engage everyone.** Throughout the process, we continuously reviewed our tactics to ensure we filled any possible information or engagement gaps.

### Implementation

We used these tactics to inform and educate our community through EngageRoseville. Additional details and examples are included in the addendum to this entry.

- **Logo, tagline and website:** developed and maintained a unique EngageRoseville logo and website (EngageRoseville.com), and tagline "tell us what matters" to emphasize our guiding principles.

- **Community Priorities Advisory Committee (CPAC):** a 20-member committee met for 9 months to review the General Fund budget and make recommendations about service-level priorities. It was supported with presentation development, live streaming of meetings, website development and video and podcast overviews.
- **Balancing Act:** an online gamification of the General Fund budget to gather input on service-level priorities.
- **FlashVote:** a series of 1-2 minute online community surveys to gather input on service level priorities.
- **Community Conversation:** an interactive in-person community discussion and education session open to the public, included real-time surveys with results visible to all attendees.
- **Video:** included 1) live streaming of remote CPAC meetings; 2) a series focusing on department services and 3) an animated educational video about the city's budget issues and the impacts of the sales tax measure.
- **Podcasts:** a series of 10-15 minute in-depth conversations about city operations, services and budget impacts.
- **Direct mail:** created and designed 2 direct mail flyers. One with budget educational information and one with sales tax measure educational information. Both sent to all 59,000 households in our city.
- **Community presentations:** developed and presented an in-depth view of our budget, economic trends and the impacts of the sales tax measure to more than 25 community groups.
- **Social media:** used as platform for education about our budget with infographics and targeted responses.
- **TV/Radio/Print:** pitched and received [in-depth coverage](#) from local media about effort and budget issues.
- **E-newsletters:** used our extensive electronic newsletter subscriptions to present educational information.
- **Open House:** held 2 community Open Houses with staff from 8 departments to interact with residents and discuss city operations and the sales tax measure.
- **Infographics:** made extensive use of infographics in direct mail, presentations and online to simplify complex issues and information.
- **Billboard:** used electronic billboards to raise awareness and invite participation in the effort.
- **Email and phone:** offered residents the option to simply call or write if they had comments or questions they were unable to present through our other input opportunities.

## Budget

**The overwhelming majority of the work for EngageRoseville was done in-house.** The planning, tactics, message development, data collection, graphic/video/audio production, social media, and website development was done by City of Roseville staff.

We contracted with individual vendors/consultants for very specific subsets of tactics, most notably FlashVote (\$5,000), Balancing Act (\$3,000) and the facilitation of the Community Conversation (\$2,000). We consulted with Institute for Local Government on the strategy that city staff developed (\$5,000). The Budget Education animation was created by Franklin Pictures (\$17,000). We also paid for printing and mailing the two direct mail pieces (\$27,000).

## Results / Evaluation

Through the EngageRoseville effort, in April 2018 the **Roseville City Council was provided with tens of thousands of data points in a 1,200 page report** (including [appendix](#)) from which to base its decisions. Throughout the effort, the data was made available as it was gathered to all participants, Council, staff and the public.

In June 2018, based on the input from the public engagement effort, Council unanimously voted to give residents the opportunity to increase revenue instead of only cutting services, by placing a half-cent general sales tax measure on the November 2018 ballot. EngageRoseville continued to educate our residents about the city's financial situation, the results of the community outreach, and what to expect if the ballot measure was approved and if it wasn't.

On November 6, 2018, the ballot measure passed with strong voter support in a notably conservative area. The measure will generate an estimated **\$16 million-\$19 million per year to the city's General Fund.**

Directly as a result of the EngageRoseville effort, **our residents are better educated about municipal finance; civic engagement and trust in local government has increased; we identified the priorities of our community for use in future budgets, and helped move the City forward to a more financially secure future.**

*Included in this addendum is more detailed information about some of our individual outreach efforts.*

### **Logo, tagline and website:**

The logo was developed using city branded colors to connect the effort to the municipal government. It was **designed to reflect inclusion and diversity aligning with our guiding principle of engaging everyone**. The tagline "tell us what matters" is a direct call to action as we gathered data about the community's priorities of their municipal services.

The repository for the data, educational information, feedback and reports was the city website. **We purchased and promoted [EngageRoseville.com](http://EngageRoseville.com)**. It redirected to our city website. As a precaution, we also purchased the domain EnrageRoseville.com.



