



Comprehensive Finance and Asset Management Policies

Policies & Processes

I. Financial Planning Policies

The City of Bellevue shall develop and maintain a six-year Financial Forecast that estimates resource and expenditure behavior for the two bienniums beyond the current budget period. This forecast will provide the City’s decision-makers with an indication of the long-term fiscal impact of current policies and budget decisions. This planning tool must recognize the effects of economic cycles on the demand for services and the city's resources. To this end, the Forecast should differentiate between revenue associated with one-time economic activities and revenues derived as a result of base economic growth. City financial planning should ensure the delivery of needed services (many of which become more critical during economic downturns) by assuring adequate reliance on ongoing resources in order to support continued city services during economic downturns.

The city is a major force in a complex regional economic system. The city must understand and anticipate changes in both regional and national economic trends in order to engage in strategic financial and management planning.

A. General Fund:

1. The Finance and Asset Management Department will prepare and maintain a Financial Forecast for General Fund operations based on current service levels and current funding sources. This forecast will include the upcoming biennium as well as the two bienniums beyond the current period (a total of six forecast years). This future-oriented look will provide insight into whether the current mix and level of resources are likely to continue to be sufficient to cover current service levels. The forecast also allows staff and City Council to test various “what-if” scenarios and examine the fiscal impact on future bienniums.
2. The City will constantly test both its planning methodology and use of planning tools in order to provide information that is timely, accurate, and widely disseminated to users throughout the City.
3. Departments will forecast and monitor their respective revenues and expenditures with assistance from the Finance and Asset Management Department. The Finance and Asset Management Department will assist departments in developing appropriate systems for such monitoring and will retain overall fiscal oversight responsibility for the General Fund.
4. The Financial Forecast is updated at least two times each year. Any unexpected changes in economic conditions or other circumstances may prompt more frequent updates. Any significant changes are reported to the Leadership Team, City Manager, and Council.

B. Utility Funds:

1. Financial forecasting will be done for the three Utility Funds in a manner similar to the General Fund. The purpose of these forecasts will be to allow the City Council and citizens to evaluate the longer-term financial needs of these programs.



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2. The forecasts should rely on the same basic economic assumptions as the General Fund Forecast. These forecasts will also identify other assumptions used in their preparation and the risks associated with them.
 3. The forecasts must identify how they will impact rate structures.
- C. Parks Enterprise Fund:
1. Financial forecasting will be done for the Parks Enterprise Fund in a manner similar to the General Fund. The purpose of this forecast will be to allow the City Council and citizens to evaluate the longer-term financial needs of the funds' programs.
 2. The forecasts should rely on the same basic economic assumptions as the General Fund Forecast. This forecast will also identify other assumptions used and the risks associated with them.
- D. Development Services Fund:
1. Financial forecasting will be done for the Development Services Fund in a manner similar to the General Fund. The purpose of this forecast will be to allow the City Council and citizens to evaluate the longer-term financial needs of the funds' programs.
 2. The forecasts should rely on the same basic economic assumptions as the General Fund Forecast. This forecast will also identify other assumptions used and the risks associated with them.
- E. Resource/Expenditure Estimating: The financial planning and subsequent budgeting for all funds will be based on the following principles:
1. Resource and expenditure estimates should be prepared on a realistic basis with a target of ± 2 percent variance from the estimate for resources and ± 1 percent variance for expenditures.
 2. Expenditure estimates should anticipate contingencies that are reasonably predictable.

II. General Budget Policies

- A. Resources Greater than Budget Estimates: Resources (fund balance) greater than budget estimates in any internal service fund shall be refunded to the contributing funds unless circumstances warrant retaining such monies for future expenditure in the current fund.
- B. Budget Preparation: Department directors have primary responsibility for formulating budget proposals in line with City Council, Leadership Team, and City Manager priority direction, and for implementing them once they are approved.

The Finance and Asset Management Department is responsible for coordinating the overall preparation and administration of the City's biennial budget and Capital Investment Program Plan. This function is fulfilled in compliance with applicable State of Washington statutes governing local government budgeting practices.

The Finance and Asset Management Department assists department staff in



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identifying budget problems, formulating solutions and alternatives, and ACFR implementing any necessary corrective actions.

