

City of Woodburn

Budget Policies & Fiscal Strategy

FY 2015-16

- **SECTION 1. ANNUAL REVIEW & POLICY**

- A. **Fiscal Responsibility**. Per the City Council's biannual Adopted Goals, it will be the policy of the City of Woodburn to return the highest level (or sustain the current levels) of service with the least amount of taxpayer investment; and to plan accordingly.
- B. **Balanced Budget**. The City's Budget shall be balanced. For each fund, ongoing costs are not to exceed ongoing revenues plus available fund balances used in accordance with reserve policies.
- C. **Budget Process**. The annual budget process is intended to weigh all competing requests for City resources within expected fiscal constraints. Levels of service will increase or decrease based on the availability of resources. Requests for new programs made outside the annual budget process are discouraged. New initiatives will be financed by reallocating existing City resources to the services with the highest priorities.
- D. **Fiscal Recommendations**. Consistent with the administrative responsibilities outlined in the Charter, the City Administrator will make fiscal recommendations to the City Council on all measures necessary to sustain current levels of service and avoid reductions in City programs, including the consideration by the City Council of new revenue sources if this is determined to be in the best interest of the community.
- E. **Budget Policies Updated Annually**. The City Council will review and adopt Fiscal Year Budget Policies on an annual basis.
- F. **Yearly 5-Year Forecast**. The City Council will review and approve the 5-Year Forecast on an annual basis. The forecast is an estimate of future revenues and expenses and is intended to serve as an estimate and a guideline for making sound financial decisions in the current fiscal year and budget preparation. The 5-Year Forecast and the annual Budget Policies together will constitute the City's Annual Financial Plan.
- G. **Policy Direction**. Consistent with their policy making role outlined in the Woodburn City Charter, the City Council is responsible for providing policy direction to determine the City's overall fiscal policy. In response to the fiscal recommendations made by the City Administrator, the City Council shall consider all measures necessary to sustain current levels of service. In addition, the City will avoid reductions in City programs and consideration of new revenue sources if this is determined to be in the best interest of the community.
- H. **Budget**. Under the Woodburn City Charter, the City Administrator serves as Woodburn's Budget Officer. The Finance Director assists the City Administrator with preparation and

presentation of the annual budget, budget administration and the day-to-day finance operations. The Budget Officer is responsible for the administration of the annual budget and may approve or disapprove the expenditures contained in the adopted budget if deemed in the best financial interest of the City.

- I. **Budget Administration**. As authorized by the City Charter, the City Administrator is responsible for taking actions necessary to keep expenditures within anticipated revenues, including initiating layoffs, reorganizations, downsizing, program reductions and adjustments to service levels. The City Administrator will keep the City Council informed as to any steps taken to reduce expenditures and, whenever possible, the Council will review the decisions and consider options during a mid-year budget review.

• **SECTION 2. DISCRETIONARY & DEDICATED RESOURCES**

- A. **Recognizing Financial Limits**. Woodburn will make a distinction between two different types of services; 1) those that are funded primarily from City discretionary resources, and; 2) those that are funded primarily from dedicated resources.
- B. **Discretionary Resources**. The General Fund is the fund that collects discretionary resources to provide discretionary programs and services as recommended by the Budget Officer and approved as part of the City's cycle. The City will continue to fund these programs primarily from General Fund discretionary resources. These include police, park and recreation, economic development, land use financial services and other programs.
- C. **Dedicated Resources**. Dedicated services (e.g., fees, grants, utility revenues, etc.) are traditional City services that are provided primarily with dedicated funds. Dedicated resources are subject to restrictions via state and federal law, grant agreements and contracts, City policy and ordinances. Frequently, these resources will be state or federal programs that the City administers locally, such as public safety programs or transportation grants. The City will fund these programs (i.e. speed and safety belt enforcement, etc.) primarily from dedicated resources.

