Category	Option	Description	Level of Change
Council's Process	Early Amendment Deadline	Establish a firm deadline (like late October) for Council to submit amendments, including identified reductions	Procedural
	Pre-Meeting Question Submission	Require Councilmembers to submit questions in advance of budget meetings	Procedural
	Budget Q&A Tracker	Maintain a living Q&A document for questions, with responses reviewed at subsequent meetings	Procedural
	Budget Workshop / Forum	Hold workshops separate from formal Council meetings	Procedural
	Council Priority Wish List Process	Council submits priorities at the start of the budget cycle (summer)	Procedural
	Tax Increase Dialogue in Workshop Setting	Require any proposed tax increase to be discussed in a public workshop prior to final vote	Procedural
Admin's Process	Earlier Budget Guidance to Departments	Administration provides clearer direction earlier (summer)	Procedural
	Department Budget Development Approach	Re-evaluate wish list budget approach and subsequent reductions	Procedural
	Internal Communication Improvements	Increase clarity on priorities, reductions, and expectations across departments	Procedural
	Increased Council Touchpoints	Schedule regular check-ins with Council (Sept–Oct) and communicate at earliest possible potential for tax increase	Procedural
	Enhanced 5-Year Plan Communication	Share multi-year projections and assumptions more clearly and earlier	Procedural

Structural / Policy	Defined Budget Timeline	Codify key milestones (submission, amendments, adoption deadlines)	Administrative Code / Ordinance
	Fixed Final Vote Date (like December 15)	Require Council to take final budget vote by a set date (like December 15 or earlier)	Charter / Ordinance
	Defined Amendment Guardrails	Establish rules for how and when amendments can be introduced	Administrative Code / Ordinance
	Restore Default Budget Mechanism	Define what happens if a budget is not adopted (default, prior-year continuation *or other see below*)	Charter / Ordinance
	Government Shutdown Option	Define the failure to adopt a budget results in the suspension of non-essential services until resolved	Charter
	Restrict Default Budget (Tax Impact)	Prohibit any default budget from including a tax increase without affirmative Council approval	Charter / Ordinance
	Modify or Remove Mayoral Veto (Budget Only)	Amend Charter to limit or eliminate the Mayor's veto authority over the budget	Charter / Ordinance
	Two-Year Budget Cycle	Adopt biennial budgeting process	Policy / Structural