




CITY OF HOUSTON

Budget & Fiscal Affairs Committee

Interoffice

Correspondence

To: Council Members

From: Stephen C. Costello, Chair 

Date: September 25, 2014

Subject: Core Services Definition

At the September 30, 2014, BFA meeting, we will be discussing core services. My goal is for committee members to vote on a policy statement to define core services. This statement will be used to prioritize spending in the coming year. As a starting point, I offer the following options for your consideration. These have been garnered from statements by the mayor and council colleagues and from staff research on the topic.

- Core services are aligned with jobs and sustainable development, fiscal responsibility, infrastructure, public safety and quality of life.
- Core services are garbage, water, infrastructure issues and safety services.
- Core services are provided to obtain one or more of the following outcomes: safety for people and property; well-built and maintained physical infrastructure; an economy that encourages and attracts capital; a clean, healthy environment; innovative and efficient government; strong cohesive neighborhoods; and first-rate cultural, educational and recreational facilities.
- Core services must meet one or more of the following criteria: services mandated by law or city charter; services essential to protecting and supporting the public's health and safety; services aimed at protecting and maintaining the city's assets and infrastructure; services contractually obligated by agreement; services providing a broad and significant public good; and services that cannot or should not be provided by the private sector because of limitations or restrictions in providing access or protecting the public interest.

Again, these are presented to serve as a starting point. Please feel free to edit these or offer an alternative statement for consideration at the meeting. You may route your edits and/or alternative statements to my office prior to the meeting and I will distribute in advance, or bring copies to the meeting Tuesday.

Committee members will vote to recommend one policy statement at the meeting.

Thank you.