• **SECTION 3. GENERAL FUND BUDGET (DISCRETIONARY)**

- A. **Annual Budget Goal**. The goal shall be to prepare a budget that maintains existing high priority programs supported by the General Fund while at the same time seeking savings wherever possible. Funding for lower priority programs will be reduced or eliminated to ensure that expenditures remain in balance with resources.
- B. **General Fund Emphasis**. The highest priority shall be to conserve General Fund discretionary resources to fund high priority programs as defined by the City Council and City Administrator.
- C. **Maximize City Council's Discretion**. Wherever legally possible, revenues are to be treated as discretionary resources, rather than as dedicated to a particular program or service. The goal is to give the City Council as much flexibility as possible in allocating resources to local priorities.
- D. **New Revenues**. In order to sustain current levels of service, avoid reductions in public safety programs or increase services needed to meet community demands, the City Council may consider new discretionary revenues if it is determined to be in the best interest of the community.

- E. **Use of Dedicated Funding Sources.** Whenever legally possible, funding responsibility for existing programs or activities should be transferred to appropriate dedicated funding sources, freeing up scarce discretionary resources to fund City Council priorities.
- F. **Cost Efficiency.** Staff will prepare fiscally conservative budgets and will seek savings wherever a balance between cost efficiency and the quality of public service can be achieved.
- G. **Materials & Services.** Departments are to prepare “base budgets” with a goal of holding General Fund or other discretionary resources for materials and services expenditures to no more than prior year budget levels.
- H. **No General Fund Street Maintenance Support.** No discretionary General Fund revenues will be used to support street maintenance activities. General Fund street lighting transfers are exempted from this policy. The current transfer from the General Fund for street lighting will be maintained as long as it is fiscally viable. The transfer will be reviewed as approved each fiscal year as part of the budget process.
- I. **Revenue Estimates.** Departments should budget for revenues based on the best information available during the budget process. If additional information becomes available during the budget process, it should be provided to the Finance Director’s Office. Accuracy in revenue/expenditure estimates is critical. New revenue estimates should be based on the best information available. Subsequent annual estimates should also take into consideration the actual receipts from the previous year.
- J. **Pursuit of New Departmental Revenues.** Departments shall pursue revenue sources to the fullest extent possible for all services as well as total cost identification (including indirect costs) for fee setting purposes, grants or other funding opportunities. Any new revenue sources should be used to offset the cost of existing staff and programs, rather than funding new staff or programs. Fee schedules will be reviewed annually to ensure costs are recovered. Fee schedules will be updated as part of the annual budget process.
- K. **Expenditure Reductions.** Reductions in revenues may require expenditure reductions from the “base budget” level. If reductions are required, the City Administrator will be guided by the City Council’s adopted Resource Reduction Strategy (See Section 17).
- L. **Discretionary Programs.** New discretionary programs may be included in the Proposed Budget with the prior approval by the City Administrator and if the new program is deemed a high priority activity. The impact of new or expanded programs on overhead services (information system services, financial services, building / grounds maintenance, human resource services, budget services, etc.) shall be evaluated to determine if overhead services need to be increased due to the addition of new programs.

The costs of increases in overhead services attributed to additional programs shall be included in the analysis of the total cost of new programs. Should outside funding for a program expire, the program may be terminated by the City Administrator or the City Council.

- M. **Full Cost Recovery.** City staff shall make every effort to assign costs where they occur through the use of interdepartmental / interfund charges and indirect cost percentage assignments. The intent is to clearly define the actual cost of each direct service the City provides internally or externally. The first priority is the recovery of overhead costs from all funds and grant programs.

N. **Annual Budget Savings.** To the extent General Fund supported departments experience savings during the year (due to position vacancies, etc.) that money should not be spent. Instead it should be saved to augment the beginning fund balance for the next fiscal year except as approved by the City Administrator.

