#### OFFICE OF THE CITY CONTROLLER



#### CITY-WIDE REVIEW OF CONSTRUCTION BOND FUND REPORT ZBD01

FROM JULY 1, 2006 THROUGH MARCH 27, 2008

Annise D. Parker, City Controller
Steve Schoonover, City Auditor

Report No. 2009-10



#### Office of the City Controller City of Houston Texas

Annise D. Parker

September 30, 2008

The Honorable Bill White, Mayor City of Houston, Texas

SUBJECT: City-Wide Review of Construction Bond Fund Report ZBD01

(Report No. 2009-10)

Dear Mayor White:

The City Controller's Office Audit Division has completed a City-Wide Review of the Construction Bond Fund Report (ZBD01 Report) created by the City's Enterprise Resource Planning Team (ERP Team). The ZBD01 Report was designed to track the balance of Bond funds to determine if enough funding is available for certain construction projects.

The primary objective of the review was to determine whether the data presented in the ZBDO1 Report is sufficiently reliable to support certification of funds by the City Controller's Office. The audit team also evaluated the adequacy of internal controls and the coordination of City departmental personnel related to the processing of the data recorded in the report.

The report concluded that the ZBD01 Report has become more reliable due to continual revisions by the Departments and the ERP Team. The Departments and the ERP Team are to be commended for their efforts in the resolution of the specific concerns regarding the ZBD01 Report. Various Department issues and concerns were addressed with the ERP Team and a proposed Action Plan is included in the body of the report as Appendix A.

We appreciate the cooperation extended to our auditors by Department personnel and the ERP Team during the course of the review.

Respectfully submitted.

whise D. Parker

Annise D. Parker City Controller

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xc: City Council Members

Anthony Hall, Chief Administrative Officer
Michael Moore, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Issa Dadoush, Director, General Services Department
Richard Lewis, Director, Information Technology Department
Michael Marcotte, Director, Public Works and Engineering Department
Richard Vacar, Director, Houston Airport System
Michelle Mitchell, Director, Finance Department
Alfred Moran, Jr., Director, Administration and Regulatory Affairs Department

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#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The City Controller's Audit Division (Audit Division) has conducted a limited review of the Construction Bond Fund Report (ZBD01). The ZBD01 Report (the Report) was designed to provide the amounts available for funding certain construction projects with City-issued Bonds. The Report contains the funding amount and all obligations entered by the Departments (Public Works and Engineering, Houston Airport Systems, and General Services). These obligations include the pre-encumbrance (proposed projects not yet approved by City Council), encumbrances (the projects which have been approved by City Council), and actual expenditures made on the project. As a result, the Bond Fund will show all costs, real or anticipated, related to the project. Consequently, the Report is a conservative "snapshot" of the amount of funding available.

Overall, the Audit Division believes the Report to be a reliable document; however, some City Departments have expressed specific concerns regarding the Report. This Review will address those issues and the proposed action plan to rectify their concerns.

#### **BACKGROUND**

Before a Bond-funded City construction project begins, the City Controller's Office must certify that sufficient Bond funds are available to pay for the proposed project. In order to track the balance of the Bond funds and determine if enough funding is available, the Report was created by the City's Enterprise Resource Planning Team (ERP Team). The City Controller's Office must be able to rely on this Report to ensure sufficient funding remains available to complete the project. This is a concern because in the event that the City Controller's Office should certify "funds are available" when they are not, this could result in the City not being able to meet its obligations to contractors.

On July 1, 2006, the City implemented a new financial and procurement system, SAP. The City Departments were responsible for providing the June 30, 2006 ending balances to the ERP Team. The ERP Team took this data and populated the new SAP database. From that date forward, it has been up to the responsible Departments to record all activities within their individual funds. There are three City Departments currently working with Bond funds:

- 1) Public Works and Engineering (PW&E),
- 2) Houston Airport System (HAS),
- 3) General Services (GSD).

