



CITY OF
FORESTPARK

City of Forest Park, GA
Policies

CITY OF FOREST PARK FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

ACCOUNTING, AUDITING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING



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I. ACCOUNTING

The City shall maintain a system of financial monitoring, control, and reporting for all operations and funds in order to provide an effective means of ensuring that financial integrity is not compromised. In addition, such practices shall provide City officials with the necessary resources in order to make sound financial decisions.

A. SCOPE


This policy applies to all accounting records that are the responsibility and under the management of the City's Department of Finance.

B. GENERALLY ACCEPTED ACCOUNTING PRINCIPLES (GAAP)

The City will establish and maintain a high standard of accounting practices. Accounting standards will conform to generally accepted accounting principles of the United States as promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). The City also will follow the Financial Accounting Standards Board's pronouncements, as applicable.

C. FUND STRUCTURE

The City will maintain the minimum number of funds consistent with legal compliance and sound financial administration. The City will adhere to the mandatory fund structure included in the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) chart of accounts (see link below). Funds shall be classified in conformity with GAAP. Further, all funds shall be reported within the annual financial statements.

 [Uniform Chart of Accounts \(UCOA\) - Fourth Edition 4.3 \(May 2020, Amended May 2023\)](#)



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D. CHART OF ACCOUNTS

The Georgia General Assembly passed the Local Government Uniform Chart of Accounts and Reporting Act in 1997 (House Bill 491). This law requires the DCA to prepare and issue a standardized chart of accounts for Georgia governments. It shall be the policy of the City to implement and utilize the account classifications as the chart of accounts prescribes.

II. AUDITING

Georgia Law on Local Government Audits, O.C.G.A. Section 36-81-7, requires an independent annual audit for the City. The annual independent audit shall be conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards (GAAS) and generally accepted governmental auditing standards (GAGAS). In addition, the City shall comply with the requirements of the General Accounting Office (GAO) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) when audits are conducted relating to federal funding, consistent with the Single Audit Act.

A. SCOPE

This policy applies to all funds that are the responsibility and under the management of the City of Sandy Springs and its Department of Finance.

B. AUDITOR QUALIFICATIONS

A properly licensed Georgia independent public accounting firm shall conduct the audit.

C. CHOOSING THE AUDIT FIRM

Every three to five years, the City will issue a request for proposal to choose an audit firm for a period of three years with two one-year renewal options. The City will request two proposals from qualified public accounting firms. One



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proposal shall contain the firm's costs and a second will contain the firm's qualifications. The cost proposals shall only be presented after three qualified firms are determined. When awarding the contract for the independent audit, not less than 70% of the decision will be based upon technical qualifications rather than cost.

D. *AUDITING AGREEMENT*

The agreement between the independent auditor and the City shall be in the form of a written contract or an engagement letter. The contract or engagement letter shall include the request for proposal as an appendix to the written document and all issues addressed in the request for proposal shall be required as part of the contract or engagement letter.

III. INTERNAL AUDIT

The City shall develop, and once developed, maintain a strong internal audit function, whereby applying financial practices and policies to transactions. The City shall develop accounting practices and procedures, which will be documented for use in internal control evaluation.

IV. MALFEASANCE AND EMBEZZLEMENT

Any employee will be prosecuted to the extent of the law in any instance where the employee is proven to have committed an illegal act such as theft.

V. FINANCIAL REPORTING

A. *SCOPE*



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The Department of Finance shall develop and maintain an ongoing system of financial reporting to meet the information needs of the government, authorities, and regulatory agencies. In addition, the City Manager, Mayor, Council, Department Heads and the public shall have access to reports to allow them to monitor, regulate, and to use as a basis for future financial decisions.

B. ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REPORT

In conjunction with the annual independent audit, the City shall prepare and publish an Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). The City shall prepare the ACFR in conformity with GAAP and the Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) program requirements. Annually, the City will submit its CAFR to the GFOA to determine its eligibility to receive the GFOA's "*Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.*" The City shall make this report available to the elected officials, bond rating agencies, creditors and citizens.

The City shall report in conformity with O.C.G.A Section 36-81-7. A copy of the City's annual audit (i.e., the ACFR) shall be submitted to the Georgia Department of Audits and Accounts within 180 days of year-end, as required. Additionally, all external reports as required by the regulatory agencies shall be completed and filed as prescribed by state and federal law. This includes, but not limited to CVIOG, EMMA, Federal government (single audit), and DCA.

VI. ANNUAL BUDGET DOCUMENT

The City shall prepare and publish an annual budget document in accordance with the policies contained within this document. This budget shall measure the annual funding and forecast the financial position of the City for the subsequent fiscal year. This document shall be prepared in conformity to the GFOA program requirements. Annually, the City will submit the budget to the GFOA to determine its eligibility to receive the GFOA's "*Distinguished Budget Presentation Award.*" The City shall make the report available to elected officials, citizens, and any interested parties.



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VII. ANNUAL CITIZEN'S REPORT

At the direction of the City Manager, the Finance Department may coordinate with the Marketing Department (or similar provider) on the publication of an annual report to the citizen's (e.g., a popular report) which includes financial details. The citizen's report shall be in addition to the ACFR. This report shall follow the recommendations of the GFOA's "Popular Annual Financial Report" (PAFR) program guidelines. The City shall submit the Annual Citizen's Report to the PAFR program to determine its eligibility to receive the award.

VIII. INTERNAL REPORTING

A. FINANCIAL REPORTING TO THE CITY COUNCIL

On a monthly basis, the Finance Department shall prepare and present a summarized "*Statement of Revenues and Expenditures*" to the City Council for all of the City's operating funds. The City also shall prepare a "Capital Project" report outlining appropriations (if any), expenses, outstanding encumbrances, and available appropriable balances for capital projects.

B. FINANCIAL REPORTING TO THE ADMINISTRATION

In addition to the external reporting detailed above, the Finance Department shall coordinate the reporting needs of each department in order to design and implement those reports which the departments need to make sound business decisions. At a minimum, departments will receive reports detailing monthly department financial activity including expenses, any personnel costs in excess of the approved budget, and recommended budget line-item adjustments.