• **SECTION 4. NON-GENERAL FUND / UTILITY BUDGETS (DEDICATED)**

- A. **Bottom-Line Emphasis.** For activities or programs funded primarily from non-General Fund sources, Departments are to prepare “base budgets” with a goal of holding any General Fund contribution to no more than the amount provided in the current fiscal year, subject to the availability of funds. Whenever possible, reductions in General Fund contributions should be achieved.
- B. **No Backfilling.** General Fund discretionary dollars will not be used to backfill any loss in water and/or sewer City utility revenue, state-shared or federal revenues, grants or dedicated funding programs (for further information, see the Resource Reduction Strategy).
- C. **Revenue Estimates.** Departments should budget for revenues based on the best information available at the time the budgets are prepared. If additional information becomes available during the budget process, it shall be provided to the Finance Department. New revenues should be estimated based on available information the first year. Subsequent annual estimates should also take into consideration actual receipts from the previous year.
- D. **Overhead Cost Allocation Charges.** All non-General Fund departments should budget the amount allocated to that department.
- E. **Cost Efficiency.** As with the General Fund, staff responsible for non-General Fund budgets will prepare fiscally conservative budgets and will seek savings wherever a balance between cost efficiency and the quality of public service can be achieved.
- F. **Utility Revenue Allocations.** It is the policy of the City of Woodburn that revenue generated by City owned utilities will be split between capital funds and operating expenses in a manner consistent with Woodburn’s Capital improvement plans and operating requirements. The allocation, or split, of these revenues will be approved annually as part of the budget processes.
- G. **Utility Rates.** The City will maintain utility rates at a level that ensures that all debt service, operating and capital costs are adequately recovered. Capital costs identified in approved capital improvement plan will be used as the basis for forming the capital costs recovery portion of utility rates.
- H. **System Development Charges.** As permissible under state law, the City will pursue the recovery of infrastructure-related development cost relating to water, sewer, street, storm and parks. These costs will be delineated via a defensible methodology, which will be revised from time to time to ensure accuracy.
- I. **Street SDC Reserve.** The Street SDC Fund will not be depleted below the estimated balance outstanding on the City’s contribution to the Woodburn I-5 Interchange Project. The Street SDC Fund resources will be focused on the Woodburn I-5 Interchange Project until the liability is settled with the Oregon Department of Transportation.

- **SECTION 5. FUND RESERVES & CONTINGENCIES**

General Fund Contingencies. At least 10% of the General Fund’s operating appropriation shall be placed into the operating contingency to meet cash flow needs and with the expectation that most will not be spent and will become part of the following year Beginning Fund Balance. The City established the Shortfall Management Contingency Reserve (SMCR) in the FY 2013-14 budget. The General Fund budget will not deplete more than 50% of the SMCR in any one year.

- A. **General Fund Contingency Proportionality.** Where contingency is expended, overall reductions will be made to the General Fund to ensure the remaining contingency remains at 10% of the General Funds operating costs.
- B. **Water & Sewer Fund Contingencies.** The Water and Sewer Funds will maintain annual contingencies of not less than 5%.

- **SECTION 6. GRANT APPLICATIONS (ALL FUNDS)**

- A. **Approval to Pursue.** The City Administrator’s approval is necessary before any employee pursues lobbying efforts on matters having budget implications, and before grant applications are submitted to the granting agency. Department Heads should advise the City Administrator before official positions are taken on matters that might have budget implications.
- B. **General Fund Matching Funds.** Upon approval by the City Administrator, matching fund requirements will be presented to the City Council for final approval.

- **SECTION 7. NEW POSITIONS, PROGRAMS AND OVERTIME (ALL FUNDS)**

- A. **Base Budget & New Positions.** Departments are to prepare “base budgets” with no new regular positions unless specifically authorized by the City Administrator in advance of Budget preparations. Reorganizations of departments or programs resulting in changes in staffing or positions may be considered if the change is cost neutral or a cost savings from the current costs. No position compensation or increase will be provided beyond amounts budgeted for the position.
- B. **Considerations of New Positions/Programs.** Unless otherwise authorized by the City Administrator, consideration of new programs and positions will occur only if the cost of the position or program is offset by non-General Fund sources legally tied to the new position or if the cost of the position is offset by new external revenues, reductions within existing funds and/or the position is required to generate those revenues. Cost estimates for new positions will include office facility space, equipment, rent, utilities, supplies, related increases in overhead services, etc.

