

**CITY OF STEVENSON  
RESOLUTION NO. 2019-330**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF STEVENSON  
ADOPTING THE FINANCIAL POLICY**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of the City of Stevenson recognizes the need to establish a Financial Policy; and

**WHEREAS**, the financial health and welfare of the City of Stevenson is highly dependent upon establishing and maintaining sound, financial-planning objectives and strategies of implementation; and

**WHEREAS**, financial policies assist the decision-making process of the Council and City administration while operating independently of changing services and financial circumstances and conditions; and

**WHEREAS**, these policies also provide guidelines for evaluating both current activities and proposals for future programs and direct the City's financial resources toward meeting the goals and programs of the strategic plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the implementation of wise fiscal policies enables City officials to protect the public interest and ensure public trust and confidence.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that the City Council of the City of Stevenson, Washington, hereby adopts the following policies as described in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated by reference.

**APPROVED AND PASSED** by the City Council of the City of Stevenson, Washington at its regular meeting this 17<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2019.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor of the City of Stevenson

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the City of Stevenson

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Attorney for the City of Stevenson

## **City of Stevenson Financial Policy**

### *Statement of Purpose*

The financial integrity of our City government is of utmost importance. To discuss, write, and adopt a set of financial policies is a key element to maintaining this integrity. Our City has evolved with a variety of financial policies that can be found in many different sources including: City Council Resolutions and Ordinances; Budget documents; and Capital Improvement Programs. The set of policies within this document implements Comprehensive Plan Objective 8.2 and serves as a central reference point for the policies most critical to the continued financial health of our local government.

Written, adopted financial policies have many benefits, such as assisting the elected officials and staff in the financial management of the City, saving time and energy when discussing financial matters, engendering public confidence, and providing continuity over time as elected officials and staff members change. While these policies will be amended periodically, they will provide the basic foundation and framework for many of the issues and decisions facing the City. They will promote sound financial management and assist in the City's stability, efficiency, and effectiveness.

### *Financial Goals*

The City of Stevenson's financial goals seek to:

- Ensure the financial integrity of the City
- Manage the financial assets in a sound and prudent manner
- Improve financial information for decision makers at all levels:
  - Policy makers as they contemplate decisions that affect the City on a long- term basis
  - Managers as they implement policy on a day-to-day basis
- Maintain and further develop programs to ensure the long-term ability to pay all costs necessary to provide the level and quality of service required by the citizens
- Maintain a spirit of openness and transparency while being fully accountable to the public for the City's fiscal activities

### *Financial Policies*

Stevenson's financial policies address the following major areas:

- |                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| • <b>General Policies</b>          | • <b>Small and Attractive Item Policy</b> |
| • <b>Revenue Policies</b>          | • <b>Accounting Policy</b>                |
| • <b>Expenditure Policies</b>      | • <b>Debt Policy</b>                      |
| • <b>Operating Budget Policy</b>   | • <b>Cash Mgmt/Investment Policy</b>      |
| • <b>Capital Management Policy</b> | • <b>Reserve Policy</b>                   |

## **I. General Policies**

1. The City Council may adopt resolutions or ordinances to set financial policies to assure the financial strength and accountability of the City.
2. The Mayor and/or City Administrator shall develop administrative directives and general procedures for implementing the City Council's financial policies.
3. All City Departments will share in the responsibility of meeting policy goals and ensuring long-term financial health. Future service plans and programs will be developed to reflect current policy directives, projected resources, and future service requirements.
4. To attract and retain employees necessary for providing high quality services, the City shall establish and maintain a competitive compensation and benefit package with the public and private sectors.
5. Efforts will be coordinated with other governmental agencies to achieve common policy objectives, share the cost of providing governmental services on an equitable basis, and support favorable legislation at the state and federal level.
6. Initiate, encourage, and participate in economic development efforts to create job opportunities and strengthen the local economy.
7. The City will strive to maintain fair and equitable relationships with its contractors and suppliers.

