

CITY OF PLAINFIELD CITIZENS BUDGET ADVISORY COMMITTEE - CBAC

REPORT TO CITY COUNCIL - MAY 6, 2019



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2019 CBAC MEMBERS

NAME	APPOINTED BY	WARD
Valerie Ellis, Chair	Elton Armady	City-Wide
Geri Agurs	Barry Goode	1 st & 4 th Wards
Shian Andrew	Ashley Davis	1 st Ward
Lyle Kamenir	Cory Storch	2 nd Ward
Tuwisha Rogers-Simpson	Steve G. Hockaday	4 th Ward
Tonya Stepney McNeil	Joylette Mills-Ransome	2 nd & 3 rd Wards
Juan Velazquez	Charles McRae	3 rd Ward

The **2019 Citizens Budget Advisory Committee Team Members** would like to thank the City Council for giving us the opportunity to contribute to the continued progress of the City of Plainfield toward achieving ***“One Plainfield . . . One Future!”***



CBAC REVIEW PROCESS RECOMMENDATIONS

- Initiate CBAC review process earlier.
- Allow sufficient time to review the budget and ask questions prior to scheduled City Council sessions.
- Provide explanation for department reorganizations or creation of new departments.
- Objectives should be aligned with the budget summary and include budget line numbers and titles.
- Include goals and objectives for all departments and come prepared to discuss.
- As mentioned in prior years, we would like each Department to establish goals and objectives that are tied to specific measurements.
- Provide a detailed written explanation of year-over-year variations that are in excess of 20%.
- The budget binder as well as the full budget detail provided by Mr. West should be distributed to CBAC in electronic format; i.e., Word or Excel.
- Provide a detailed report of employee and associated dollar transfers by department.
- Provide a work table for CBAC to layout budget documents during the Council review sessions.



CBAC BUDGET OBSERVATIONS

Over the course of three meetings CBAC conducted a detailed analysis of the proposed budget and questioned department heads regarding specific expenditures. The CBAC has made the determination that Mayor Mapp's Administration, in partnership with the City Council, has produced tremendous results in stabilizing and managing the cities finances as well as providing an increase in services.

The following are examples we feel are important to highlight:

- In a number of cases, the request for Professional Training and Staff Development (202) appears to be overstated relative to historical trends and/or year 2018 actuals. This was also noted in the 2017 and 2018 report as well, and should addressed.
- In many cases, Outside Consulting Services (219) appears to be used as a contingency fund. Outside Consulting Services throughout Departments seems to be over budgeted and under utilized.
- Overtime Hours (104) in some Departments/Divisions are extremely high.
- Many Departments/Divisions have budgeted for Publications (255) resulting in higher than needed allocations and loss of synergy between Departments/Divisions.
- Hardware and Software Maintenance (234) is budgeted throughout various Departments/Divisions.
- A breakdown of interdepartmental transactions was not provided for review thereby limiting the ability to identify movement of funds and employees.



CBAC BUDGET RECOMMENDATIONS

- Utilize Training and Staff Development (202) only for its intended use thereby eliminating use as a contingency fund.
- Review and adjust Outside Consulting Services (219) to reflect true expense. Where needed, create a separate line item for contingency funds.
- CBAC recommends a review of all Department/Division Overtime (104) to determine where adjustments in work schedules, forecasting training, vacations, special events, etc. can be made to reduce overtime where possible.
- CBAC recommends that the Media and Communications Department review the Publications (255) budgets of all departments in an effort to consolidate and reduce overall paper mailings and postage costs City-wide.
- Consolidate all Hardware and Software Maintenance (234) from all Department/Division budgets and reallocate to IT to manage and execute.
- CBAC recommends that a reconciliation report of all interdepartmental transactions be provided by the Finance Department.



PUBLIC WORKS & URBAN DEVELOPMENT

- CBAC recognized that there may be a duplication in roles and responsibilities and allocation of funds within the Department. Our recommendation is to reevaluate for more synergies in those roles and responsibilities thereby reducing your overall budget.
- Provide a detail of how many Seasonal Employees are assigned to work in the Recreation Division.



PLAINFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

- Review entire budget to identify line items that may be over funded in an effort to locate \$45,000 to fund Cisco position.
- Seek to use the Public Works Department for Plainfield Public Library maintenance projects.



COMMUNICATIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Media and Communications

- Revise goals and objectives to streamline departments within the first 90 days, 6 month and one year timeframes and provide measurable benchmarks for establishing new department.
- Media & Communications must provide more details in their plans and objectives for overall operation.
- In the interim of building the Department should consider outsourcing some of the functions within Media & Communications in an effort to minimize initial personnel, equipment and production until a long-term plan is developed and approved.



COMMUNICATIONS & IT CONTINUED

IT

- Perform software updates during the evening hours thereby eliminating the need for workday interruptions.
- IT should be more proactive in its review and update of software throughout the various Departments; i.e., Fire Department.
- IT should remove dollars associated with the planned Robotics program from their budget and transfer those dollars to the Recreation Department.



FINANCE

- Look to use USPS EDDM® (Every Door Direct Mailing®) for all city-wide mailing distributions in an effort to reduce postage costs.
- Removal of miscellaneous lines items from the budget; all lines must be clearly defined.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Re-evaluate the use and offering of PILOT and other business incentive programs with the goal of shifting some of the tax burden to commercial entities to help reduce or stabilize homeowner property taxes
- Continue to seek Grants to fund this Department.
- The more people come to Plainfield, a wide range of housing initiatives should be analyzed to make smart investments and create new housing opportunities, with a mix of affordable, social and rental market supply.
- Direct focus to specific concerns raised around the lack of affordable rental units available for vulnerable populations such as seniors and those on social assistance programs or disability.



HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

- Aside from Division Goals & Objectives, the Director of Health & Social Services should provide overall Department Goals & Objectives for 2019 with summary of 2018 accomplishments. Note has been on-going request other the past few years.
- Provide transparency of budget shifts and offsets when receiving grant funding.
- The more people come to Plainfield, a wide range of housing initiatives should be analyzed to make smart investments and create new housing opportunities, with a mix of affordable, social and rental market supply.
- Direct focus to specific concerns raised around the lack of affordable rental units available for vulnerable populations such as seniors and those on social assistance programs or disability.



DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

- Re-evaluate the Professional Training and Staff Development (202) for possible reduction given YOY spending.
- Department to further share community outreach programs.
- Director of Police Other Expenses (233) included funds for lighted stop signs which seems to have been a better fit within the Department of Public Works Signal Division. A possible transfer of funds to the Department of Public Works may be warranted.
- CBAC is in agreement with the elimination/reduction of Shot Spotter (239) late fees by renegotiating contract terms and conditions.
- Look to increase Parking Bureau funding to cover the cost to procure and install electronic parking meters.
- Review the possibility of increasing school crossing guard pay for FY 2020.



DEPARTMENT OF FIRE

- Ensure funding is available to complete updates and renovations to buildings, bathroom facilities, and boiler maintenance at all fire stations.
- Continue life safety and fire educational programs budgeted under Professional Training & Staff Development (202) City-wide.
- Increase inspections for fire code adherence, carbon monoxide alarms, illegal occupancies, etc.
- Work closely with IT to upgrade equipment and software.
- CBAC is in agreement with the Director of Fire to transfer funds from Overtime (110) to Convention/Conference Registration (222) that is already depleted.
- The Director of Fire should investigate the need for Chief's Expense (257).



CONCLUSION

A review of the budget shows a range of priorities for government spending, which reflect the diverse priorities and opinions of Plainfield residents, and a desire to accomplish economic growth while also maintaining a balanced budget and lower property taxes.

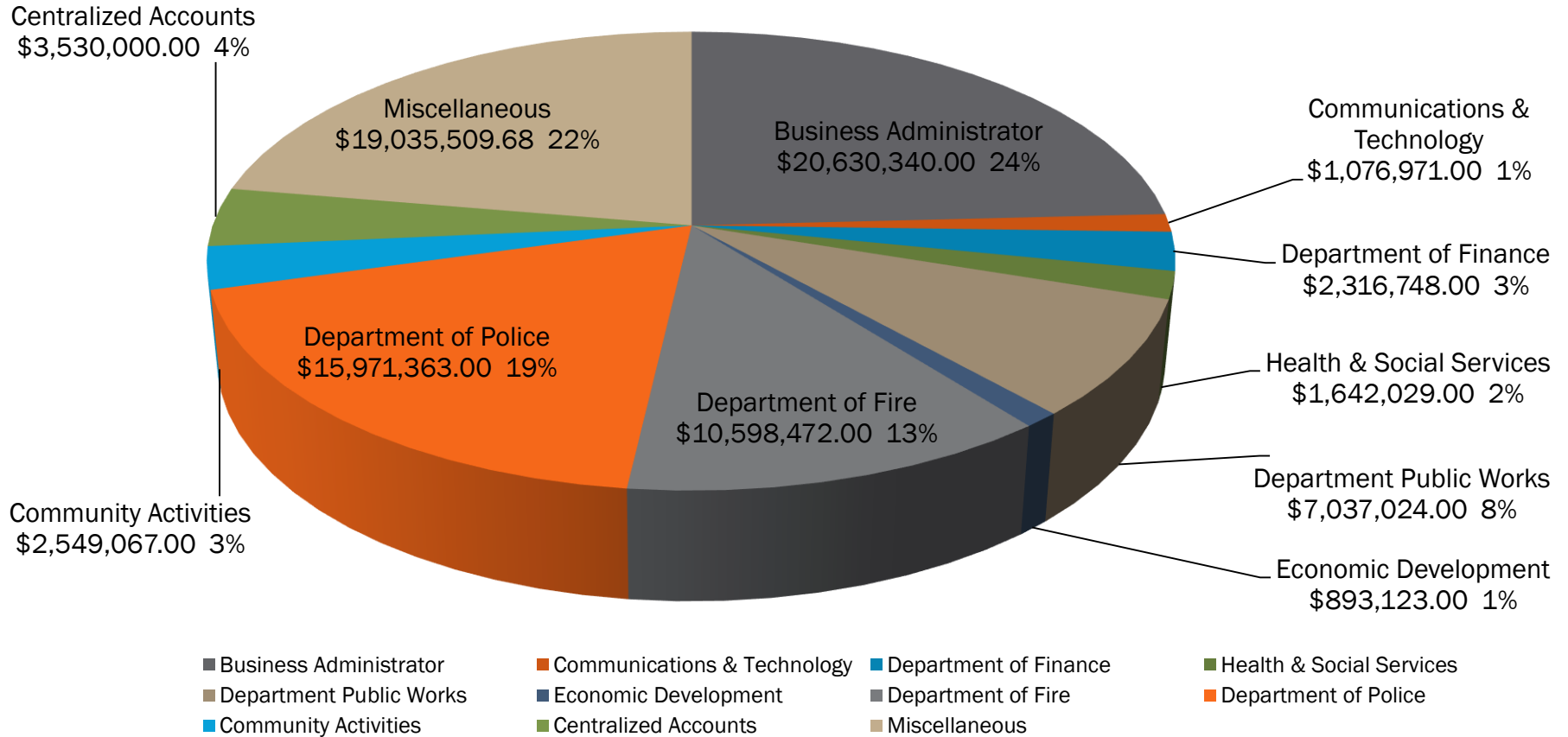
CBAC has identified some areas for increased focus, particularly with outside consulting services, miscellaneous expenses, overtime, Media & Communications, and Information Technology environments. Overall, CBAC is proud of the City's strong economic position leading up to the release of the 2019 Budget.

The members of CBAC would like to extend a special note of appreciation to the City's Finance Director, Mr. Ron West for his guidance and assistance throughout this review process.