## **Community Priorities Advisory Committee (CPAC):**

This 20-member committee representing stakeholder groups and residents met for nine months to review the General Fund budget and make recommendations about service-level priorities.

**Each meeting included extremely detailed presentations about economic and General Fund budget outlooks or individual department services and costs.**

All of the presentations and educational materials were placed on the [EngageRoseville.com website](http://EngageRoseville.com) for easy public access.



Every meeting was streamed live on YouTube and our city website. Because the meetings were held at different locations in the city to invite resident participation, each live stream broadcast required complete set up and tear down of the broadcast equipment.

**There were more than 2,200 live or on-demand views of the set of meetings.**

The Community Priorities Advisory Committee produced a [63-page set of recommendations](#) that was included in the report presented to the Roseville City Council in April 2018.



## **Balancing Act:**

Balancing Act is an **online gamification of the General Fund budget** we used to gather input on service-level priorities by requiring users to close a \$2 million budget gap in order to submit their budgets. As with all of our efforts, it was open to everyone.

Because municipal government budgets can be extremely detailed and laden with jargon, **we spent weeks working to present the material in an easily understood yet informative and useful way.** This aligns with our guiding principle to simplify. Even so, this was a more complex avenue to gather input.

The application is designed to allow the allocation of funds using a set budget amount. However we **customized the application so that participants had to cut already allocated funds to close an operational budget gap.** Using the percentage changes in different groups of city services, we were able to develop a list of service priorities.

We received 322 submissions in two weeks. **Roseville had 2 ½ times the national participation rate** for this application. [The results can be seen here.](#)

The screenshot shows the City of Roseville logo in the top left and a "Help" button in the top right. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- You are in deficit.** A red progress bar shows a deficit of -\$2.0m.
- Options for Service Reductions**: A donut chart with six colored segments (yellow, teal, red, green, orange, purple).
- Spending**: A list of departments with their respective spending amounts and expandable arrows:
  - Development Services: \$750,000
  - Fire: \$2.2m
  - Police: \$3.6m
  - Parks & Recreation: \$3.8m
  - Libraries: \$1.3m
  - Public Works: \$1.9m
- Where The Money Comes From...**: A purple bar representing revenue, with "General Fund revenue: \$11.5m" and an expandable arrow.
- Submit**: A green button with a "Reset all to start over" link below it.

At the bottom, there is a disclaimer: "The City of Roseville is pleased to offer you this simulation tool to provide feedback regarding priorities for discretionary services in the city's largest General Fund departments. In order to submit your budget, you must close a \$2 million budget gap. The expenses you would decrease in different departments are for services that are not mandated by law or fully funded by user fees. It's for this reason that we refer to them as "discretionary" services."

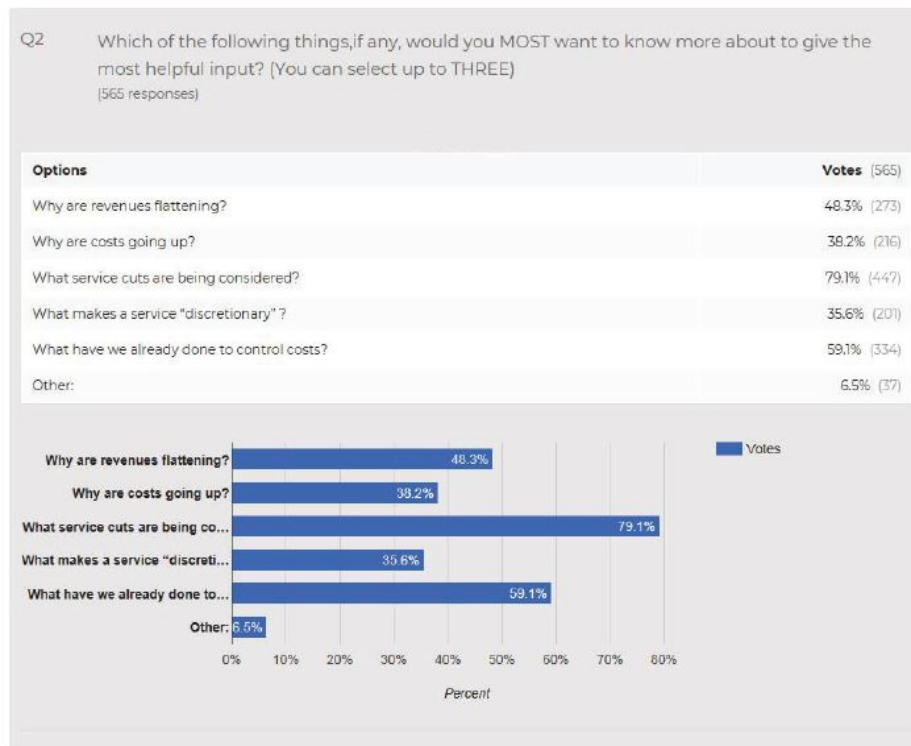


## **FlashVote:**

Through FlashVote, an online community survey tool, we conducted **several short 1-2 minute surveys** about services provided by our five largest General Fund departments.