- C. **Public Hearings:** The City Council will hold three public hearings on the budget. The first two will be held sufficiently early in the budget process to allow citizens to influence budget decisions and to allow the council to indicate special priorities before city staff develops a preliminary budget recommendation. The third and final public hearing will be held shortly after the preliminary budget's initial presentation to the council and before the council's final budget deliberations. The final public hearing will be held prior to the time the council fixes the annual Property Tax levy. If deemed necessary, additional public hearings may be conducted.
- D. **Overhead and Full Cost Allocation:** Department budgets should be prepared in a manner to reflect the full cost of providing services.
- E. **Examination of Existing Base Budget:** During each biennial budget development process, the existing base budget will be thoroughly examined to assure removal or reduction of any services that could be eliminated or reduced in cost.
- F. **Services to Keep Pace With Needs of Community:** The City will strive to ensure that city service priorities keep pace with the dynamic needs of the community by incorporating a service needs review as part of the budget process.
- G. **Maintenance of Quality Service Programs:** Quality service programs will be offered by the City of Bellevue. If expenditure reductions are necessary, service elimination is preferable to poor or marginal quality programs.
- H. **Maintenance of Existing Services vs. Additional or Enhanced Service Needs:** Significant annual resource allocations needed to maintain existing service quality will compete directly with investment proposals during the budget evaluation process.
- I. **Budget Monitoring:** The Finance and Asset Management Department will maintain a system for monitoring the City's budget performance. This system will provide the City Council with quarterly presentations to the council regarding fund level resource collections and department level expenditures. Included will be provisions for amending the budget during the year in order to address unanticipated needs, emergencies, or compliance with State of Washington budgetary statutes. Budget amendments requiring City Council approval will occur through a process coordinated by the Finance and Asset Management Department. Significant financial issues that need to be addressed between regular monitoring reports will be provided to the council as warranted.
- J. **Performance Budgeting:** Performance measures will be utilized and reported in department budgets. The City will prepare trends, comparisons to other cities, and other financial management tools to monitor and improve service delivery in city programs.
- K. **Interfund Charges Based on Full Cost:** Interfund charges will be based on recovery of the full costs associated with providing those services. Internal Service Agreements shall be established between vendor and client departments reflecting full cost recovery unless special circumstances exist. Any disputes will be brought to the City



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Manager or Deputy City Manager for resolution after thorough evaluation by the Finance and Asset Management Department.

- L. Outcome Based Budget Presentation Format: The focus of the City's biennial budget presentation is directed at displaying the City's services plan in Outcome areas to reflect the values of our community and important community-wide priorities recognized by the council.
- M. Distinguished Budget Presentation: The City will seek to obtain the Government Finance Officers Association Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for each biennial budget. The Budget will be presented in a way that clearly communicates the budget to members of the public.

III. Utility & Other Fund Budget Policies

- A. Utilities Department Financial Policies: The Utilities Department Financial Policies, including Solid Waste Reserves policies, were adopted in December 2017, with revisions in November 2022.
- B. Building Permit Revenues and Expenditures: Revenues derived from building permit fees shall be designated for the exclusive support of the development activities in the Development Services Fund. This fund will provide permit processing and compliance inspection services. Building permit fees shall include an overhead rate component to recover its share of general overhead costs, as well as department overhead from those departments directly involved in permit processing activities.
- C. Parks Enterprise Revenues and Expenditures: Revenues derived from golf and certain culture and recreation fees shall be designated for the exclusive support of activities in the Parks Enterprise Fund. This fund will maintain and operate the golf course, tennis center, and Robinswood House, administer adult athletic programs, pay approved maintenance services and overhead charges to the General Fund, and fund golf course improvements in the Capital Investment Program Fund. The Parks Enterprise Fund may also charge the General Fund for a portion of their programs that are offered with a "fee subsidy". This charge is designed to allow youth and special populations access to programs at less than full cost, to encourage participation.