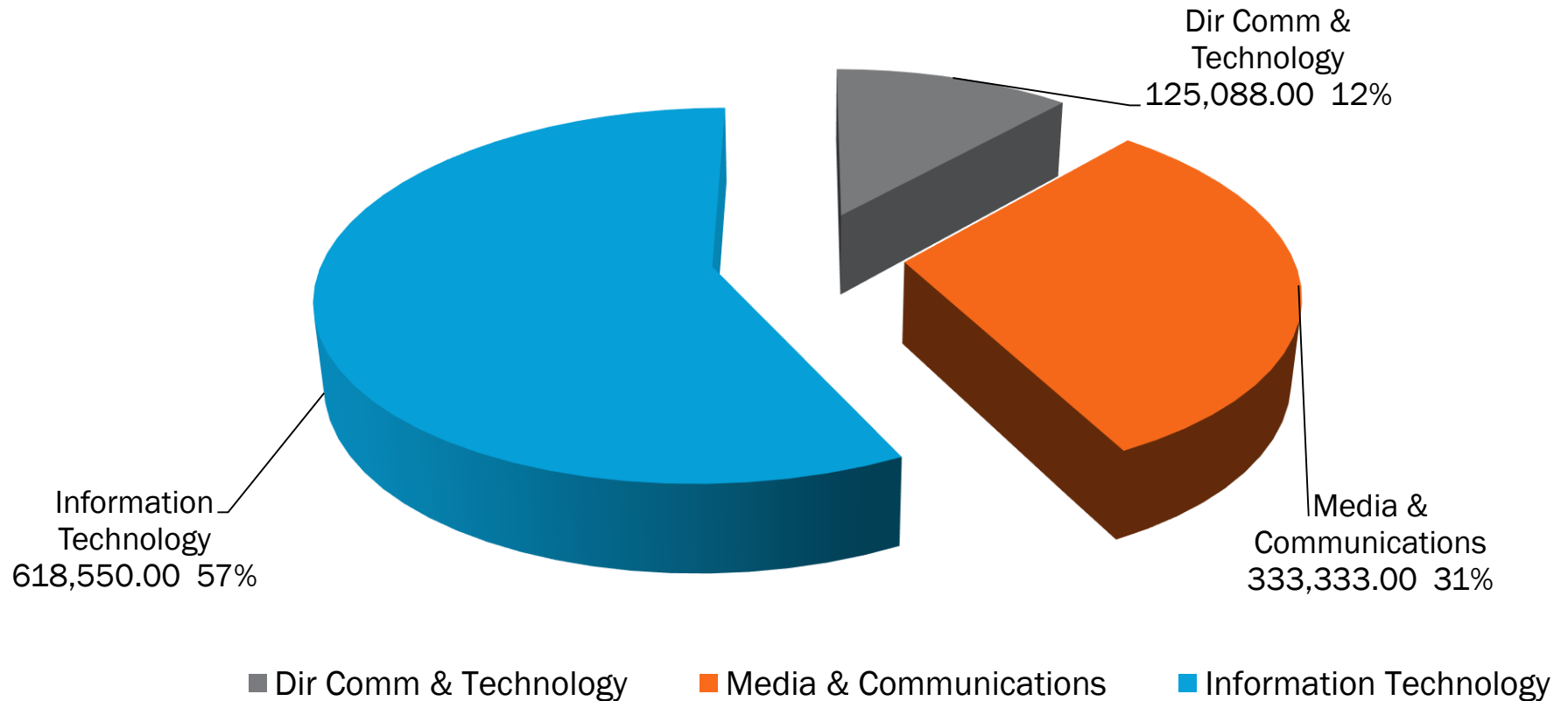
CBAC would also like to thank the City Council's Finance Team who took time out of their schedules to extend a warm and cordial welcome to the Committee at our very first meeting.