In contrast to the more in-depth Balancing Act, which could take 30-45 minutes to complete, these FlashVote surveys are meant to be completed on smartphones, laptops or by phone very quickly. We wanted to **give our residents and stakeholders input opportunities of differing time commitment and depth** – aligning with our guiding principle of engaging everyone.

Each survey was open for 48 hours. Upon completion, all the participants received the results of the survey. The FlashVote surveys had **more than 2,500 participants and produced more than 10,000 data points.**



## Community Conversation:

In February 2018, we held a **Community Conversation about Priorities**. Like all of our input gathering opportunities, it was open to everyone. We received more than 150 reservations for the event with about 120 residents attending.

Wanting to increase discussion and limit the chances for a few people to dominate the meeting, we set up several round tables to seat five or six residents and a city staff person at each. **City staff helped facilitate the discussion, answer questions and take notes.** Departmental experts were also on hand to move from table to table to answer questions and provide perspective on their budget and services.

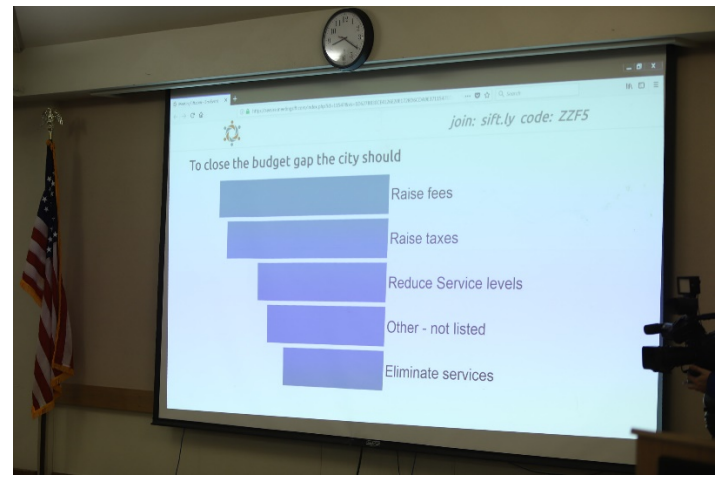
We **provided [infographic fact sheets](#)** from each of the five largest General Fund departments and each of those departments gave a short five-minute overview to set the stage for the discussions at each table.

After each set of presentation and discussion, **participants provided input through their smart phones. Results were displayed in real time on screens around the room.** For those without smart phones, we provided paper surveys. Questions we were unable to answer at the meeting were compiled, researched and [posted to our website](#) and sent to the participants, along with the results of the surveys and feedback from the evening.

The staff facilitators and departmental experts helped give the city a face to the participants, increasing public trust. In fact, the **participants gave the city staff a large ovation at the end of the meeting.**

We received local media coverage of the event from [CBS 13 in Sacramento](#) and the [Roseville Press Tribune](#).

After the event, we **produced a recap [video](#) and [podcast](#)** for residents to see and hear their neighbor's reaction to the EngageRoseville effort to encourage further engagement.



## Podcasts:



The ["Roseville Connections" podcast](#) was used primarily as a teaching tool for the EngageRoseville project in the form of in-depth interviews with our City Manager, Chief Financial Officer and heads of five major General Fund departments.

Our greatest **challenge was to reduce a tremendous volume of highly complex data down into conversational, digestible formats** that community members would understand.

Each discussion was released about week prior to the Community Priorities Advisory Committee meeting related to that topic. In this manner, the public could prepare for the public meeting. They would have a better grasp of the content and context of the discussion at hand.

**There were more than 1,600 downloads of the podcast series.**

We also produced an [on-location podcast, "Inside a Community Conversation"](#) showcasing our community meeting and getting reaction from residents in attendance. We thought it important for listeners to hear the experience of their neighbors as they interacted with the city and provided input.

## Video:

We used **video in several different ways** to present information about our budget, city services and the EngageRoseville effort.

