Pierce County Flood Control Zone District

Annual Budget and Capital Improvement Program Processes
Version February 18, 2026

Introduction

The Pierce County Flood Control Zone District (the District) provides funding for the acquisition, planning, design, construction, maintenance, and operation of flood control improvements in Pierce County. Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 86.15.140 sets forth the process by which flood control zone districts approve an annual budget. The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) comprises the projects included in the annual budget. To be considered for inclusion in the CIP, a project must first be identified in the District's Comprehensive Plan of Development (District Plan).

CIPs typically cover a 6-year period and are revised and adopted annually. Adjustments to the CIP and individual projects may occur for various reasons, including changes in organizational priorities, complications with permitting, complex design issues, project cost savings, loss of other funding sources, or unforeseen complications during construction.

Roles related to the annual budget and 6-year CIP processes include:

- The Board of Supervisors (the Board) and the Executive Committee, composed of Pierce County Council members, govern the District. They are responsible for voting to approve the annual budget, including the CIP.
- The District Executive Director supports the deliberations of the Board and the Executive Committee and provides direction to the District Administrator on behalf of the Board.
- The District staff are designated personnel within Pierce County's Department of Planning & Public Works who administer the District's approved projects and programs. They prepare the draft budget documents for consideration by the Board.
- The District Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee) provides expert policy advice to the Board. The Advisory Committee reviews and recommends the annual capital budget for the District, including capital improvement projects and funding levels, subject to approval or approval with modification by the Board (Pierce County Code 11.06.030).
- Project sponsors are cities and towns, unincorporated Pierce County, and the Port of Tacoma that request funding assistance from the District for flood control improvements.

This guidance document provides an overview of the District's annual capital budget and 6-year CIP processes and describes the role of project sponsors in helping the District establish and update the 6-year CIP.

District Annual Capital Budget Process

1. The District sets the Flood Control Zone District budget annually, including the CIP.
2. The District provides budget direction to the Advisory Committee related to the capital budget in late spring each year and asks the Advisory Committee for its capital budget recommendation.
3. The Advisory Committee considers capital budget options prepared by District staff over the summer and formulates a recommendation for consideration by the Board.
4. The Executive Committee of the Board reviews the Advisory Committee's recommendation in late summer and recommends a capital budget by resolution for action by the Board.
5. The Board holds a public hearing on the capital budget and votes to approve the budget. If the budget is not approved, amendments are incorporated and the budget is presented to the Board again. The Board typically considers the annual budget in October and before December 1 of each calendar year.

The Board may make changes to the capital budget at any time; however, any changes must meet the requirements of RCW 86.15.140 and RCW 36.32.120(7). For example, the District may reallocate funding for projects identified in the 6-year CIP at any time through an amendment. Only project funds approved in the annual budget are guaranteed.

District CIP Process

District staff review the projects identified in the District Plan. Eligible projects must be identified in the District Plan as either (1) an identified project with an initial project ranking number or (2) a project that addresses an identified problem. See the separate guidance document titled Comprehensive Plan of Development Guidance to Project Sponsors for additional details.

District staff develop a draft 6-year CIP based on coordination with project sponsors and information in the District Plan. The following factors may be considered during the review process:

- Degree of risk, severity, and consequences of flooding addressed by the project.
- Reduction in ongoing maintenance and repairs.
- Ability to expend funds for the requested project phase (project readiness).
- Ability to leverage funds to complete the project phase.
- Representation of countywide needs, both geographically and by project type.
- Other community and ecological benefits.

Guidance for Project Sponsors

Adding Projects to the 6-Year CIP

Project sponsors may proactively request the addition of a new project to the 6-year CIP.

- The project must meet eligibility requirements, as described above. If a project or problem is not identified in the District Plan, see the guidance for adding a project to the District Plan.
- Sponsors should contact the District Administrator directly and include the following project information:
  - Project name and identification number as specified in the District Plan.
  - Project location.
  - Project manager or point of contact and contact information.
  - Project description.
  - Requested funding year(s).
  - Requested District funding amount (per year).
  - Project funds secured or unsecured from other sources.
- District staff will review submitted projects on a case-by-case basis to determine whether any will be added to the 6-year CIP in the next budget cycle.

Updating Information

For projects included in the 6-year CIP, sponsors must keep the District Administrator informed of project progress on a quarterly basis through the District Capital Projects Progress Report Form. This form reports on the project's expenditures and the status of the project's scope of work. Annually, the project sponsor must update the anticipated budget forecast for the remainder of the project, including any updates to the use of District funds.

<u>Delay or Defer Projects:</u>

- Project sponsors must notify the District Administrator if a project is delayed and they wish to retain the project on the CIP to preserve the District's financial commitment. The project sponsor must provide evidence demonstrating a reasonable likelihood that the delay is temporary and that funds will be used within the 6-year CIP timeframe.
  - The District Administrator may recommend reallocating a delayed project's previously approved funding to advance other approved projects.
- A project may be deferred if it is no longer advancing toward construction or completion and either has no plan to advance within the foreseeable future or is faced with an obstacle beyond the project sponsor's control. Project sponsors must notify the District Administrator if their project is significantly delayed beyond the 6-year CIP timeline. The project may then be deferred and removed from the 6-year CIP.
- As stated above, the District Administrator provides the Board with quarterly project status reports.

Request Additional Funds:

- Project sponsors must notify the District Administrator if they are requesting additional funds beyond what was approved in the 6-year CIP. The project sponsor must follow the process outlined in the Adding Projects to the 6-Year CIP section above to request additional District funding.

Reallocate Project Savings

- Once a project has been constructed and is in final close-out, it is considered complete.
- The project will be noted as complete and removed from the CIP in the following year.
- The District Administrator will recommend reallocating unspent funds to new or existing CIP projects as part of the annual capital budget process.
- When actual project costs are less than the project cost estimate, the cost savings will be shared with the District based on the percentage of the project funded by the District.

Coordinating with the District

- Please contact the District to discuss project ideas prior to submitting a request. For questions or to discuss possible projects, contact the District Administrator, L. Brandon Smith, PE, at 253-798-3154 or pcfczd@piercecountywa.gov. Requests may also be sent by U.S. Postal Service to:

  L. Brandon Smith
  c/o PC PPW Surface Water Management
  Pierce County Flood Control Zone District
  9850 64th St W
  University Place, WA 98467-1078

Definitions

Approved Project: A project that is on the CIP and has received funding.

Capital Program (Capital Improvement Program): A multiyear financial plan that:

- Lists and describes capital projects that a project sponsor plans to undertake, and
- Indicates how projects will be funded.

Comprehensive Plan of Development (District Plan): A plan that:

- Sets the District's goals and objectives, and
- Identifies regional policies, programs, and projects the District could fund.

Delayed Project: A project delayed from the original schedule at the time of project approval but is still advancing toward construction or completion.

Deferred Project: A project that is no longer advancing toward construction or completion and either has no plan to advance within the foreseeable future or is faced with an obstacle beyond the project sponsor's control.

New Project: A project in the District Plan that is proposed to be included on the CIP for the first time.

Project Acceleration: An action by the Board to allocate additional funds to an Approved Project sooner than previously approved by the Board.

Project Funding Allocation: An action by the Board to designate specific funds in specific years for an Approved Project.