IV. State-Mandated Budget Requirements

Washington State law (RCW [35A.34](#)) specifies requirements that must be followed in budgeting each of the City's funds. The following summarizes the key areas covered in Washington State law:

- A. Key Requirements:
 - 1. The timing, process, and responsibility for each step.
 - 2. A standard account classification system prescribed by the State Auditor.
 - 3. Preparation and filing of a preliminary budget by the chief administrative officer.
 - 4. A "budget message" from the chief administrative officer explaining the



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content, financial policies, and major proposed changes.

5. A public hearing on the proposed preliminary budget conducted before adoption of a final budget, which shall be held on or before the first Monday in December.
 6. Procedures for handling special situations such as mid-biennium emergencies.
 7. Limitations on the expenditure of city funds and procedures for amending the budget.
 8. Quarterly or more frequent reporting to the City's legislative authority on the revenue and expenditure status of each fund.
 9. Budgeting of non-operating/special purpose funds on a different basis from operating budget funds.
- B. Fund Types: The City budgets all funds in accordance with the Optional Municipal Code, Section [35A.34](#) of the Revised Code of Washington. In accordance with state law, the City prepares its biennial budget on an estimated cash receipts and disbursements basis and by a process that conforms to the stated timing requirements. The only exceptions are the following special purpose funds: special assessment (e.g., Local Improvement District (LID) Bond Fund) and custodial agency funds (e.g., Firemen's Pension Fund), where the City acts in a custodial capacity as the bookkeeper for monies belonging to others. The City maintains three primary types of funds: operating, capital project and other special purpose funds.
1. Operating funds finance the continuous, traditional service delivery functions of a municipality in Washington State. Expenditure authority (appropriations) for each of these funds lapses at the end of each biennium, and a new budget must be adopted by the City Council.
 2. Capital project funds include the General and Utility Capital Investment Program Funds which provide for the City's seven-year capital funding. Capital project fund budgets do not lapse at the end of the biennium, but are carried forward until the monies are fully expended or their objectives are accomplished or abandoned (RCW [35A.34.270](#)).
 3. Special purpose funds are distinguished from operating/budgetary funds by their limited objectives and/or finite life spans. Special purpose fund budgets do not lapse at the end of the biennium but are carried forward until the monies are fully expended or their objectives are accomplished or abandoned (RCW [35A.34.270](#)). Examples of special purpose funds are the Operating Grants, Donations and Special Reserves Fund, and the Housing Funds.

As required by state law, the 2023-2024 Budget reflects balanced expenditure and revenue estimates for each of the City's funds. Although revenue estimates are made only at the fund level, expenditure budgets are prepared at the department and division level for the purpose of administrative control.

V. Budget Development Process



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The Finance and Asset Management Department is responsible for coordinating the overall preparation of the City's budgets. To accomplish this, staff issues budget instructions, conducts budget preparation training sessions, and communicates regularly with department staff. Their guidance provides the overall "rules of the game" within which the more detailed budget instructions and coordinating efforts are developed.

The following are the major provisions for a biennial budget in accordance with Section [35A.34](#) of the Revised Code of Washington.

Major Steps in Budget Preparation	State Law Time Limitations
1. Request by clerk to all department heads and those in charge of municipal offices to prepare detailed estimates of revenues and expenditures for the next biennium.	By second Monday in September.
2. Estimates are to be filed with the clerk.	By fourth Monday in September.
3. Estimates are presented to the City Manager (CM) for modifications, revisions or additions. Clerk must submit to CM proposed preliminary budget setting forth the complete financial program, showing expenditures requested by each department and sources of revenue by which each such program is proposed to be financed.	On or before the first business day in the third month prior to beginning of the fiscal year.
4. CM provides the legislative body with current information on estimates of revenues from all sources as adopted in the budget for the current year. CM also provides the legislative body with the proposed preliminary budget setting forth the complete financial program, showing expenditures requested by each department and sources of revenue by which each such program is proposed to be financed.	No later than the first Monday in October.
5. The legislative body must hold a public hearing on revenue sources for the coming budget, including consideration of possible increases in property tax revenues. (Chapter 251, Laws of 1995, codified as RCW 84.55.120)	Before legislative body votes on property tax levy.
6. CM prepares preliminary budget and budget message and files with the legislative body and city clerk.	At least 60 days before the ensuing fiscal year.
7. Clerk publishes notice that preliminary budget has been filed and publishes notice of public hearing on final budget once a week for two consecutive weeks.	No later than the first two weeks in November.
8. Setting property tax levies	November 30