PW&E and HAS track their own construction activities, while GSD oversees all the other Bondfunded construction activities occurring within the City. The June 30, 2006 Bond fund balances used to populate SAP were not accurate in all cases. A City Controller's memo dated December 18, 2006 to PW&E, HAS, and GSD management requested the Departments perform analyses on their Bond funds to identify the discrepancies and make the necessary adjustments to the fund balances by January 10, 2007. Accordingly, the three Departments began working on their Bond fund reconciliations, and as of this Report date, all three Departments have completed their reconciliations and made corrections to their funds except in a few minor instances.

#### **OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE**

The audit's objective was to determine whether the data presented in the Report is sufficiently reliable to support certification of funds by the City Controller's Office.

The scope of our work began with an analysis of the unspent Bond appropriations as of June 30, 2006, to ensure the balances were accurately carried forward into the City's new financial data system (SAP). Since the data in the Report is entered and maintained on a departmental level, we performed our test work at the department level. The work included reviewing applicable policies, procedures, interviewing appropriate City employees, examining supporting documentation, and performing any other audit procedures deemed appropriate.

During the Planning Phase it was determined that a limited review would be the most effective manner for conducting this engagement. The original objectives were as follows:

- Determine whether data maintained in the SAP Construction Bond Fund Report (ZDBO1) is sufficiently reliable to support continuing certification of funds by the City Controller's Office.
- Determine whether unspent Bond appropriations from June 30, 2006 were carried forward accurately into SAP.
- Evaluate the adequacy of internal controls and coordination of departmental personnel related to the processing of the data recorded in the report.
- Identify any recommendations for the resolution of any findings noted to prevent future inaccuracies, if any.

There were two significant events that precluded the Auditors from achieving all of the original objectives listed above. The first was some of the Bond funds had not yet been reconciled and the reported available amounts were not supported by documentation. The second was the Public Works & Engineering Department's (PW&E) personnel were not available to assist us in our Review. PW&E was obligated to focus their immediate efforts on the reconciliation of their fixed assets related to the completion of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

#### CONCLUSION

We conclude that the Report has become more reliable as this Review progressed, due to continual revisions by the Departments and the ERP Team. Much of the inaccuracy of the original fund balances were attributed to inputting inaccurate fund balances into the new SAP system in July 2006. Since that time, the Departments have devoted many hours in analyzing and attempting to reconcile the fund balances. Concurrently, the ERP Team has made strides in responding to Department requests for improvements to the Report.

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We conducted a limited Review of the Report, and discussed the various Departments' issues and concerns with the ERP Team. These discussions resulted in the proposed Action Plan included in Appendix A.

Linda McDonald, CPA

Auditor-in-charge

Arnie Adams, CFE, CIA

Audit Manager

Steve Schoonover, CFE

City Auditor

#### **APPENDIX A**

#### DEPARTMENT CONCERNS/ ERP SOLUTIONS AND RESPONSES

|   | DEPARTMENT CONCERN  | SUGGESTED DEPARTMENT SOLUTION  | ACTION PLAN / RESPONSES FROM ERP TEAM  |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1 | The budgets are entered by the Departments (PW&E, HAS, and GSD); however, this information needs to tie to the approved ordinance to verify not what a Department has loaded in SAP, but what Council has approved.  Funds will appear to be unavailable even though there has been no Council approval | ERP team creates a reporting capability where the ordinance can be added to the budget, ensuring accurate information. This has been requested previously by the Finance Department and is a high priority. It is item 30 on the ERP "Reporting Request Tracking" report but is not operational. Within SAP, we need a dedicated field to enter ordinance numbers. | A text field is available in SAP which will be dedicated for the Ordinance Number (ON). A committee was appointed to create specific guidelines for entering the ON in the text field. The Departments will be responsible for inputting their ON into the text field according to the guidelines.  See Appendix B for step by step instructions for inputting the ONs, and for creating a report that will address this issue.  |
| 2 | Departments can enter obligations that enable the available proceeds balance to go negative.  | Do not allow obligation to exceed available proceeds.  | SAP does not have the capability to restrict the available proceeds from going below \$0.  The responsibility for the Bond funds is at the Department level; however, there are instances when another Department can make adjustments to another Department's fund balance. If this occurs, it is imperative that the person making the adjustment immediately notify the appropriate person in the affected Department and provide a detailed written explanation of why the adjustment was made and the amount of the adjustment. The current points of contact are 1) Tracy Tuckerson at HAS; 2) Roland Mosley at PW&E and 3) Ja'nice Sparks at GSD. |
| 3 | Report includes all budget transactions, pre-posted budgets, posted budgets, and appropriated budgets.  All these transactions have an impact on the available balance.   | Addition of another report such as a ZBD01A that only includes the approved Budget impact.   | See the Action Plan / Response in 7, and Appendix B.  A New Report, ZBD01P, was recently developed to include only posted budget documents. The calculation of budget also includes carry forward budgets from prior fiscal years and these documents will not have a budget ordinance number. The ZBD01A option will require significant document maintenance by Finance to add the Council Ordinance number to the budget documents. The ZBD01 was designed to provide all the budgeted  |