## **II. Revenue Policies**

*Design, maintain, and administer a revenue system that will assure a reliable, equitable, diversified, and sufficient revenue stream to support desired City services.*

### General Revenues

1. Current expenditures will be funded by current revenues. The City will try to maintain a diversified and stable revenue system to protect programs from short-term fluctuations in any single source.
2. Budgeted revenues will be estimated conservatively using accepted standards and estimates provided by the state, other governmental agencies or reliable economic forecasters when available.
3. General Fund and other unrestricted revenues will not be earmarked for specific purposes, activities or services unless otherwise authorized by City Council or required by law, or generally accepted accounting practices (GAAP). All nonrestricted revenues will be deposited into the General Fund and appropriated by the budget process.
4. If revenues from "one-time" or limited duration sources are used to balance the City's annual operating budget, it is to be fully disclosed and explained at

the time the budget is presented. It is the City's goal to not rely on these types of revenues to balance the operating budget.

5. The City will not use deficit financing and borrowing to support on-going operations in the case of long-term (greater than one year) revenue downturns. Thereafter, revenue forecasts will be revised and expenses will be reduced to conform to the revised long-term revenue forecast or revenue increases will be considered.
6. The City will follow an aggressive and professional policy of collecting revenues. When necessary, discontinuing service, small claims court, collection agencies, foreclosure, liens and other methods of collection, such as imposing penalties, collection and late charges, may be used.

#### Fees and Charges

7. Enterprise and Internal Service operations will be self-supporting.
8. The City will maximize the use of service users' charges in lieu of ad valorem (property) taxes and subsidies from other City funds, for services that can be identified and where costs are directly related to the level of service provided.
  - a. Charges for providing utility services shall be sufficient to finance all operating, capital outlay, and debt service expenses of the City's enterprise funds, including operating contingency, planned capital improvements, and reserve requirements.
  - b. User charges shall fund 100% of the direct cost of development review and building activities. User charges include, but are not limited to, land use, engineering inspection, building permit and building inspection fees.
  - c. Park recreation programs shall be funded by a users' charge. User charges shall be comparable to other neighboring cities where practical.
  - d. Other reimbursable work performed by the City (labor, contracted services, equipment and other indirect expenses) shall be billed at actual or estimated actual cost.
  - e. Charges for services shall accurately reflect the actual or estimated cost of providing a specific service. The cost of providing specific services shall be recalculated periodically, and the fee adjusted accordingly. The City shall maintain a current schedule of fees and charges, showing when the fees were last reviewed and/or recalculated. Fees, charges, and utility rates will be reviewed every three years at a minimum.
  - f. The City will consider market rates and charges levied by other municipalities for like services in establishing rates, fees, and charges.
  - g. Certain fees, such as rental fees, will be based upon market conditions and are not subject to the limitations of cost recovery.

### Grants and Gifts

9. Grant funding for programs or items which address the City's current priorities and policy objectives should be considered to leverage City funds. Inconsistent and/or fluctuating grants should not be used to fund on-going programs.
10. Before accepting any grant, the City shall thoroughly consider the implications in terms of ongoing obligations that will be required in connection with acceptance of said grant.
11. All grants and other federal and state funds shall be managed to comply with the laws, regulations, and guidance of the grantor, and all gifts and donations shall be managed and expended in accordance with the City's Donation Policy and the wishes and instructions of the donor.

### **III. Expenditure Policies**

*Identify priority services, establish appropriate service levels, and administer the expenditure of available resources to assure fiscal stability and the effective and efficient delivery of services.*

1. The City will strive to adopt an annual General Fund budget in which current expenditures do not exceed current projected revenues. Capital expenditures may be funded from one-time revenues.
2. Department Directors are responsible for managing their budgets within the total appropriation for their department.
3. The City will take immediate corrective actions if at any time during the fiscal year expenditure and revenue re-estimates are such that an operating deficit is projected at year-end. Corrective actions can include a hiring freeze, expenditure reductions, fee increases, or use of contingencies. The City Council may approve a short-term interfund loan or use of one-time revenue sources to address temporary gaps in cash flow, although this will be avoided if possible.
4. Long-term debt or bond financing shall not be used to finance current operating expenditures.
5. The City will assess funds for services provided internally by other funds. Interfund service fees charged to recover these costs will be recognized as revenue to the providing fund.
6. Emphasis will be placed on improving individual and work group productivity rather than adding to the work force. The City will invest in technology and other efficiency tools to maximize productivity. The City will hire additional staff only after the need for such positions has been demonstrated and documented.

