

Project Proposal — Personal Budget Tracker

Section 1: Student Information

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Working Title: Where Did My Money Go?

Section 2: Project Concept

A personal budget tracker web app that lets users log in, record income and expenses, categorize their spending, and view simple visual summaries of their finances. It is aimed at people like me who are not the greatest with money and need a visual guide on where it all went. It is useful because it is practical and personally relevant, and it naturally requires both front-end work (forms, dashboards, charts) and back-end work (authentication, data storage, filtering).

Section 3: Planned Features

1. Home/Dashboard Page — overview of recent transactions and current balance (Front-End)
2. User Login/Signup — authentication so each user's data is private (Back-End)
3. Add/Edit/Delete Transaction Form — users log income or expenses (Front-End + Back-End)
4. Category Summary Page — spending broken down by category, shown in a simple chart (Front-End + Back-End)
5. Monthly Report Page — filter/view transactions by date range (Back-End)

Section 4: Technical Stack (Planned Tools)

1. Front-End: HTML, CSS, Bootstrap, JavaScript
2. Back-End: Node.js + Express
3. Database: MongoDB
4. Hosting: Digital Ocean VPS + Cloudflare DNS
5. Version Control: GitHub

Section 5: Design Sketch or Wireframe

Below is a labeled wireframe showing the Home/Dashboard page and the Add Transaction page.

Nav Bar: Logo | Dashboard | Add Transaction | Logout

Current Balance: \$1,568.67

Recent Transactions

09/01 Groceries	-\$159.44
09/02 Paycheck	+\$700.00
09/03 Gas	-\$55.70
09/04 Netflix	-\$19.99

+ Add Transaction (button)

Nav Bar: Logo | Dashboard | Add Transaction | Logout

Form Title: New Transaction

Field: Amount (\$)

Field: Category (dropdown: Groceries, Income, Gas...

Field: Date

Toggle: Income / Expense

Submit Button

Cancel / Back to Dashboard (link)

Section 6: Development Plan

Due Date	Project Milestone	Budget Tracker Focus
9/6/26	Part 1 – Project Proposal	Concept, features, wireframes finalized
9/27/26	Part 2 – Add HTML Elements	Build static HTML structure for Home/Dashboard and Add Transaction pages
10/4/26	Part 3 – Add CSS Styles	Style pages: layout, balance banner, transaction list
10/11/26	Part 4 – Add Bootstrap Styles	Apply Bootstrap for responsiveness; add front-end JS interactivity (form validation, live totals)
11/8/26	Part 5 – Server-side Form Handler	Set up Node.js/Express server; handle Add Transaction form submissions server-side
11/15/26	Part 6 – Connect to Database	Connect app to MongoDB; store/retrieve transactions; build category summary query
11/22/26	Part 7 – Add Registration and Login	Implement user registration/login/authentication so each user's data is private
12/16/26	Part 8 – Final Submission and Presentation	Testing, monthly report/filtering feature, deploy to DMACC host, prepare presentation

Section 7: Expected Learning Outcomes

I want to move beyond just making a site "work" and build it the way real applications are built; designing a MongoDB schema thoughtfully, implementing security-by-design from the start, and validating usability and accessibility rather than assuming the site works because it works for me.

Section 8: Instructor Feedback

[Instructor Note]