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|   | DEPARTMENT CONCERN  | SUGGESTED DEPARTMENT SOLUTION  | ACTION PLAN / RESPONSES FROM ERP TEAM   |
|---|---|--|---|
|   |   |  | transactions affecting the fund. The request to provide a report that includes only approved Budget will require an outside contract vendor to program this new report. The ERP Team will determine a cost estimate for providing such a report. It will be up to the requesting Department(s) to pay for the new report.   |
| 4 | ZBD01 & ZBD02 do not reconcile.<br>ZBD02 is a summary of ZBD01.<br>Users may depend on summary<br>for support.  | Reconcile all reports.   | Examination of the reports did not indicate any discrepancies; there were no specific examples provided to the ERP Team indicating differences.  It was agreed that the Reports reconciled.   |
| 5 | Transition of Carry Forward Budgets impacts the Carry forward balances.  FY 2007 Year End Budget Carry-forward Process was inconsistent and did not always carry forward some of the budget amount for various Funded Programs.  Caused additional problems with PO setups and processing payments, which lead to more reconciliation issues that were very | Review Final Prior Year Balances and compare to New Year data.  Have some type of systematic assurance process to verify that all anticipated Carry-Forward budgets were converted. Please communicate any problems and time schedule for performing this process. | Previous to November 2007, some of the carry forward balances were skewed; however, the ERP Team believes the issues that caused the discrepancies have been corrected, and should not cause problems in the future. By learning from our experience with FY07 carry forward process, the FY08 process will be more timely and transparent.   |
| 6 | time consuming.  Balances entered in the "All" period category results in proportional distribution.  | Indicate in the system that this selection will result in this proportional spread.  | By definition, the "All" option spreads the budget amounts. The drop down menu shows "All" and periods 1 through 12 to choose from when preparing a budget document. Enhanced training materials and coaching session on budget document processing can remedy this situation. The "ALL" option spreads the budget amount to periods one through twelve. This option is covered in the training materials. See further training in Action Plan / Response 10. |