7. All compensation planning will focus on the total cost of compensation which includes direct salary, health care benefits, pension contributions, and other benefits which are a cost to the City.
8. Periodic comparisons of service delivery will be made to ensure that quality services are provided to our citizens at the most competitive and economical cost. Privatization and contracting with other governmental agencies will be evaluated as alternatives to service delivery where appropriate. Programs that are determined to be inefficient and/or ineffective shall be reduced in scope or eliminated.
9. Whenever feasible, government activities will be considered enterprises if doing so will increase efficiency of service delivery or recover the cost of providing the service from the benefiting entity by user fees.
10. The City will make every effort to maximize any discounts offered by creditors/vendors. Staff will also use competitive bidding per the Purchasing Policy to attain the best possible price on goods and services.

#### **IV. Operating Budget Policies**

1. The City Council will adopt and maintain a balanced annual operating budget.
2. The City will strive to adopt a budget where current annual operating revenues will be equal to or greater than current operating expenditures.
3. Balanced revenue and expenditure forecasts will be prepared to examine the City's ability to absorb operating costs due to changes in the economy, service demands, contractual obligations, and capital improvements. The forecast will encompass five years and will be updated annually.
4. In the event a balanced budget is not attainable, and the cause of the imbalance is expected to last for no more than one year, the planned use of reserves to balance the budget is permitted. In the event that a budget shortfall is expected to continue beyond one year, the planned use of reserves must be developed as part of a corresponding strategic financial plan to close the gap through revenue increases or expenditure decreases.
5. Any year-end operating surpluses will revert to unappropriated balances for use in maintaining reserve levels set by policy and will be available for capital expenditures and/or "one-time" only General Fund expenditures.
6. The City will provide for adequate maintenance and the orderly replacement of capital assets and equipment. Fleet and equipment replacement will be accomplished through the use of a "rental" rate structure. The rates will be revised annually to ensure that charges to operating departments are sufficient for the replacement of the vehicles and equipment.
7. The operating budget shall serve as the annual financial plan for the City. It will serve as the policy document of the City Council for implementing Council goals

and objectives. The budget will provide the staff the resources necessary to accomplish City Council determined service levels.

8. As mandated by RCW 35A.33.135, the Mayor shall annually present a proposed operating budget to the City Council on or before the first Monday in October. The City Council must adopt by ordinance a final balanced budget no later than December 31 of each year.
9. Funds may not be expended or encumbered for the following fiscal year until the budget has been adopted by the City Council.
10. Budget control and accountability is maintained at the departmental level.
11. The Mayor has the authority to approve appropriation transfers between programs or departments within a fund. In no case may total expenditures of a particular fund exceed that which is appropriated by the City Council without a budget amendment. Amendments to the budget are approved by the City Council.

## **V. Capital Management Policies**

*Review and monitor the state of the City's capital equipment and infrastructure, setting priorities for its replacement and renovation based on needs, funding alternatives, and availability of resources.*

### Capital Facilities Plan

1. The City will develop a Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) as defined and required by RCW 36.70A.070 which is consistent with the City Comprehensive Plan by the end of 2024. The plan shall be for a period of six years.
2. The CFP will include all projects to maintain public capital facilities required to maintain service levels at standards established by the City Council. It may also include for consideration such other projects as requested by the Mayor or City Council.
3. The CFP will provide details on each capital project plan including estimated costs, sources of financing and a full description of the project.
4. The City will finance only those capital improvements that are consistent with the adopted CFP and City priorities. All capital improvement operating and maintenance costs will be included in operating budget forecasts.
5. A status review of the CFP will be conducted annually and a report will be presented by the Community Development Director or their designee, to the City Council.

