



AIR TIME eNEWSLETTER



UPCOMING FORUMS

Thursday, January 12 Milton Dohoney, City Manager Milton Dohoney Looks Beyond The December Budget To The Challenges Ahead

Thursday, January 26 Dr. Victor Garcia, "Core Change" Initiative Co-sponsored by "Elementz,"

Thursday, February 9 Privatization of Government Services Co-sponsored with League of Women Voters

Christ Church Cathedral Forums

Thursdays, Noon

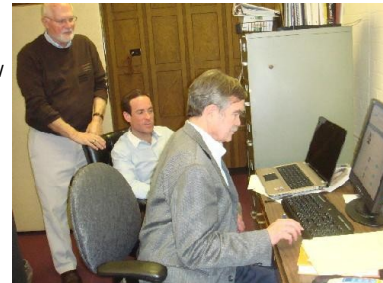
318 East Fourth Street (Map to Christ Church)

Parking \$1an hour from 11:30am-1:30pm

AIR EXAMINES CITY AND COUNTY BUDGET

QUESTIONS OF PUBLIC POLICY

A number of public policy issues need to be examined in any analysis of the current local budget crises. A review of certain policy issues should help explain how the budget dilemmas confronting the City and the County reached their current stages. Such an analysis should also provide some options for over coming the present service and revenue mismatch.



The Question of Essential Services

First of all, the local budget crises raise the question just what services need to be provided by city and county governments? In other words, what are basic services that the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County must make available? Beyond fire, police, sanitation, and infrastructure maintenance, should the City continue to offer parks, recreation, health, planning, economic development, and environmental services? The question of essential services for Hamilton County is complex and even murky.

The Question of Service Delivery

Another policy issue focuses on how services are delivered. The question is usually posed in terms of how a service can be delivered in the most effective and efficient way? Confronted by the current budget crunch, the watch word is efficiency and efficiency means the lowest cost.

Changes in service delivery have taken many forms. Service consolidation represents one form where a larger unit of government such as a county takes over a service or program once delivered by one or more smaller units of local government. The process of sharing services is also on the rise. Neighboring municipalities will often work together to deliver a service rather than administering two distinct programs.

Privatization was in fashion in the 1980s. Instead of providing a service with its own staff and equipment, the local government contracts that service with a private company or firm. Although privatization worked well in many instances, it did not emerge as the panacea that many expected. However, in this current fiscal climate, it is again being touted as a cheaper way to deliver services. The issue of raising new revenue to support City and County services is a key topic that must be raised in any analysis of policy questions related to the local budget crises. Unless services and programs are eliminated or cut so drastically that local government becomes a shadow of its present form, then new revenues must be tapped.

CONTRIBUTIONS HELP AIR, INC. WITH WORK ON BUDGET STUDY

AIR IS researching the city and county budgets to search for ways to include citizen participation in the process. We are a charitable 501(c)(3) organization and your donations are tax deductible.

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\$500

\$100

\$50