|   | DEPARTMENT CONCERN  | SUGGESTED DEPARTMENT SOLUTION   | ACTION PLAN / RESPONSES FROM ERP TEAM  |
|---|---|---|--|
| 7 | The ZBD01 includes all budgets as soon as they are entered by Departments but before approval by Council. The ZBD01 may be inaccurate and understate the available amount if:  1) entries are incorrect, or 2) some requests are never approved by Council and are not deleted from the System  The Department may think it does not have enough funds to cover important projects, and it may delay them unnecessarily.  The City may expand commercial paper lines prematurely to cover requests, thus incurring unnecessary expense.  The City Controller may not certify when it could. | For City Controller's certification, we need a version of the ZBD01 that filters out the budgets that have not been approved by Council.  The original Report is still useful at the department level if they keep budget entry accurate. | See the Action Plan/ Response in 3, and Appendix B.  Since the ZBD01 reflects posted and preposted budget documents, the report could be considered as a more conservative presentation of financial posting than a report that shows only posted documents. Preposted documents can indicate plans for available resources that have not been finalized for City Council consideration. As an alternative view, the ZBD01P shows only posted budget documents. A report on City Council approved budget documents will require updates to carry the ordinance information. The quality of any of these existing or proposed reports depends on accurate and current documents. Preposted budget documents need to be periodically reviewed and then either posted or undone. All posted budget documents will eventually need to be tied to a budget ordinance or reversed. |
| 8 | The budgets can include errors, and given the requirement to enter budgets before City Controller and Council approval, there is no Citywide control to reconcile Availability of funds.  Departments may wait unnecessarily to start projects.   | Departments should reconcile Availability at least monthly, starting with last month's Available, subtracting true budget requests, and adding new resources to check whether ZBD01 amount is reasonable                                  | Construction and capital project funds need to be actively managed by the Department. In some cases, Departments may wish to reconsider who has ability to enter budget documents and limit budget document access.  |

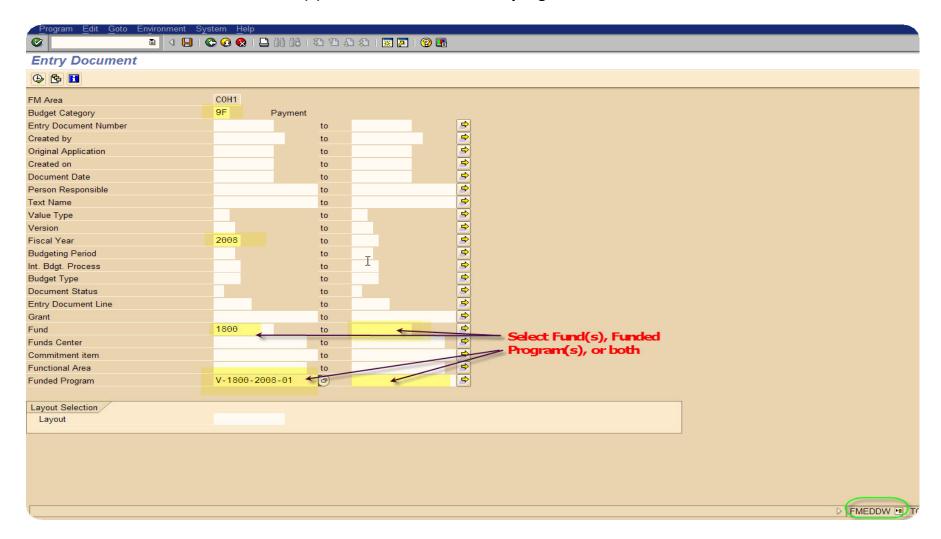
|    | DEPARTMENT CONCERN   | SUGGESTED DEPARTMENT SOLUTION  | ACTION PLAN / RESPONSES FROM ERP TEAM   |
|----|--|--|---|
| 9  | Other Departments have access to setup budgets and process transactions that affect the cash and other assets in our CIP funding sources.  Due to budgets that are setup by other groups, the Departments end up performing reconciliations on various funds, to verify what caused related fund balances to change (especially in the fund certification process for RCA's). Many times it would be a transaction by other Departments.   | transactions to the Departments for processing   | It is imperative that the person making the adjustment immediately notify the appropriate person in the affected Department and provide a detailed written explanation of why the adjustment was made and the amount of the adjustment. The current points of contact are 1) Tracy Tuckerson at HAS; 2) Roland Mosley at PW&E and 3) Ja'nice Sparks at GSD. |
| 10 | COH does not currently have an overall CIP budget in the system and therefore it only shows the remaining balance from the previous fiscal year plus any new appropriations approved during the current year for each project.  Because the historical data does not appear on the report, our focus is on ensuring that the budget data input into the Funds Management Module via the Budget vs. Actual report is correct and that the appropriations from the previous system were carried forward accurately in SAP. | A special training is scheduled with the ERP Team on how to best use the ZBD01 and to provide knowledge on other topics such as how to record salary recovery, clear settlement errors, and close out projects in SAP. | The ERP Team stands ready to assist with training and coaching sessions as needed. Contact the ERP Team and schedule training sessions.   |