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Major Steps in Budget Preparation	State Law Time Limitations
9. The legislative body, or a committee thereof, must schedule hearings on the budget or parts of the budget and may require the presence of department heads.	Prior to the final hearing.
10. Copies of proposed (preliminary) budget made available to the public.	No later than six weeks before January 1.
11. Final hearing on proposed budget.	On or before first Monday of December and may be continued from day-to-day but no later than the 25 th day prior to next fiscal biennium.
12. Adoption of Budget.	Following the public hearing and prior to beginning of the ensuing fiscal biennium.
13. Copies of final budget transmitted to the State Auditor's Office.	After adoption.



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The following are key procedural steps in the City's budget development process. Note that the process and dates indicated below match the 2023-2024 process and may be changed for future processes.

1. In early February, City Council validates the seven identified community Outcomes that will frame 2023-2024 Budget, as well as the 2023-2029 Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan.
2. In February, the council validated the Outcome areas for the upcoming budget.
3. In late March, Budget kick off starts, and City Council provides policy direction and priorities during a Workshop for the development of the operating and CIP budgets.
4. Early in the year, an operating and CIP budget survey was conducted. The survey reached a statistically valid sample of Bellevue residents and queried residents on a variety of city services, including how important and satisfied residents were with these services.
5. In April, the Budget Survey information was presented to the City Council.
6. Revenue and expenditure estimates were developed and updated by the Finance and Asset Management Department throughout the budget process. "Early Outlook" Financial Forecasts were prepared and presented to the council in March.
7. In April, the Request for Results (RFR) were sent to departments. Departments prepared proposals in response to the RFRs and submitted to the Budget Office.
8. The initial public hearing was held in June and a second public hearing was held in August to provide the public with ample opportunity to comment on recommended programs and/or ideas for new programs.
9. From mid-June to early August, the Leadership Team reviewed the department submissions and provided feedback.
10. In October, the City Manager made final budget decisions and directed preparation of the preliminary budget.
11. During early October, preliminary budget documents were prepared, printed, and filed with the City Clerk. This proposed budget was presented to the Council in mid-October, and copies were made available to the public immediately after the presentation.
12. Between late October and early December, the council met in a series of budget sessions to review and discuss the proposed budget.



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13. The third and final public hearing was held in November during the time the council discussed the preliminary budget. Citizens were able to comment on recommended programs and/or ideas for new programs at these public hearings.
14. In early December, the council adopted the budget by ordinance and established the budget appropriation for the next biennium.
15. The final budget is published and distributed during the first half of the following year. Copies are made available to the public and are available on the City's website.
16. Quarterly monitoring reports are prepared by the Finance and Asset Management Department to report on actual performance compared to budget estimates and to identify any remedial actions that may be needed.
17. As required by state law, a mid-biennium update will occur during the year following adoption of the biennial budget. This update is required by state law and allows for budget modifications and technical adjustments.
18. The budget development process described above is supplemented by information generated by the City's Financial Forecast. The forecast is a financial tool that provides the City's decision-makers with an indication of the long-term fiscal impact of current policies and budget decisions.
19. The budget process is also supplemented by information on service delivery performance and benchmarking with discussions and publication of a Comparative Cities Performance Report and an Annual Performance Report.

VI. Budget Adjustment & Amendment Processes

Under the provisions of state law and the City's operating procedures, the operating budget may be adjusted or amended in two different ways. Adjustment of the budget involves a reallocation of existing appropriations and does not change the budget "bottom line". Amendment of the budget involves an addition to or reduction of existing appropriations.