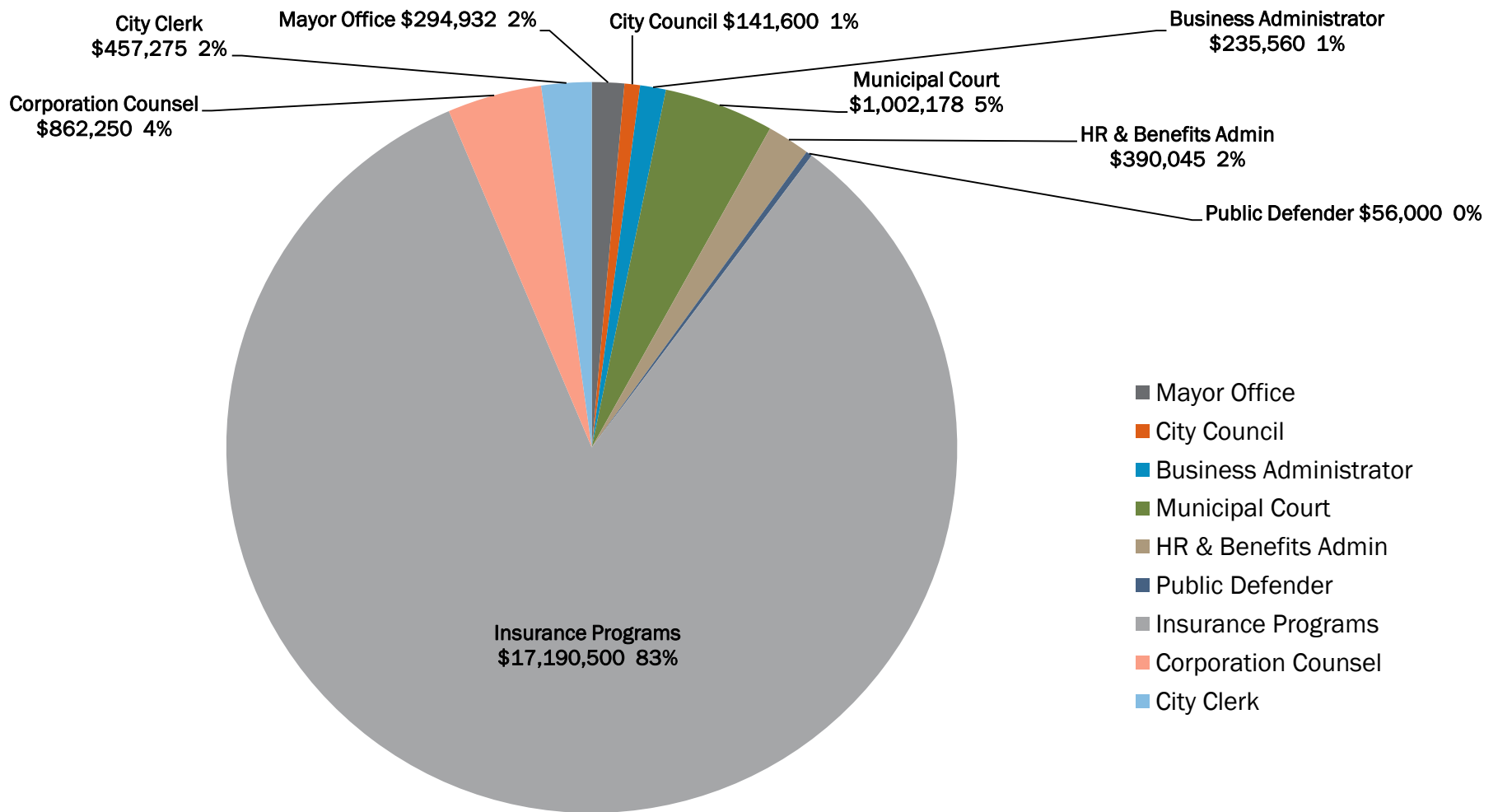


TOTAL CY 2019 BUDGET



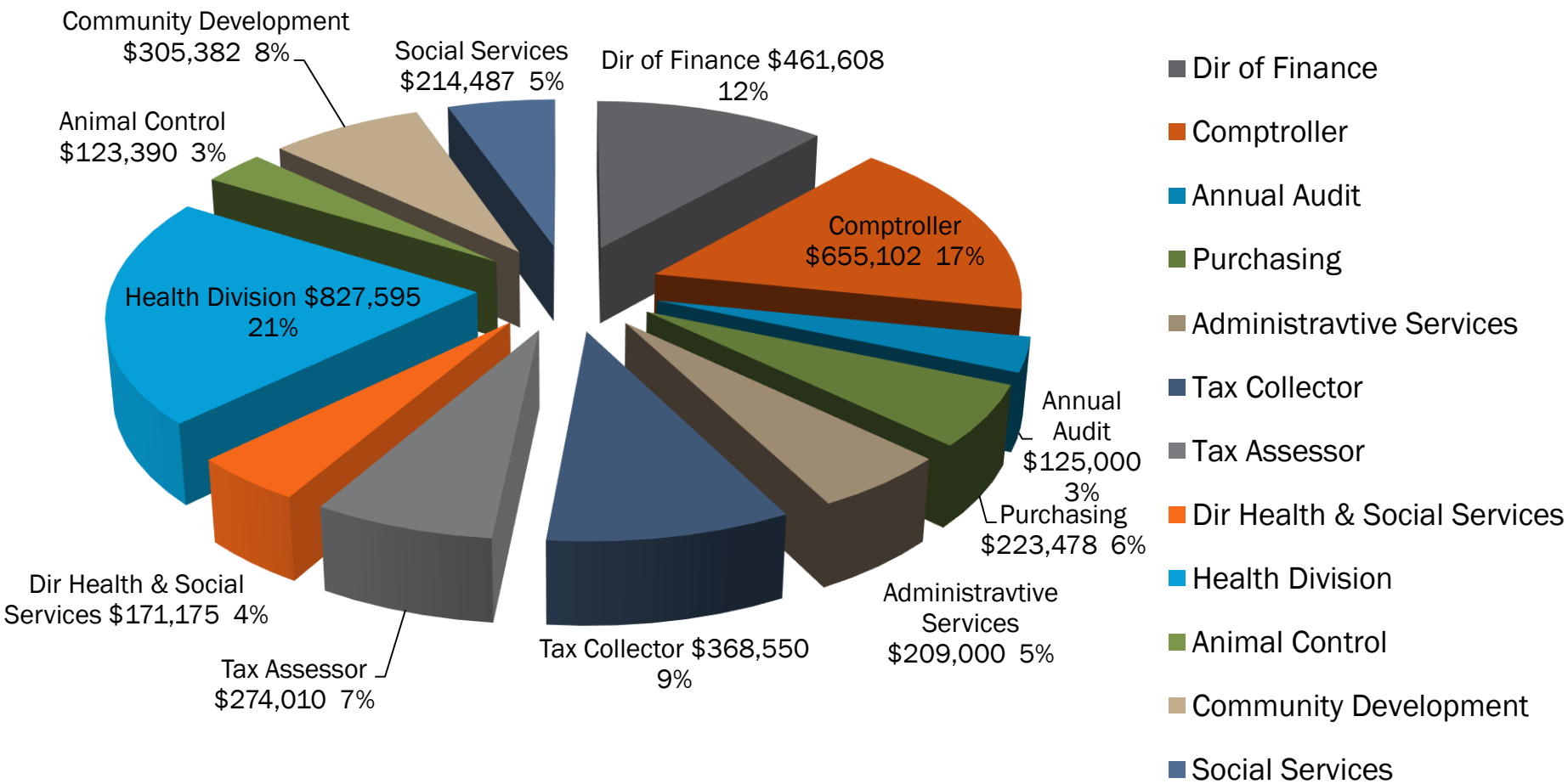
2019 COMMUNICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY BUDGET