|    | DEPARTMENT CONCERN  | SUGGESTED DEPARTMENT SOLUTION  | ACTION PLAN / RESPONSES FROM ERP TEAM  |
|----|---|--|--|
| 11 | Prior period information on the ZBD01 continues to change when viewed at a later date. Cannot determine the actual available balances at any given time | It appears the budget numbers change and therefore the available funds amount changes at various times after this period is closed. The budget, as opposed to the actual, never closes and can always be adjusted. | The reason the ZBD01 can change is due to either 1) a change in assets; or 2) budget changes which may occur in Periods 13 and 14. If the Department has a specific problem with their fund balance and are unable to determine the cause, contact the ERP Team and they will attempt to assist you in resolving the discrepancy.  |
| 12 | ZBD01 does not reflect inception to date expenditures and budget (appropriations) process through SAP.  |  | Inception-to-date perspective was not part of the SAP Blue Print. The conversion of financial records from legacy to SAP was done on available balances and did not bring forward historical payments and budgets. Departments will need to combine legacy and SAP activity to arrive at inception to date reporting   |
| 13 | Contract Retainage is lumped in with Accounts Payable (G/L 211010) and is not identified as Contract Retainage  |  | Keeping Retainage Payable separate from other payables as a general ledger account would require major configuration changes to the system. The request to provide a report that includes only Retainage would require an outside contract vendor to program this new report. It would be up to the requesting Department(s) to pay for the new report.  Released retainage items can be identified on the Retainage Report by vendor. Once a retainage is released, it is immediately paid (daily check run) so that a released retainage is not part of the liability balance. |

# APPENDIX B INSTRUCTIONS FOR RECORDING ORDINANCE NUMBER INTO SAP

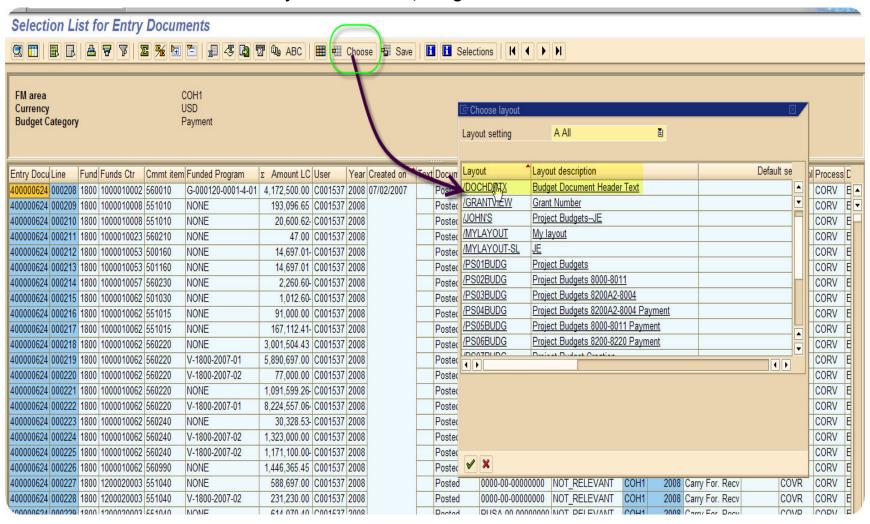
#### LOCATE HEADER TEXT

Using Tcode FMEDDW, enter Budget Category 9F and current FY Enter value(s) for fund and / or funded program to focus search