### Capital Asset Management

6. The City will maintain its capital assets at a level adequate to protect the City's capital investment and to minimize future maintenance and replacement costs.

The budget will provide for adequate maintenance and orderly replacement of capital assets from current revenues where possible.

7. The capitalization threshold used in determining if a given asset qualifies for capitalization is \$5,000 per item with a useful life of over one year.
8. The City will conduct an annual physical count/inspection of all capital assets.
9. Adequate insurance will be maintained on all capital assets consistent with the results of the annual physical count/inspection.

## **VI. Small and Attractive Item Policies**

*It is the policy of the city to maintain accountability over all tangible items that may have the likelihood of disappearing without being noticed. The departments shall review and update records to be verified by a physical inventory at least once a year and provide such list to the Treasurer's office for monitoring differences between years.*

1. Small and attractive items are defined as easily moveable, desirable items with a unit cost of \$300.00 to \$4,999.99 and have a life expectancy of more than one year. Those items are either concealable or portable.
2. Concealable items are defined as small enough to fit into one's pocket, bag, briefcase or back pack (examples: electronic devices, radios, weapons; laptops, peripherals such as Personal Data Assistants (PDA) & software packages; etc.).
3. Portable items are defined as medium sized assets that can be easily carried. (examples: televisions, computers, printers, mobile hand or power equipment; rescue equipment; computer monitors, modems, cpu's, projectors, typewriters, lawn mowers, etc.).
4. Each department head or their designee will prepare a list at least annually of their small and attractive items. This list will be provided to the City Administrator by January 31st each year for monitoring.
5. Each department/fund will notify the City Administrator of any additions, deletions, interdepartmental transfers, modifications, or leases of property that is not reflected on the preliminary list. Deletions from the inventory should include items that were scrapped, cannibalized, disappeared mysteriously, or damaged beyond salvage. The City Administrator or their designee will ensure the appropriate changes are made to the departments/funds small and attractive list. After the adjustments are made, the final list will be given to the department head or the Mayor to sign that it is true and correct.
6. A physical inventory will be conducted annually by the department to verify the existence and condition of all items on the Small and Attractive list. Every two years the City Administrator or their designee will help with the physical inventory verification with each department during the summer or fall months.



## Exhibit A

7. The Small & Attractive list will contain the serial number, model number and other key-identifying characteristics. All inventoried property will be assigned a unique city identification number by the City Administrator's Office if it does not already have one of the identifiers listed above. If an item is assigned a city identification number, that assigned number will follow the asset throughout its life in the city's Small and Attractive system.
8. Whenever feasible, each piece of property will be engraved or marked with the city's name and/or identification number on the upper right-hand corner. Such markings will be removed or obliterated only when the item is sold, scrapped, cannibalized, or otherwise disposed of.
9. The city's property identification numbers are assigned by the City Administrator's Office for uniformity and must be unique to a single property item if there is not a serial number, model number or other key-identifying characteristic. Each department/fund should maintain a register of ID numbers that identify assets under their control if there is no serial or model number. The city will use a 10-character field that has the capability of using alpha or numeric characters for their ID number.
10. The city may acquire property via purchase, construction, donation, or lease. Regardless of how it is acquired, when the property is received, the department/fund purchasing the item will add it to their Small and Attractive data base listing and mark the item with the city's name. Quarterly the City Administrator's office will provide a list with documentation on all small and attractive items purchased. This list will include department, date, serial numbers, model numbers, order numbers, or any other means available for tracking purposes.
11. Items previously acquired will eventually be disposed of and need to be deleted from the departments list. Deletion may be required due to a sale of the asset, scrapping, mysterious disappearance (lost or stolen), or involuntary conversion (fire, flood, etc.).
12. The department head controlling the item is the only one in position to trigger removal from their list. An Asset Disposal Sheet must be submitted in the event of deletion for any reason. Items disappearing mysteriously may require additional reports to the police department, Mayor, and insurance company. Deletions brought about as a result of natural disasters would require reporting to the insurance provider for an eventual reimbursement claim.
13. Occasional transfers of property between departments, individuals within a department or funds will occur. The original controlling department/fund is accountable for all items and for initiating a notice of transfer.
14. Interdepartmental transfers involving a proprietary fund (i.e. Water/Sewer) need to have a transfer of money. The sale price will be fair market value, which may result in a gain or a loss on sale of fixed assets. Interdepartmental transfers or intergovernmental (i.e. city to County or State) do not require the city to declare the item surplus or to do a public notice.