- A. Adjustment: Under the first method, departmental expenditures and requirements are monitored throughout the year. Certain departments may develop the need for additional expenditure authority to cover unanticipated costs that cannot be absorbed within the budget, while other departments will not require their full budget authorizations. The Finance and Asset Management Department reviews and analyzes all department and/or fund budgets to determine what adjustments are necessary and whether the adjustments can be made within existing appropriation limits. These changes are then reviewed with the affected department and/or fund managers. When an adjustment is needed, Finance and Asset Management staff will look first to savings within the department; and then transfers between departments. No City Council action is needed as state law allows budget adjustments to be done administratively.
- B. Amendment: Amending the City's budget occurs whenever the requested changes from department and/or fund managers will cause the existing appropriation level for the fund to change. This situation generally occurs when the City Council authorizes



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additional appropriation. This is done by an ordinance that amends the original budget and states the sources of funding for the incremental appropriations.

VII. Agenda Memorandum Review

The Finance and Asset Management Department will review all agenda items submitted for City Council action. The objective of these reviews will be to ensure compliance with the budget and disclosure of all fiscal issues to the council. This information will be presented in the fiscal impact section of each agenda memorandum.

VIII. Revenue Policies

The City must be sensitive to the balance between the need for services and the City's ability to raise fees, charges, and taxes to support those services.

- A. Mix of Revenues: The City should strive to maintain a diversified mix of revenues to balance the sources of revenue amongst taxpayers and to provide ongoing stability and predictability.
 - 1. Property Taxes and other stable revenues provide a reliable base of revenues during periods of economic downturn.
 - 2. The City's overall revenue structure should be designed to recapture for the City some of the financial benefits resulting from city economic and community development investments.
 - 3. The City will strive to keep a total revenue mix that encourages growth and keeps Bellevue economically competitive and a city of choice for people to live and do business.
- B. Taxes Should Be Selected for Balance, Applicability, and Probable Economic Impact: The following factors will be considered when the City's taxes are increased, decreased, extended, or changed in any way.
 - 1. Stability of the tax source over its expected life.
 - 2. Suitability for a pledge against future debt if that is part of the City Council's long-range intent for the revenue source.
 - 3. Spread the tax burden throughout the City's tax base by utilizing a broad array of the tax sources available and by investigating mitigation of inequities and hardships where appropriate (e.g., Property Tax exemptions and deferrals, and utility tax rebates for low-income elderly people). State and local legislative remedies for detrimental tax impacts should be sought where appropriate.
 - 4. Apply the tax impact information for both residential and business taxpayers against a future vision of what the tax policy decision is intended to foster.
- C. Property Tax Revenues for Park Maintenance: Revenues derived from the Property Tax Lid Lift for Park Maintenance, which Bellevue voters approved in November 2008, shall be deposited in the General Fund to pay all costs necessary to fund the maintenance and operating costs of specific park facilities.



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- D. **Charges for Services:** As much as is reasonably possible, city services that provide private benefit should be supported by fees and charges to provide maximum flexibility in use of general city taxes to meet the cost of services of broader public benefit. Charges for services that benefit specific users should recover full costs, including all direct costs, capital costs, department overhead, and citywide overhead. Departments that impose fees or service charges should prepare and periodically update cost-of-service studies for such services. A subsidy of a portion of the costs for such services may be considered when consistent with legal requirements to meet other city interests and objectives, such as remaining competitive within the region.
- E. **Backup Convention Center Financing:** In accordance with Ordinance No. 4094 (passed on 12/4/89) and Ordinance No. 4229 (passed on 3/4/91), 0.01 percent of the City's total gross receipts business and occupation taxing authority of 0.2 percent, is reserved as a backup financing mechanism for the Convention Center should additional financing beyond that contemplated in the adopted Convention Center Financing Plan become necessary. In addition, any additional increase in the City's B&O Tax (measured by gross receipts) shall first require an analysis of the status of the Convention Center Financing Plan. This information must be included in any fiscal impact notes on agenda materials presented to the City Council for the purpose of increasing the B&O Tax rate described above.

IX. Operating Policies

The City should accommodate both one-time and ongoing expenditures within current resources, establish and adequately fund reserves, regularly monitor and report on budget performance, evaluate the fiscal impact of new proposals, operate as efficiently as possible, and constantly review city services for appropriateness and effectiveness.