#### LOCATE HEADER TEXT

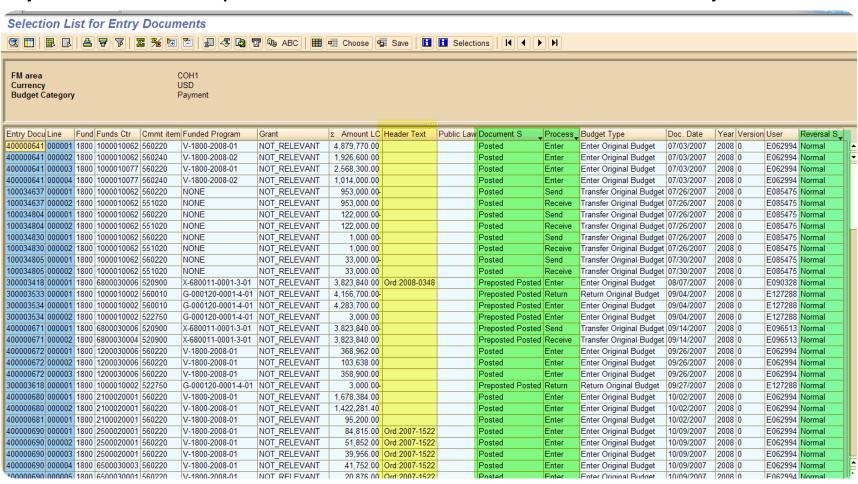
## Review results from FMEDDW execute action Go to Choose icon to change report layout Select Layout DOCHDRTX, Budget Document Header Text



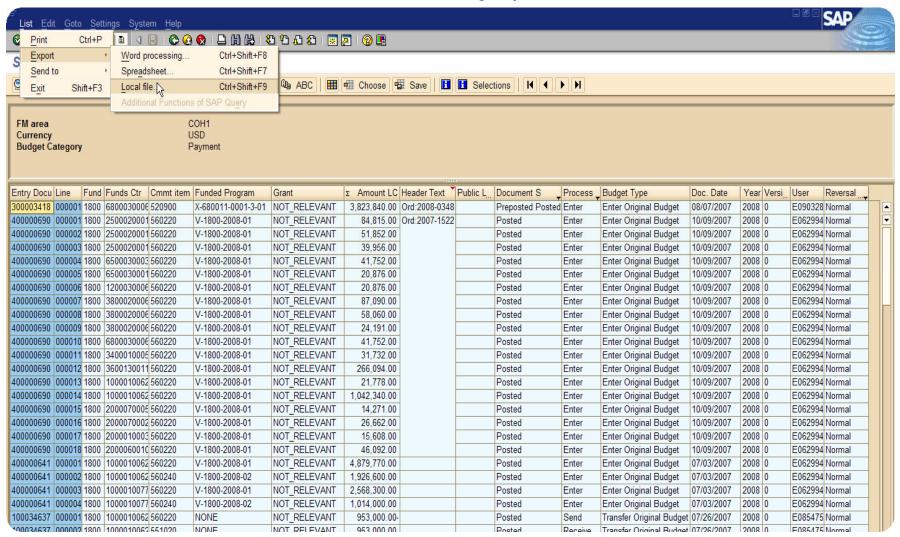
#### LOCATE HEADER TEXT

View of Output after DocHdrTx layout applied
This layout rearranges selected columns and filters out unwanted documents
Document Header Text field highlighted in yellow
Filtered fields are in green highlights

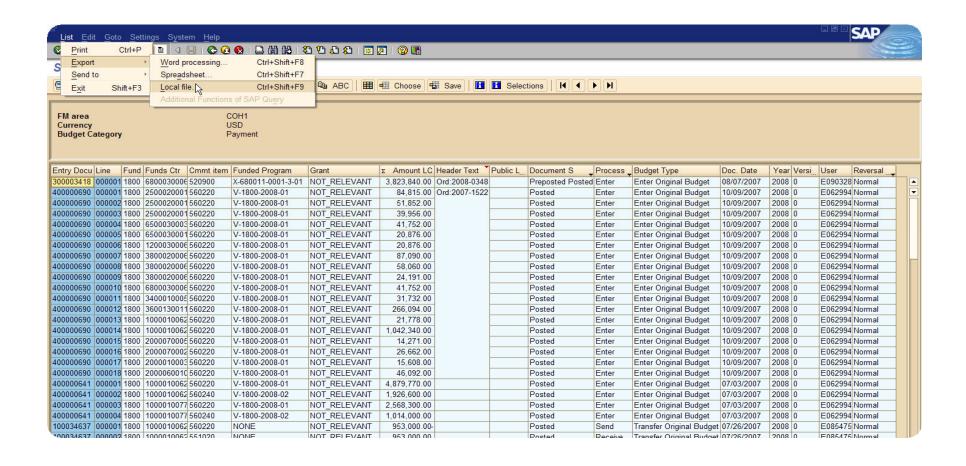
Layout shows Posted or Preposted documents that have not been reversed and are not Carry Over documents