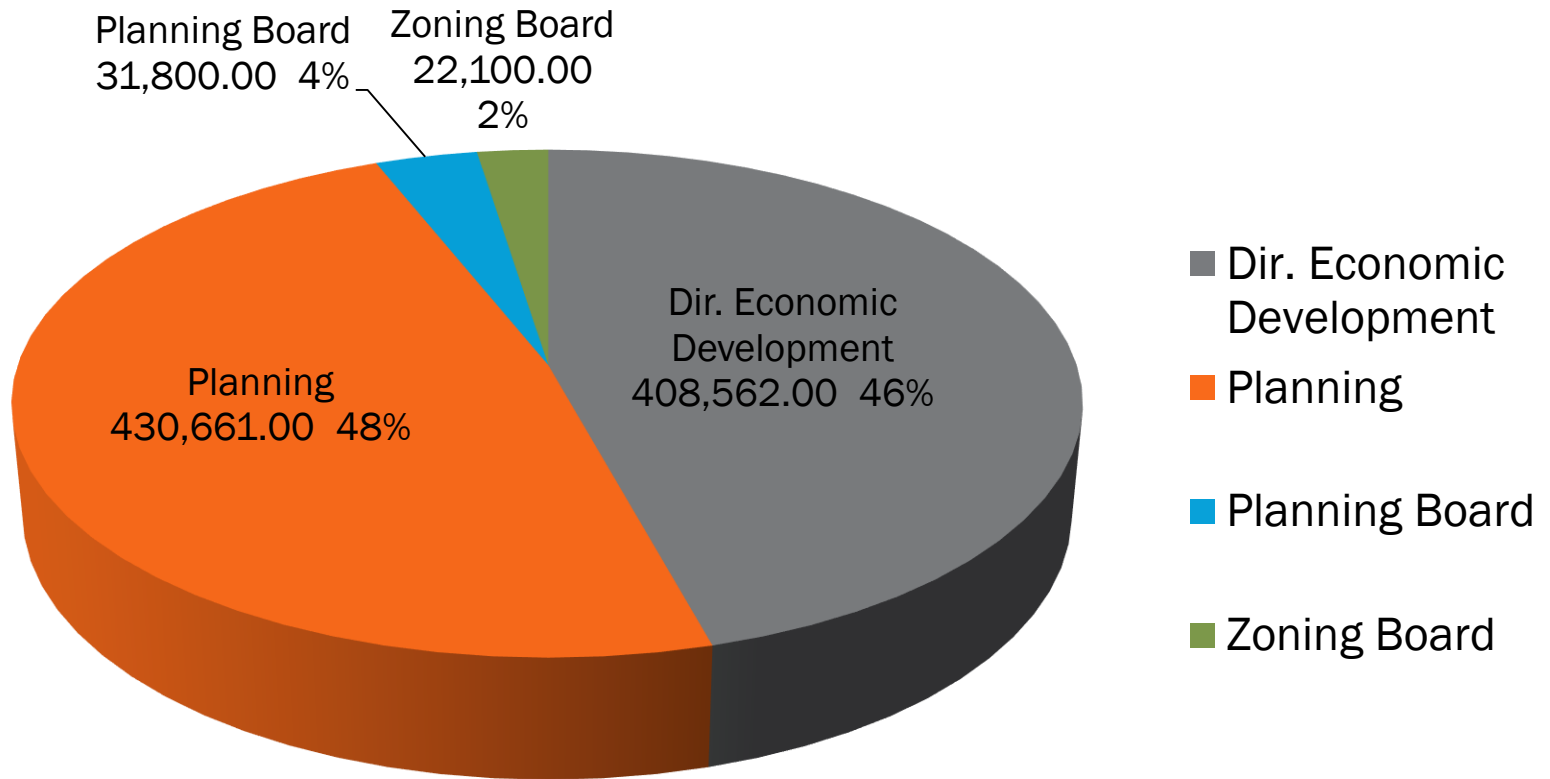




2019 LEGISLATIVE EXECUTIVE BUDGET

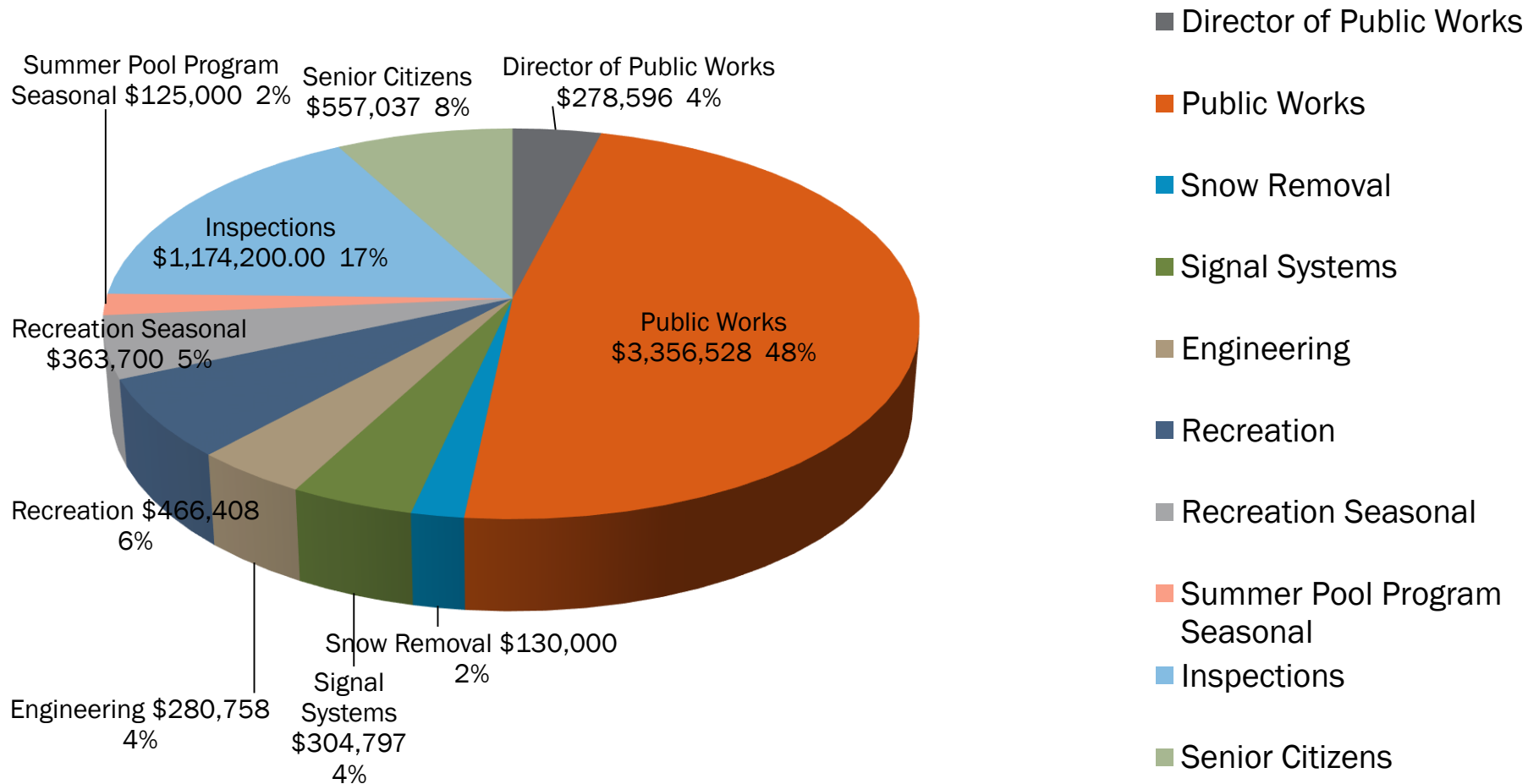




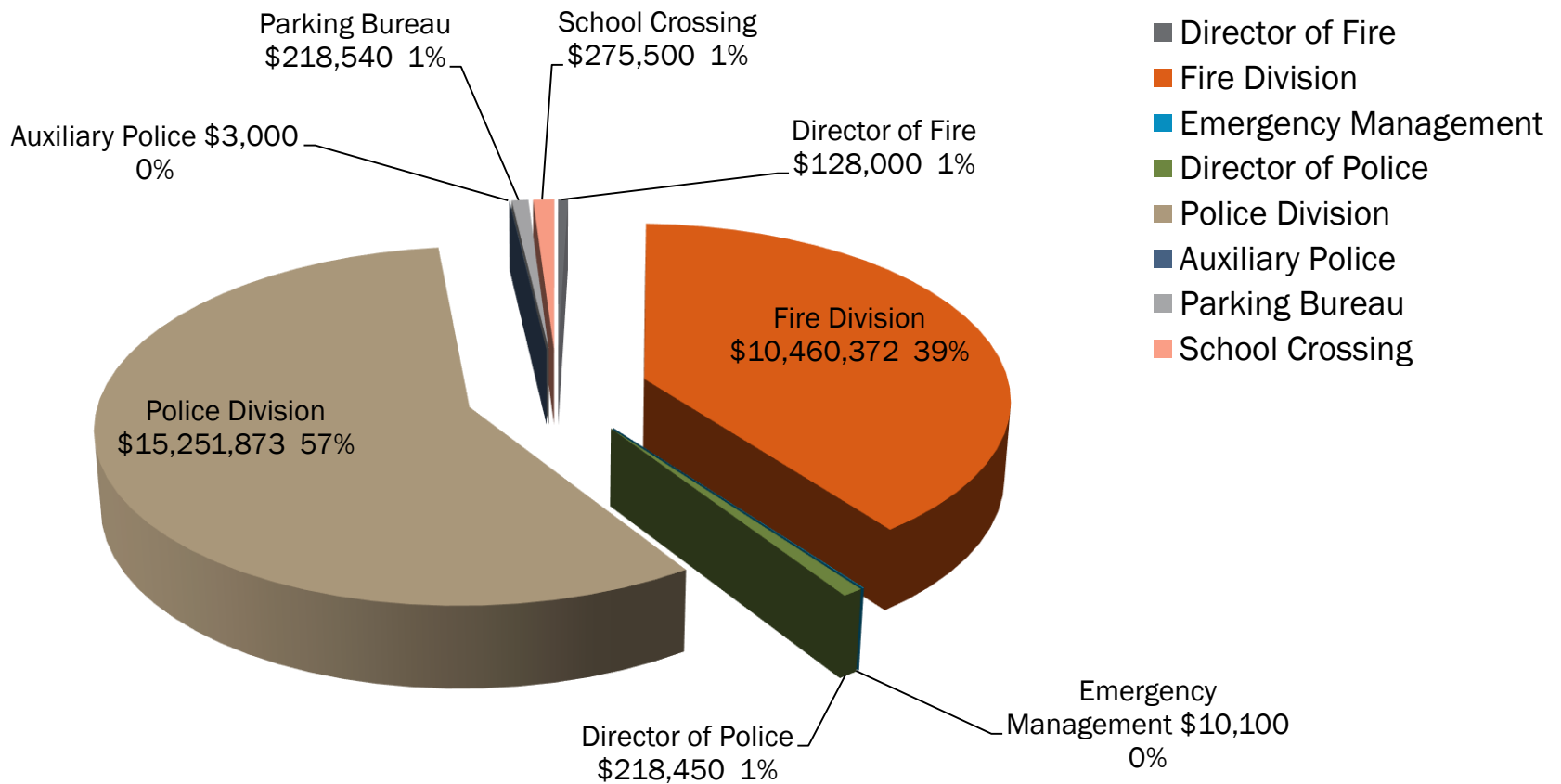