- A. **Expenditures should be Within Current Resource Projections:** Ongoing expenditures should be equal to or less than ongoing revenues. Each city fund budget must identify ongoing resources that at least match expected ongoing annual requirements. One-time resources and non-recurring ending fund balances will be applied to reserves or to fund one-time expenditures; they will not be used to fund ongoing programs.
- B. **Unrestricted Resources Should Remain Unrestricted:** Unless otherwise stated explicitly by the City Council, unrestricted resources will not be earmarked for specific purposes in the General Fund. This will preserve the ability of the council to determine the best use of available resources to meet changing service requirements.
- C. **Continual Improvement of Service Delivery:** The City will seek to optimize the efficiency and effectiveness of its services through Business Process Improvement (BPI) efforts, performance budgeting and measuring, and by assessing its services with comparable cities to reduce costs and improve service quality.
- D. **Cash Management:** The Finance and Asset Management Department will develop, maintain, and constantly seek to improve cash management systems which ensure the accurate and timely accounting, investment, and security of all cash assets. All cash received by city departments will be deposited with Finance and Asset Management within 24 hours of receipt.



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- E. Cash Reserves: The City will maintain adequate cash reserves to reduce the potential need for borrowing or service reductions during periods of economic downturn, natural catastrophe, or for other, one-time extraordinary expenditures. Annually, the City will target 15 percent of General Fund revenues as a General Fund ending balance, commonly known as a reserve.
- F. Fund Balances: Accruals and non-cash enhancements to revenues will not be made to influence fund balances at year-end or during budget discussions.
- G. Fixed Asset Inventories: Accurate inventories of all physical assets (including roads infrastructure), their condition, life spans, and cost will be maintained to ensure proper stewardship of public property. The Finance and Asset Management Director will establish policies and appropriate procedures to manage fixed assets, including establishing the threshold dollar amount for which fixed asset records are maintained and how often physical inventories will be taken.
- H. Allocation of Overhead Costs: Overhead costs will be allocated to determine the full cost of providing services. Overhead costs will be allocated according to consistent methodology developed in consultation between the Finance and Asset Management Department and other operating departments.
- I. Utility Debt Coverage Ratio Target: The City Council adopted the following debt service coverage policy for the bonds issued by the City's Waterworks Utility on March 7, 1994 by Resolution No. 5759:

"The City Council will establish utility rates/charges and appropriations in a manner intended to achieve a debt service coverage ratio (adjusted by including city taxes as an expense item) of approximately 2.00. The City Council authorizes the Waterworks Utility to utilize this policy in development of pro forma projections which will be disseminated to the bond rating agencies and to the financial community generally."

X. Fund Description & Reserve Policies

Fund descriptions and reserve policies have been developed in a standard format for all city funds and are included in the 2023-2024 Budget Detail volume.

- A. Fund Descriptions include the following:
 - 1. Fund Type
 - 2. Fund Description
 - 3. Year Created
 - 4. Major Revenue Sources
 - 5. Major Expenditures
 - 6. Fund Custodian
 - 7. Reserve Policy
 - 8. Other Notes
- B. Reserve Policies include the following:
 - 1. Budgeting for Reserves: The City will maintain and justify budgeted reserves.



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2. Expenditure of Budgeted Reserves: Reserves included in the operating budget shall not be expended without the express written approval of the Finance and Asset Management Director.
3. Annually the City will target 15 percent of General Fund revenues as a General Fund ending balance. This balance is to protect the City's essential service programs during periods of economic downturn, which may temporarily reduce actual resources or cut the growth rate of city resources below that necessary to maintain pre-existing service levels. Additionally, the ending fund balance, commonly known as a reserve, can be used in the event of a natural catastrophe, counter cyclical basic revenue growth (Property, Sales, and B & O Taxes combined) below 5 percent for the biennium, or because of unfunded federal or state mandates.
4. The target of 15 percent of annual General Fund revenues as a General Fund reserve shall be sufficient to maintain the City's exceptional bond rating for both its unlimited and limited general obligation tax bonds.

XI. Capital Investment Program Plan Policies

A number of important policy considerations are the basis for the Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan. These policies provide guidelines for all financial aspects of the CIP, and ultimately affect the project selection process.