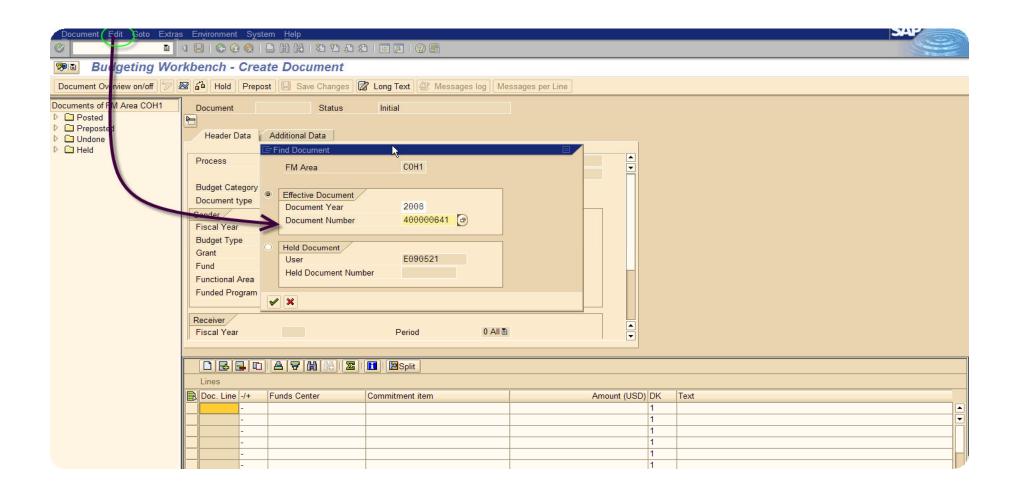
## LOCATE HEADER TEXT Sort on the Header Text field to group the text entries



