Facilities Capital Project Budget Process

The UTSA Facilities capital project budget process begins with a needs analysis in which Facilities Planning and Development meets with the customer/client/user (client) to identify the client needs. The client is typically a department within the University such as an academic department, Research, Housing, Campus Recreation, Athletics or an administrative department. At minimum the product of this process is a summary of space requirements and identification of significant program requirements and how they relate to standard system needs. In addition to the client, other university staff potentially affected by the proposed project are also provided an opportunity for input regarding needs to determine project scope and budget. These include: EHS&RM, Campus Police, Office of Information Technology (OIT), Transportation and Facilities Operations and Maintenance (O&M) including housekeeping and grounds.

Additionally, proposed projects are reviewed with the university utilities engineer to determine utilities upgrades that may be required by the project and the related costs that should be included in the project budget, including upgrades to the central plant. Similarly, proposed projects are reviewed by the university environmental planner to determine water quality storm water upgrades that may be required by the project and the related costs are included in the project budget. Consideration is also given to other potential future work in the affected area, required upgrades, and costs associated with these upgrades.

Capital project budgets are also developed based upon historical expenditures. There are three excellent sources for this information: UT System Office of Facilities Planning and Construction, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the University of Texas at San Antonio. The University of Texas System publishes the “OFPC Historical Project Cost Information” which provides cost data for construction costs and total project costs by project type. It also lists cost information related to specific delivery methods such as preconstruction services for CM at Risk, FF&E, design fees, testing fees, and location modifiers. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board publishes annually the “The Higher Education Coordinating Board Project Construction Cost Analysis” which lists the average cost per square foot plus one standard deviation for both new construction and repair and renovation projects. Finally, UTSA Facilities Planning and Development maintains a data base of historical project costs for small projects that occur repeatedly such as sidewalk and office renovation projects.

Every project provides an opportunity to consider innovative measures to leverage resources. These vary from project to project and are determined on a case-by-case basis. In a recent example, two projects; a small classroom building and an administrative office building, were combined into a single project when it was determined that increased efficiencies and economies of scale would allow for increased value for the University. This project was completed in the past year, and has provided increased classroom space, and operational efficiencies by returning administrative offices previously housed off-campus to the Main Campus, saving more than $1.3M per year in lease payments alone.