

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council, City of Stevenson

FROM: Wesley Wootten, City Administrator

DATE: July 2, 2025

SUBJECT: Justification for Proposed Finance Director and Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker Positions

Dear Council Members,

This memorandum is submitted for your review and approval regarding the strategic reorganization of City staffing, specifically the establishment of a dedicated Finance Director position and a new Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker role. This proposal reflects a proactive approach to enhancing the efficiency, fiscal health, and operational excellence of the City of Stevenson, with a clear understanding of the direct budgetary implications.

I. Justification for the Finance Director Position

The financial landscape for municipalities is increasingly complex, with evolving regulations, reporting requirements, and the necessity for sophisticated financial planning. The existing Deputy Clerk/Treasurer position, while vital, no longer fully encompasses the breadth and depth of expertise required to strategically manage the City's financial affairs in this environment.

The new Finance Director position is designed to serve as the City's chief financial officer and treasurer, providing comprehensive oversight of:

- **Budgeting and Financial Planning:** Developing and managing robust annual budgets, long-range financial forecasts, and capital improvement plans.
- **Compliance and Reporting:** Ensuring strict adherence to the Washington State Budgeting, Accounting, and Reporting System (BARS), Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and other state and federal regulations. This includes the preparation of critical monthly, quarterly, and annual financial reports, as well as leading the annual audit process.
- **Investment and Debt Management:** Strategically managing the City's investments to maximize returns while safeguarding public funds, and effectively managing municipal debt.
- **Internal Controls and Risk Management:** Implementing and maintaining strong internal control systems to protect public assets and serving as the City's risk manager.

- **Strategic Advising:** Providing timely and accurate financial data and expert advice to the City Administrator, department heads, and the City Council to support informed decision-making.

By establishing a dedicated Finance Director, the City will benefit from specialized leadership focused solely on financial integrity, strategic fiscal management, and long-term financial stability. While this is a new title, it largely replaces and elevates the financial responsibilities previously distributed, allowing for a more cohesive and professional approach to the City's finances.

The proposed salary scale for the Finance Director, ranging from **\$89,000 to \$115,900 annually**, reflects a competitive rate for this level of responsibility within Washington State municipalities, balancing fiscal prudence with the need to attract and retain highly qualified candidates capable of managing the City's critical financial operations. This places the position on a par with other senior department heads, acknowledging the central role of sound financial management in all City functions.

II. Justification for the Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker Position

The City of Stevenson prides itself on its public spaces and facilities. However, the increasing demands on our Public Works Department to maintain City buildings, parks, landscaping, and support special events necessitate dedicated resources. The new Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker position addresses this need directly.

This role will be instrumental in ensuring the continuous care and upkeep of all City-owned buildings and grounds, including:

- **Custodial Services:** Maintaining clean, sanitized, and well-organized restrooms, offices, and public spaces, which directly impacts public perception and employee well-being.
- **Groundskeeping:** Expertly managing lawns, shrubs, flower beds, irrigation systems, and general landscaping, contributing to the aesthetic appeal and safety of our public areas.
- **Minor Repairs and Event Support:** Performing essential minor repairs and providing crucial support for City events, reducing reliance on other departments and external contractors.

This is proposed as a seasonal, part-time position (25-30 hours/week, March-November), allowing the City to address peak maintenance needs efficiently without incurring the overhead of a full-time, year-round employee. This flexible staffing approach is both cost-effective and responsive to the seasonal nature of grounds maintenance.

The proposed hourly wage for the Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker, ranging from **\$20.00 to \$26.31 per hour**, is consistent with compensation for similar custodial and

groundskeeping roles in the region, particularly for part-time and seasonal employment. This ensures fair compensation while optimizing the City's operational budget.

III. Budgetary Considerations and Fiscal Prudence: Detailed Cost Analysis

The proposed staffing adjustments are designed with fiscal responsibility at the forefront, and the following outlines the estimated direct costs and their impact on relevant budget funds. These figures include not only salary but also an estimated 35% for benefits (such as employer-paid taxes, health insurance, and retirement contributions), which are standard expenses for municipal employees.

A. Finance Director Position

- **Proposed Entry-Level Annual Salary:** \$89,000
- **Estimated Annual Benefits (35%):** \$31,150
- **Total Estimated Annual Cost for Finance Director: \$120,150**
- **Offset from Eliminated Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Position:**
 - The 2025 budgeted salary for the Deputy Clerk/Treasurer position, which the Finance Director replaces, was **\$93,251**. With estimated benefits (35%), its total annual cost was approximately **\$125,889** (\$93,251 + \$32,638 in benefits).
- **Net Annual Impact to Budget for this Function:**
 - The net impact on expenditure for this critical financial management function is approximately **-\$5,739** (\$120,150 - \$125,889). This indicates that the proposed Finance Director position, at its entry-level, will result in a slight *decrease* in overall personnel costs for this function, while significantly enhancing the City's financial management capacity.
- **Impact on Budget Funds:**
 - The Finance Director position is a core administrative function and will primarily be funded through the **General Fund**. This fund is responsible for the overall operations of the City and will absorb the net change in personnel costs. A portion of the Finance Director's time, especially related to utility billing, financial reporting for enterprise funds, and debt service for utility projects, may be allocated and charged to relevant **Enterprise Funds** (e.g., Water Fund, Sewer Fund) based on established cost allocation plans, thereby reducing the direct impact on the General Fund.

B. Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker Position

- **Proposed Entry-Level Hourly Wage:** \$20.00
- **Estimated Annual Salary Cost:** \$19,800 (based on 9 months, 27.5 hours/week average)
- **Estimated Annual Benefits (35%):** \$6,930

- **Total Estimated Annual Cost for Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker: \$26,730**
- **Impact on Budget Funds:**
 - This position primarily supports the maintenance of City parks, public buildings, and general grounds. As such, the costs for this position will largely be incurred by the **General Fund**, specifically within the Public Works or Parks Department budgets. Depending on the nature of facility maintenance performed (e.g., at the Wastewater Treatment Plant or Water Facilities), a portion of these costs could potentially be cross-charged to the **Water Fund** or **Sewer Fund** if specific time tracking justifies such allocations. However, for initial budgeting, the primary impact is anticipated on the General Fund.

C. Overall Budget Impact Summary

- **Net Annual Cost (Finance Director):** ~\$5,739 (decrease compared to replaced position)
- **New Annual Cost (Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker):** ~\$26,730
- **Total Estimated Net Increase in Personnel Costs Across All Funds:** Approximately **\$20,991 annually**

The investment in these positions is not merely an increase in expenditure but a strategic enhancement of the City's operational capabilities. A dedicated Finance Director will lead to more efficient financial processes, stronger grant management, improved compliance, and better-informed financial decisions, potentially leading to long-term savings and increased revenue opportunities that can offset these costs. The Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker will ensure the longevity and presentability of City assets, reducing future repair costs and enhancing public enjoyment of our facilities and parks.

We are confident that these investments are fiscally responsible and will yield significant benefits to the City of Stevenson and its residents.

IV. Conclusion

The addition of a dedicated Finance Director and a Facilities & Grounds Maintenance Worker represents a forward-thinking investment in the City of Stevenson's administrative and operational infrastructure. These positions will strengthen our financial stewardship, enhance the quality and appearance of our public spaces, and ultimately improve the services we provide to our community.

We respectfully request the City Council's approval of these vital new positions and their associated salary scales as presented.

Sincerely,

Wesley Wootten

City Administrator, City of Stevenson