Additional personnel or programs shall be requested only after service needs have been thoroughly documented or after it is substantiated that the new employees will result in increased revenue or enhanced operating efficiencies.

- C. **Annual Overtime Budgets.** Departments will anticipate their annual overtime costs to be included the Proposed Budget. Once the Budget is adopted, overtime costs are to be managed within adopted levels. No overtime costs can exceed budgeted levels without first obtaining the authorization of the City Administrator.

- **SECTION 8. MID-YEAR BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

- A. **Revised Revenue or Expense Estimates.** If additional information concerning revenue reductions or significant expense increases becomes available after the start of the fiscal year, it may be necessary to make budget adjustments. These adjustments will be made in accordance with the City Council's adopted Resource Reduction Strategy.

- **SECTION 9. MID-YEAR REQUESTS, GENERAL FUND CONTINGENCY (ALL FUNDS)**

- A. **Non-Emergency Requests.** In those cases where a department is required to absorb an unanticipated cost beyond its control of a non-emergency nature, departmental resources must first be exhausted prior to a transfer from General Fund contingencies. Upon conducting a final financial review of departmental budgets towards the end of the year, a transfer from contingency will be made to cover unanticipated costs that could not be absorbed throughout the year.

- B. **Emergency Requests.** Emergency requests during the fiscal year will be submitted to the City Administrator for recommendation and forwarded to the City Council for consideration.

- **SECTION 10. COMPENSATION & BENEFITS (ALL FUNDS)**

- A. **Wage Policy.** Historically, the biggest factors forcing budget growth are increases in employee compensation and increased benefit costs. The City will have a compensation and benefit program that: 1) reflects the value of work performed by our employees, 2) compares favorably with the compensation and benefits paid for similar work in both the private and public sectors, and 3); considers the community's ability to pay. Both our employees and the public must understand the mutual respect that such a policy warrants.

- B. **Health Care & PERS Costs.** Continue the City's policy on wages and salary increases which evaluates the increased cost of health insurance and PERS contributions as part of the total compensation package. It is the goal of the City to reduce annual escalations of health insurance, and other benefit costs by getting the employees to bear an equitable portion of the annual premium increases and/or selecting lower cost benefit programs.

- A. **Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA).** The City Administrator will make a recommendation either to include, or not include, a COLA for non-represented employees in the Proposed Budget. COLAs included in the Proposed Budget are considered and approved by the Budget Committee and City Council as part of the budget process. COLAs or other compensation provided for in collective bargaining agreements will be provided for in the annual Proposed Budget.

- B. **Step Adjustments.** Budgeted personnel services expenditures will include an amount to account for annual step adjustments for all employees who are not currently at the top of their range. Annual employee step adjustments will not exceed 5% without the expressed permission of the City Administrator.

- **SECTION 11. BUDGET CONTROLS**

- A. **Legal Compliance.** The City Administrator and Finance Director will continue to review and control departmental budgets at the appropriation level.

- B. **Personnel Services & Benefits.** With the exception of overtime pay and temporary help accounts, which shall be developed by Department Heads with the advice of the Finance Director and the approval of the City Administrator, personnel services and benefits cost calculations will be provided by the City Administrator and the Finance Director and will be used as provided. The City Administrator and the Finance Director will also provide estimates for insurance and internal services costs. These amounts will not be altered by Department Heads.
- C. **Wages & Benefit Control.** Positions not entitled to receive benefits will be managed in a manner that keeps them below mandatory benefit thresholds (such as PERS, health insurance, etc.). Positions will only be eligible for benefits if approved by the City Administrator and/or designated in Job Descriptions. All benefit costs must be anticipated and included in the annual Budget.
- D. **One-Time Revenues.** One-time revenues will be used only for one-time expenses.