## Exhibit A

15. Whenever an item has mysteriously disappeared and all efforts have failed to recover it, the controlling department/fund shall notify the City Administrator, who will give a copy to the Mayor and the Sheriff's Office. Ninety days after notification, if the item has not been found, the department head will send an Asset Missing Form to the City Administrator's office so they may remove the asset from the asset inventory. Copies of the report will be sent to the Mayor, City Council, and Department Head.

### **VII. Accounting Policies**

*Comply with prevailing federal, state, and local statutes and regulations. Conform to a comprehensive basis of accounting in compliance with Washington State statutes and with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) as promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) where applicable.*

1. The City uses the cash basis of accounting which is a departure from generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).
2. The City will maintain expenditure categories according to state statute and administrative regulation. The City will use the "Budgeting, Accounting & Reporting System" (BARS) prescribed by the State Auditor for its revenue and expenditure classification.
3. Quarterly budget reports showing the current status of revenues and expenditures will be prepared and distributed to appropriate legislative, staff and management personnel in a timely manner and made available for public inspection.
4. Electronic financial systems will be maintained to monitor revenues, expenditures, and program performance on an ongoing basis.
5. The Annual Financial Report will be prepared and submitted to the State Auditor's Office no later than 150 days from the end of the preceding fiscal year.
6. The Annual Financial Report will be prepared on the basis of accounting that demonstrates compliance with Washington State statutes and the BARS manual prescribed by the State Auditor, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than generally accepted accounting principles. The report will provide full disclosure of all financial activities and related matters.
7. An annual audit shall be performed by the Washington State Auditor's Office, which will issue an official opinion on the annual financial statements, along with a report on accountability for public resources and compliance with state laws and regulations and its own policies and procedures.
8. The City's budget should satisfy criteria as a financial and programmatic policy document, as a comprehensive financial plan, as an operations guide for all organizational units, and as a communications device for all significant budgetary issues, trends and resources. It is the goal of the City Administrator to submit the budget document to the Washington Finance Officers Association (WFOA) or Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation program.

## **VIII. Debt Policies**

*Establish guidelines for debt financing that will provide needed capital equipment and infrastructure improvements while minimizing the impact of debt payments on current revenues.*

1. The City will not use debt to pay for current operations. The use of bonds or certificates of participation will only be considered for significant capital and infrastructure improvements.
2. The term of the debt shall never extend beyond the useful life of the improvements to be financed unless it is for a project funded by USDA Rural Development in which case the term of the loan may not exceed 40 years.
3. General obligation debt will not be used for self-supporting enterprise activity.
4. Every project proposed for financing through general obligation debt shall be accompanied by a full analysis of the future operating and maintenance costs associated with the project.
5. The general policy of the City is to establish debt repayment schedules that use level annual principal and interest payments.
6. Interest earnings on bond proceeds will be limited to 1) funding the improvements specified in the authorizing bond ordinance, or 2) payment of debt service on the bonds.
7. Proceeds from debt will be used in accordance with the purpose of the debt issue. Funds remaining after the project is completed will be used in accordance with the provisions stated in the bond ordinance that authorized the issuance of the debt.
8. The City will use the most prudent methods of acquiring capital outlay items, including the use of lease-purchase agreements. In no case will the City lease- purchase equipment whose useful life is less than the term of the lease.
9. The City may issue interfund loans as short-term debt, for a period of three years or less, rather than outside debt instruments to meet short-term cash flow needs, such as a delay in receipting tax revenues or issuing long-term debt. Interfund loans will be permitted only if an analysis of the affected funds indicates excess funds are available and the use of these funds will not impact the fund's current operations. All interfund short-term borrowing will be subject to Council approval by resolution as approved for interfund loans.
10. Lease purchase financing may be used when the cost of borrowing or other factors make it in the City's best interest.