### LOCATE HEADER TEXT If desired, Export results to Local File

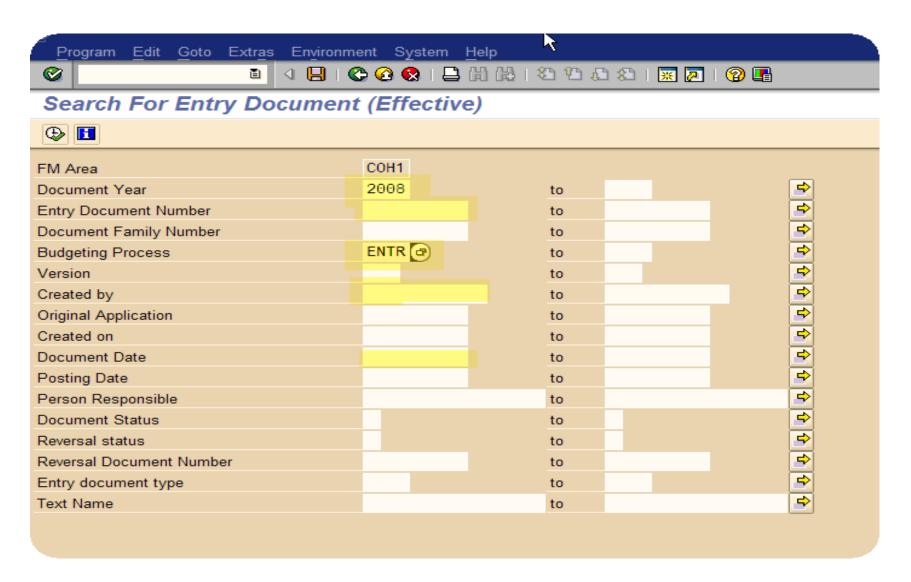


## UPDATE HEADER TEXT Inside Tcode FMBB, go to Edit / Find Put value in Document Year or Document Number



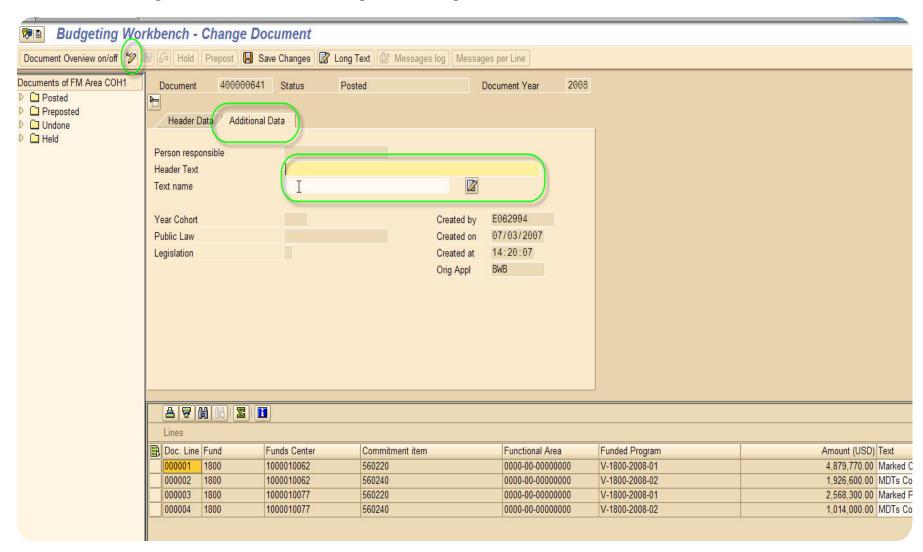
#### **UPDATE HEADER TEXT**

Alternatively, you can use Search Effective and put values in the selection parameters



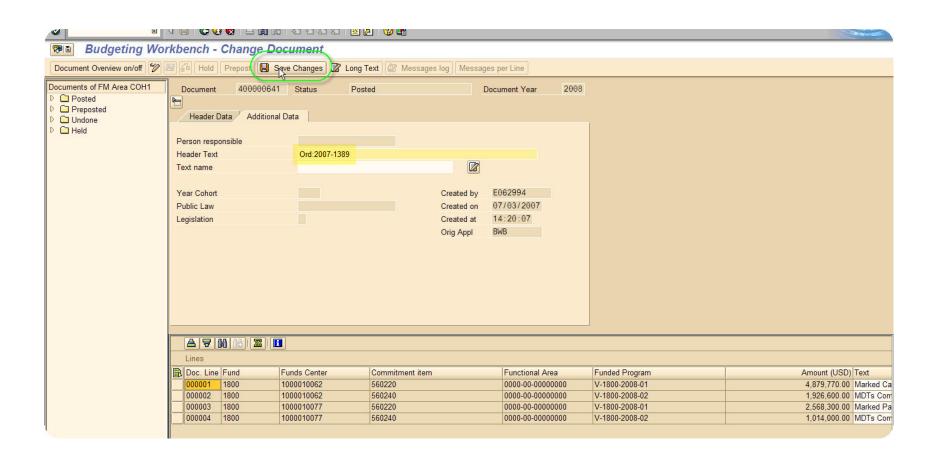
#### **UPDATE HEADER TEXT**

After selecting document, click on Change icon and go to Additional Data tab and then Header Text field



#### **UPDATE HEADER TEXT**

# Update Header Text field with council ordinance number Check text for consistency with agreed upon format for council ordinance number Save Changes



### UPDATE HEADER TEXT Rerun FMEDDW report to check results