Video remains, by far, the most valuable and engaging content across social platforms.

- Consumers **retain 95% of a message when they watch it on video compared to 10% when reading it.**
- Social media video generates 1200% more shares than text and images combined.
- Videos on Facebook increases end user engagement by 33%

The [most impactful was a two-minute animated Budget Education video](#). Succinctly and clearly, it presented the problem, the efforts of the city, and the impacts of the sales tax measure.

It was used extensively in October 2018 on social media, the city's website and at dozens of community presentations. **It received more than 10,000 views online and at the various meetings.** Social media response to each re-posting of the video was very strong with residents quoting directly from it in discussions with their neighbors.

Our [Community Priorities Advisory Committee meetings were streamed live on YouTube and our city website.](#)

Because the meetings were held at different locations in the city to invite resident participation, each live stream broadcast required complete set up and tear down of the broadcast equipment. **There were more than 2,200 live or on-demand views of the meetings.**

In conjunction with the podcast recordings noted above, we **simultaneously recorded the interviews on video to produce three- to four-minute highlights from the discussion.** This provided the opportunity to widen the audience for the information to those unlikely to listen to a podcast. These videos were used on social media and our EngageRoseville website, generating **more than 2,100 views.**

And as noted in the description of the Community Conversation on the previous page, we **produced a recap video** for residents to see and hear their neighbors' reaction to the EngageRoseville effort to encourage further engagement.



**Direct mail:**

We created two direct-mail educational flyers. Each was sent to all 59,000 households in Roseville.

The first was a four-page flyer created and sent in February 2018 to **outline the budget issues, set the stage for the year's outreach, correct some misconceptions in the community, and call attention to our efforts to gather public input.**

It included a short narrative with centerfold infographics to simply illustrate our main message points. This aligns with our guiding principles of engage everyone, educate and simplify.

The four-page flyer follows this page.

The second flyer was produced and sent in October 2018 to **present facts about the sales tax measure and city finances**, and increase outreach for our two open-house information sessions. The design tied into elements from our Budget Education video which we were featuring heavily on social media. The front and back of the October flyer are below.

The City of Roseville is not immune from slowing revenue growth and increasing expenses faced by all California cities. We need your help to tell us what matters.

# Budget gap persists; forecast to widen

**You may be surprised to hear that—like all California cities—the city of Roseville is facing budget challenges**  
Though we've done a lot to address these issues, we still face challenges. Even more change is needed. We'd like to know your thoughts.

**Strong fiscal management; high satisfaction ratings**  
During the recession and as the economy began to recover, our strong fiscal management didn't waver. We maintained quality-of-life services while minimizing cuts. In fact, residents gave us a 96% satisfaction rating for city services in 2014.

**Reductions in staffing, pay and benefits**  
Being a service organization, labor is our biggest cost. Performance audits show our staffing levels and structure are efficient and effective. While our population and demand for services grew, we reduced staffing 39% on a per capita basis in the past decade. We implemented pension reforms.

We partnered with our labor groups to slow payroll growth and to reduce salaries and benefits.

**Despite action, challenges remain**  
Fast forward to today. Factors contributing to our budget challenges include:

- Changes in consumer spending habits are reducing our revenue.
- After deferring maintenance of City facilities during the recession, we have a lot of catching up to do.
- Despite changes made to reduce pension benefits, we won't see the savings for many years.
- Minimum wage, health insurance and other costs are increasing.
- New legislation and regulations add significant costs to the City's operations.

**City gets small fraction of tax revenues**  
You may not realize that the City receives just a small fraction of the sales and property taxes collected here.

We receive 1 cent of the 7.25 cents collected in Roseville on every dollar of sales. We receive about \$750 from the average \$5,000 annual property-tax bill for a typical Roseville home. The balance goes to the State, County, schools, and special districts.

**Your awareness and input are needed**  
These realities have led to short- and long-term budget gaps. Ones that are projected to widen in the years ahead. As the City's expenses grow faster than our revenues, we have some tough choices.

That's where you come in. Your awareness and understanding of the situation is key.

We'd like to hear from you.

Whether you participate in person or online, your input will help our City Council determine which options to consider as we develop the Fiscal Year 2018-19 budget and beyond.

As the world changes, we must adapt to ensure a strong future for our community.