2019 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

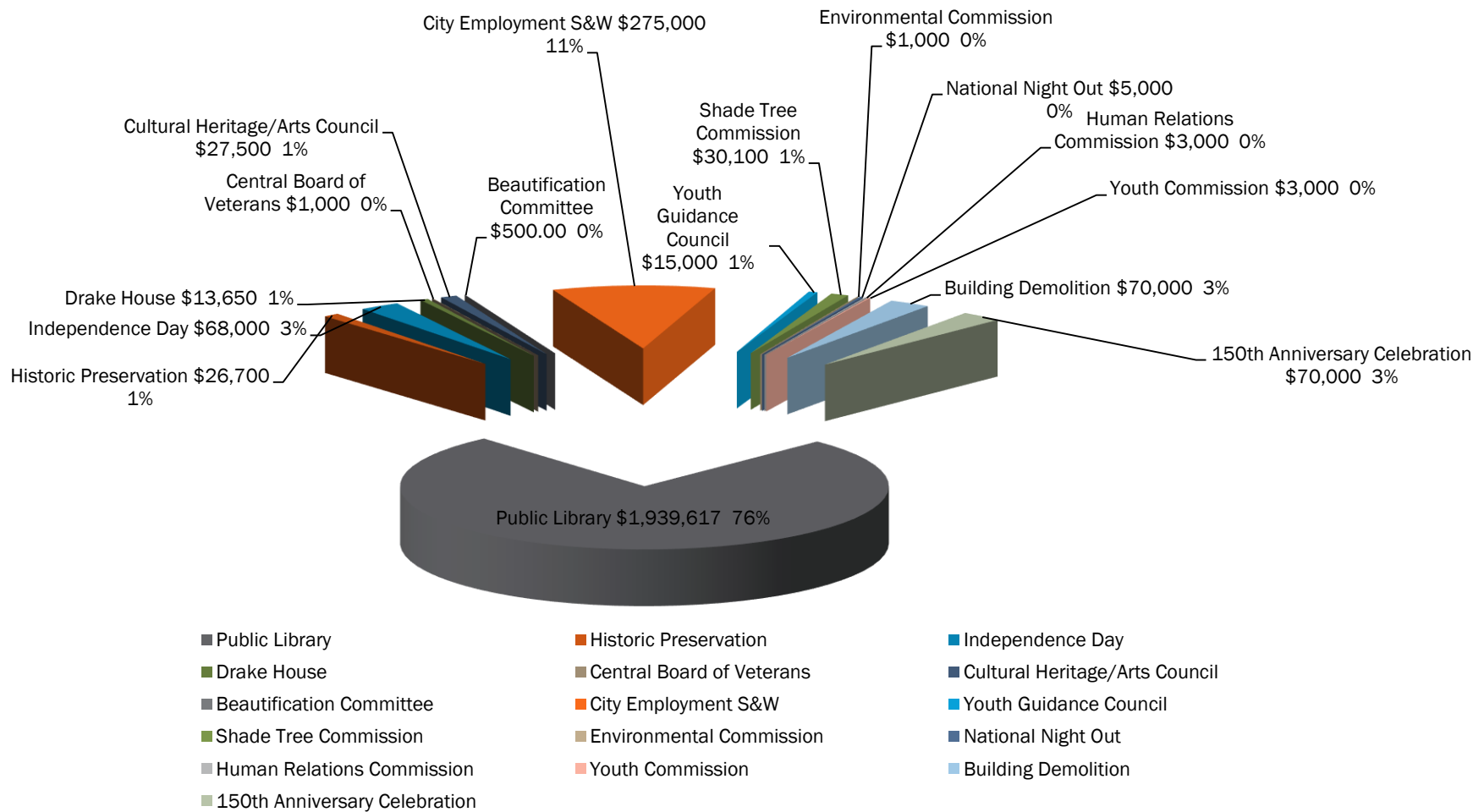




2019 PUBLIC WORKS & URBAN DEVELOPMENT BUDGET