- **SECTION 12. UNAPPROPRIATED ENDING FUND BALANCES (ALL FUNDS)**

- A. **Limit Unappropriated Ending Fund Balances.** To provide the most budget flexibility during the year, limit the use of unappropriated ending fund balances to circumstances where they are required by law. Rather than use unappropriated fund balances, the goal should be to place any monies not needed for current expenditures in the relevant funds' operating contingencies.

- **SECTION 13. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT GUIDELINES**

- A. **Capital Improvement Program.** A 6-year Capital improvement Program will be adopted as part of the annual budget process. It will include all projects anticipated to be initiated and/or delivered in the 6-year planning period. The Capital Improvement Program will be consistent with the City's adopted Capital Improvement Master Plans. Funding availability will determine the rate at which Capital Improvement program projects are initiated or completed.
- B. **Exceptions.** The City will fund dedicated programs and services with dedicated funding sources. Exceptions may be made, on a case-by-case basis, by the Budget Committee, City Council or by the City Administrator if appropriate. One criterion will be whether the City would incur more costs elsewhere as a result of the reduction.
- C. **Capital Planning Consideration.** Recognizing that it does not necessarily make sense to fund current operations at the expense of long-term capital or planning programs, every effort will be made to continue capital and planning programs geared to the City's long-term needs.

- **SECTION 14. DEBT ISSUANCE (ALL FUNDS)**

- A. **Debt Issuance.** The City will only issue debt in accordance with adopted Master Debt Resolutions for Sewer and Water. General Obligation debt will only be issued in compliance with state statutes. Debt will only be issued (for all fund types) when a dedicated resource is available to meet the required debt service and reserve.
- B. **Interfund Transfers.** Interfund transfers are allowed if the City Council determines the transfer to be in the best interest of the City. All interfund transfers will be managed consistent with state budget law. No debt will be issued without the approval of the City Administrator and authorization of the City Council.

- **SECTION 15. ANNUAL FINANCIAL AUDITS**

- A. **Annual Audit Required.** The Oregon Municipal Audit Law (ORS 297.405 – 297.555) requires a financial audit and examination be made of the accounts and financial affairs of the City at least once a year. Consistent with State law, the City of Woodburn will conduct an annual independent audit of the preceding fiscal year.
- B. **Audit Standards.** Woodburn’s annual financial audits will be conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States. Those standards require that an independent auditor plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the basic financial statements are free of material misstatement.

The audit will examine, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the basic financial statements. The audit will also assess accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall basic financial statement presentation. The audit will contain an assessment of the City’s internal financial controls and procedures make any necessary recommendation for improvement.

- C. **Finance Director and City Administrator Oversight.** It will be the responsibility of the Finance Director and the City Administrator to oversee the annual audit process.
- D. **Preparation of Financial Statements.** When feasible, City staff will prepare and provide annual financial statements to the auditor’s satisfaction. If staffing levels or other barriers exist to internal preparations of financial statements, the City Administrator may authorize the auditor’s preparation of financial statements for the purposes of completing the annual audit on time.
- E. **Audit Deadlines & Extensions.** Per Section 15 (F), the Annual Audit will be presented to the City Council no later than December 31. Consistent with State law, the annual Audit will also be filed with the Oregon Secretary of State’s Audit Division no later than December 31.

The presentation of the Audit to the City Council and filing with the Secretary of State’s Office may occur later than December 31 if an audit filing extension is granted by the Secretary of State’s Office. Any and all requests for audit filing extensions must be approved by both the City Administrator and the Auditor. In the event that an audit filing extension is requested and/or granted, the City Administrator will inform the City Council of the reason for the extension request and estimated time line for completing, presenting and filing the audit.

- F. **Audit Presentation to Council.** The annual audit findings will be presented to the Woodburn City Council during a regularly scheduled City Council meeting by a representative of the audit firm. All audits presented to the City Council must be complete and signed by a representative of the audit firm.
- G. **Budget Committee Review.** A copy of the Annual Financial Report will be provided to the Woodburn Budget Committee for their review.