## What can I do? Tell us what matters

<p><b>Attend A Community Conversation</b> February 26 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. Registration required at <a href="http://EngageRoseville.Eventbrite.com">EngageRoseville.Eventbrite.com</a></p>	<p><b>BalancingAct</b> Show how you'd fill the budget gap <a href="http://rosevilleca.abalancingact.com">rosevilleca.abalancingact.com</a> Coming later this month</p> <p><b>FlashVote</b> Take short online surveys <a href="http://FlashVote.com/RSVL">FlashVote.com/RSVL</a></p>	<p><b>EngageRoseville.com</b></p> Podcasts          Videos          E-newsletters          Reports          Community Priorities Advisory Committee meetings
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**Attend these key upcoming City Council meetings**

<p><b>April 4 • 7 p.m.</b> EngageRoseville presentation</p>	<p><b>April 10 • 5 p.m.</b> Service reduction workshop</p>	<p><b>June 4 &amp; 5 • 4 p.m.</b> Budget workshop</p>	<p><b>June 20 • 7 p.m.</b> Budget adoption</p>
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Meetings are in the Roseville City Council Chambers, 311 Vernon Street

# Who pays for these city services?



**40%**

Comes from taxes paid by **Roseville residents**

**60%**

Comes from taxes paid by **visiting shoppers and businesses**

**Sales Tax you pay**  
(in Roseville)

**Property Tax you pay**

City receives **14%**

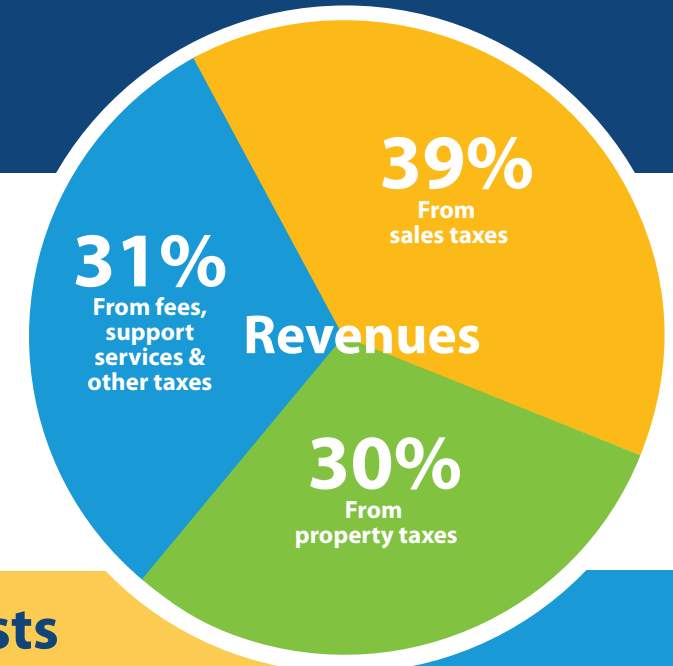
Most of the sales and property tax you pay goes to the state of California

City receives **15%**

# Taxes and fees fund city services

The General Fund pays for police, fire, parks and recreation, libraries, public works, economic development, development services, and general government

Roseville's FY 2017-18 General Fund budget is **\$137 million**



## Steps to control labor costs



2007



2017

**Staff reduced 39% per capita**

2007: 8.5 city employees per 1,000 residents

Today: 5.2 city employees per 1,000 residents with corresponding service reductions

### Salaries & benefits reduced

- Reduced overall medical and retirement benefits
- Reduced salaries to middle of the market
- Use of contract services



### Cost pressures increase



Deferred maintenance



Cost of business



Pension costs

# New consumer spending habits decrease city revenue

**Then**

Shopping at the store

**VS**

Shopping online

**Now**



City receives a penny for every dollar spent at the register

City receives less than a penny of every dollar spent online by Roseville residents



Sales tax distribution from online purchases results in an annual loss of \$3-4 million (and growing) to Roseville

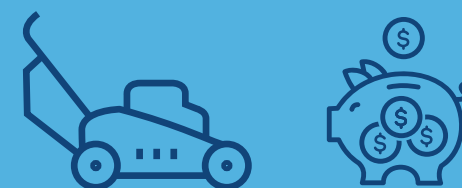
**Then**

Buying goods

**VS**

Buying services

**Now**



City receives sales tax on residents' lawn mower purchases

For example:



City receives no revenue when residents purchase lawn services

*California does not tax services*

For example:



**Open House Information Sessions:**

We held two community Open House Information Sessions with staff from eight departments, including the City Manager's Office, to interact with residents and discuss city operations and the sales tax measure.