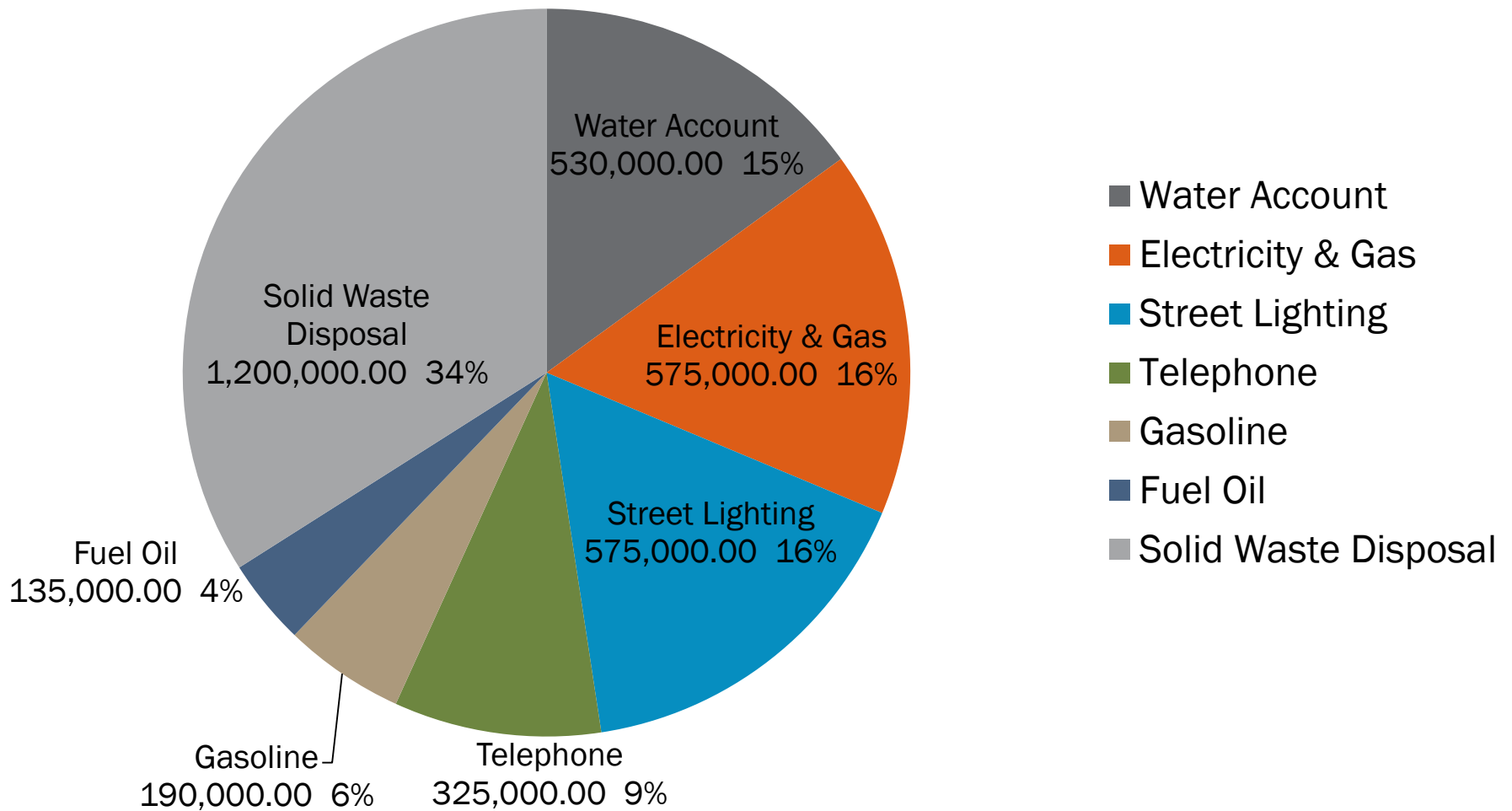


2019 FIRE & POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET

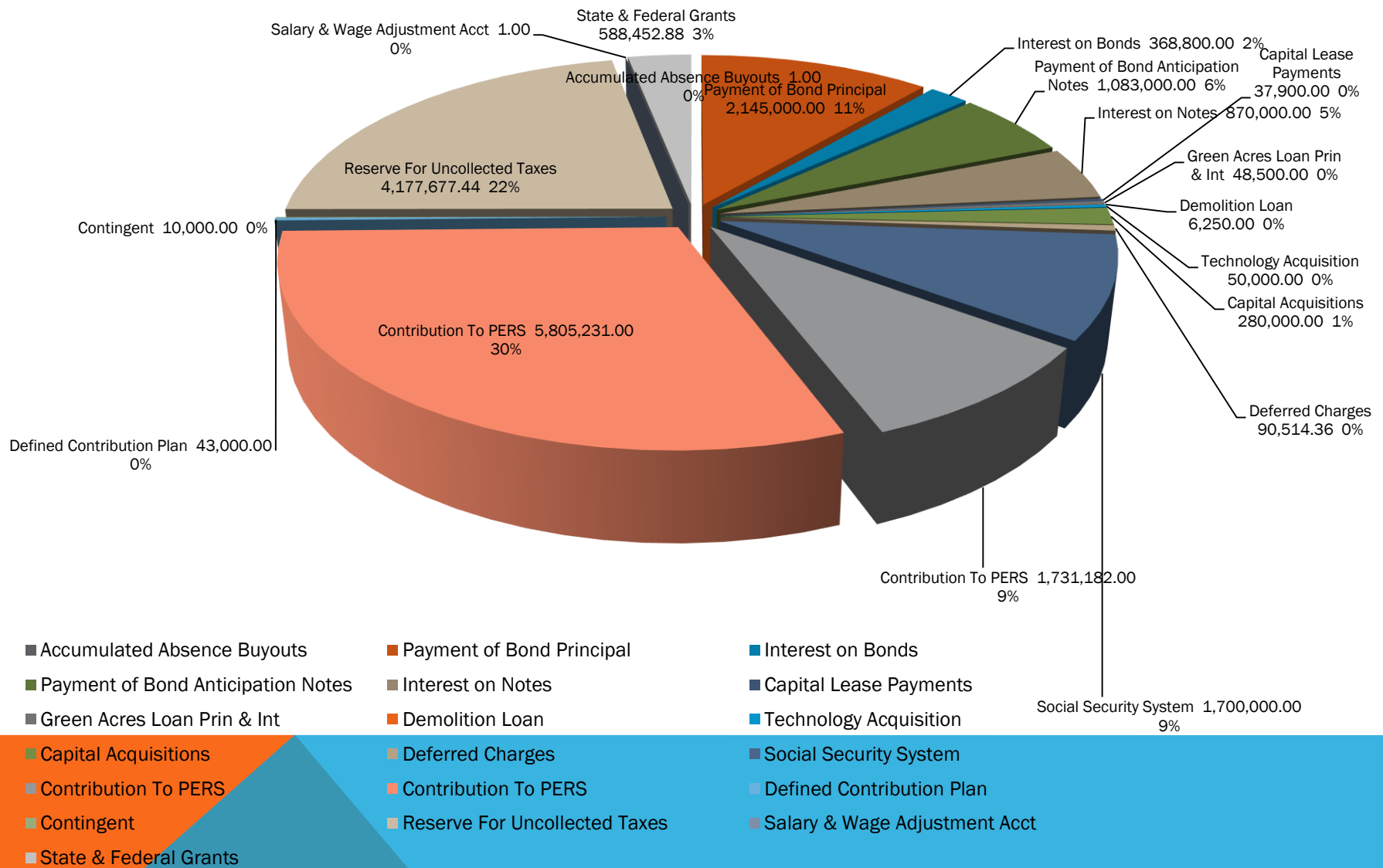


2019 COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES BUDGET





2019 CENTRALIZED ACCOUNTS BUDGET



2019 MISCELLANEOUS & OFFSET BY REVENUE BUDGET