- **SECTION 16. PROGRAMS**

- A. **Discretionary Programs.** To the extent additional discretionary resources are available, high priority services areas will be slated for growth in discretionary support. Lower priority service areas will receive constant or decreasing discretionary support. Based on the direction of the City Council, discretionary programs are identified, and prioritized, as follows:

Discretionary Programs

- ✓ Police Patrol & Public Safety
- ✓ Police Support Services
- ✓ Financial Services
- ✓ Legal Services
- ✓ Land Use Planning
- ✓ Economic Development
- ✓ Code Enforcement
- ✓ General Administration
- ✓ Library
- ✓ Aquatic Center
- ✓ Recreation Programming
- ✓ Parks and Park/Tree Maintenance
- ✓ Other General Fund Supported Non-Essential Program & Services
- ✓ Computer/Network transfers (capital replacements of desktop pc's and associated servers)
- ✓ Discretionary Transfers (i.e. Transit, Streets, RSVP, etc.)
- ✓ Community Services (i.e. flower baskets, TOT Grants – where permissible, etc.)
- ✓ Intergovernmental Agreements that provide no direct offsetting revenues

• **SECTION 17. RESOURCE REDUCTION STRATEGY (ALL FUNDS)**

- A. **Goal & Reduction Approach.** When faced with a potential reduction in resources, the City's goal is to continue to provide services in a professional, effective and efficient manner. Consequently, to the extent possible, across-the-board reductions in expenditures will be avoided.
- B. **Case-by-Case Consideration.** Reductions will be made on a case-by-case basis, focusing on each individual program or service. If possible, reduction will be made proportional to the programs and services identified by the City Council.
- C. **Moderation When Possible.** If, as a result of loss of a significant amount of discretionary resources, expenditure reductions become necessary, those reductions will be made in moderate case-by-case reductions in discretionary supported programs and services. These reductions will focus first on programs funded by dedicated resources and then services funded by discretionary resources.
- D. **Discretionary Contributions.** If further reductions are required, any discretionary funding that supplements or supports services mostly supported with dedicated resources will be reduced or eliminated. This may apply to programs or activities expanded or started with discretionary resources within the last few years. Exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis by the City Council.
- E. **Furlough Days.** If personnel budget/salary saving are required, the City will consider a reduced work week or furlough days prior to laying off staff.
- F. **Consideration List.** Discretionary funding for programs funded by discretionary resources will be reduced or eliminated as needed. Legal restrictions or the City's ability to maintain minimal service levels will be considered. Based on the direction of the City Council, the order of City service areas to be considered for reductions are:

Consideration List

- ✓ Intergovernmental Agreements that provide no direct offsetting revenues
- ✓ Community Services (i.e. flower baskets, TOT Grants – where permissible, etc.)
- ✓ Discretionary Transfers (i.e. Transit, Streets, RSVP, etc.)
- ✓ Computer/Network transfers (capital replacements of desktop pc's and associated servers)
- ✓ Other General Fund Supported Non-Essential Program & Services
- ✓ Parks and Park/Tree Maintenance
- ✓ Recreation Programming
- ✓ Aquatic Center
- ✓ Library
- ✓ General Administration
- ✓ Code Enforcement
- ✓ Economic Development
- ✓ Land Use Planning
- ✓ Legal Services
- ✓ Financial Services
- ✓ Police Support Services
- ✓ Police Patrol & Public Safety

G. **Indirect Costs.** The City's overhead programs will not be prioritized, but will be sized to the need and size of the overall organization. Generally, wherever possible, the City's goal is to make fee-supported programs self-sufficient. This includes recovering those programs' appropriate share of the City's overhead costs. If reductions occur, then indirect costs will be sized to the needs and size of the rest of the organization.

H. **Dedicated Funding for Programs.** Where legally possible, the City will consider using dedicated resources to fund high priority programs related to the purpose for which the dedicated funds are received.