## **IX. Cash Management and Investment Policies**

*Manage and invest the City's operating cash to ensure its legality, safety, provide for necessary liquidity, avoid imprudent risk, and optimize yield.*

1. Cash and Investment programs will be maintained in accordance with Federal and

## Exhibit A

State law and will ensure that proper controls and safeguards are maintained. City funds will be managed in a prudent and diligent manner with an emphasis on safety of principal, liquidity, and financial return on principal, in that order.

- a. *Safety*. Investments will be undertaken in a manner that seeks to ensure the preservation of capital in the portfolio. Specifically, the City will: (a) seek to avoid realizing any loss through the sale or disposal of an investment; and (b) seek to mitigate the risk of unrealized losses due to a decline in value of investments held in the portfolio.
  - b. *Liquidity*. The investment portfolio will remain sufficiently liquid to meet all cash requirements that may be reasonably anticipated. This will be accomplished by structuring the portfolio in the following manner: (a) the City will purchase investments scheduled to mature in accordance with its anticipated cash needs, in order to minimize the need to sell investments prior to maturity; (b) a portion of City funds will be maintained in cash equivalents, including money market fund, investment pools and overnight securities, which may be easily liquidated without a loss of principal should an unexpected need for cash arise; and (c) the portfolio will consist largely of investments with active secondary markets.
  - c. *Yield*. The City's investments will be designed with the objective of maximizing a fair rate of return consistent with the safety and liquidity noted above.
2. The City will maintain written guidelines on cash handling, accounting, segregation of duties, and other financial matters.
  3. Monthly reports will be prepared and distributed to all departments and the City Council showing cash position, and year-to-date budgeted and actual expenditures.
  4. The City will conduct annual reviews of its internal controls and cash handling procedures.

### **X. Reserve Policies**

*Maintain the reserves, contingencies, and ending fund balances of the various operating funds at levels sufficient to protect the City's credit as well as its financial position from emergencies.*

1. At each fiscal year end the remaining dollars left in each fund that are undesignated and unencumbered constitute available reserves of the City.
2. The City will include all fund balances in the annual budget.

#### Strategic Reserve

3. The City's goal shall be to establish and maintain a General Operating Strategic Reserve of at least 10 percent of the General Fund and General-Fund supported operating budgets.

## Exhibit A

4. The reserve is defined as an emergency or cash flow reserve to fund one-time, emergency, or unanticipated expenditure requirements or offset unanticipated revenues fluctuations occurring in the fiscal year or one-time revenue losses.
5. Annual contributions will be budgeted from the General Fund resources as available to establish and maintain the target reserve level.
6. All expenditures drawn from the reserve account shall require prior Council approval unless previously authorized by the City Council for expenditure in the annual budget.

### General Fund

7. The City's goal shall be to maintain a General Fund ending fund balance of at least 10 percent of the budgeted General Fund operating revenues.

### Unemployment Reserve

8. The City's goal shall be to maintain an unemployment reserve of at least the maximum weekly benefit allowed by state law times the maximum number of weeks allowed, excluding any extension of benefits during times of high unemployment.

### Enterprise Funds

9. The City's Enterprise Funds will maintain reserves equal to at least 10 percent of their adopted operating expenditures.

### Equipment Rental & Replacement Fund

10. Sufficient reserves will be maintained to provide for the scheduled replacement of City vehicles and capital equipment at the end of their useful lives.
11. Contributions will be made through assessments to the operating departments and maintained on a per asset basis.

### Additional Reserves

12. Additional reserve accounts may be created by the City Council to be set aside for specific purposes or special projects, for known significant future expenditures, or as general operational reserves.