- A. Relationship of Long-Range Plans to the CIP Plan: Virtually all the projects included in the CIP are based upon formal long-range plans that have been adopted by the City Council. This ensures that the City's Capital Investment Program, which is the embodiment of the recommendations of these individual planning studies, is responsive to the officially stated direction of the City Council as contained in the Comprehensive Plan and supporting documents. Examples of these supporting documents are: Transportation Facility Plans (Central Business District (CBD), Bellevue-Redmond Overlake Transportation Study (BROTS), East Bellevue Transportation Study (EBTS), Newcastle), the Parks and Open Space Plan, the Municipal Facilities Plan, the Fire Master Plan, the CBD Implementation Plan and the Comprehensive Plans of the Water, Sewer, and Storm & Surface Water Utilities. There are exceptions, but they are relatively small when compared to the other major areas of expenditure noted above. These exceptions include activities such as the Neighborhood Enhancement Program (NEP) and the Community Development Program.
- B. Establishing CIP Priorities: The City uses the following basic CIP project prioritization and selection process.
 1. Each CIP program area establishes criteria to be used in the prioritization of specific projects submitted for funding. These specific criteria are developed in conjunction with City Council priorities and input from citizens and associated city boards and commissions (if applicable).
 2. The Finance and Asset Management Department determines revenue projections available to the non-utility CIP in consultation with various revenue-



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- generating departments and the amount of resources available for new projects for each new seven-year Plan.
3. The Budget Finance and Asset Management Department, CIP Review Panel and City Manager evaluate the various CIP projects and select those with the highest priority.
 4. Within the available funding, the highest priority projects are then selected and funded in the CIP.
 5. CIP program area managers recommend an expenditure plan to the Finance and Asset Management Department and City Manager, which includes all capital costs and any applicable maintenance and operations (M&O) and/or required short-term financing costs. Program area managers are responsible for the cost estimates of their proposed programs, including future M&O costs related to the implementation of completed projects.
 6. A Preliminary CIP Plan is recommended to the City Council by the City Manager along with the operating budget recommendations.
 7. The City Council reviews the Operating and Preliminary CIP Plan, holds a public hearing(s) to allow for citizen input, makes desired alterations, and then officially adopts the budget and establishes related appropriations as a part of the City's biennial budget process.
- C. Types of Projects Included in the CIP Plan: The CIP Plan will display, to the maximum extent possible, all major capital projects in which the City is involved. While the following criteria may be used as a general guide to distinguish which projects should be included or excluded from the CIP Plan, there are always exceptions which require management's judgment. For purposes of the CIP Plan, a CIP project is generally defined to be any project that possesses all the following characteristics:
1. Exceeds a cost of \$100,000
 2. Involves:
 - a. Totally new physical construction,
 - b. Development of a major technology system (technology system is defined as "an integrated set of hardware, software and processes working cohesively to perform a business function")
 - c. Reconstruction designed to gradually and systematically replace an existing facility or system on a piecemeal basis,
 - d. Replacement of a major component of an existing facility or technology system, or
 - e. Acquisition of land or structures; and
 3. Involves city funding in whole or in part or involves no city funds but is the City's responsibility for implementing, such as a 100 percent grant-funded project or 100 percent Local Improvement District funded project.



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Eligible costs include:

- a. Studies/plans that determine the feasibility and/or support the preliminary design of future CIP projects,
 - b. Pre-design, design, development, right-of-way, construction, inspection, and/or testing, and
 - c. Staff and consultants to deliver the capital project.
- D. **Scoping and Costing Based on Predesign Study:** It has proven difficult to develop accurate project scopes, cost estimates, and schedules on which no preliminary engineering or community contact work has been done. To address this problem, some projects are initially proposed and funded only for preliminary engineering and planning work. This funding will not provide any monies to develop final plans, specifications, and estimates to purchase rights-of-way or to construct the projects. However, generally, an estimated amount, sufficient to cover these costs based on a rough preliminary estimate is earmarked within the program area.
- E. **Required Project Features and Financial Responsibility:** If a proposed project will cause a direct impact on other publicly-owned facilities, an equitable shared and funded cost plan must be coordinated between the affected program areas.
- F. **Predictability of Project Timing, Cost, and Scope:** The predictability of timing and costs of projects is important to specific private developments, such as the provision of street improvements or the extension of major sewer lines or water supply, without which development could not occur. These projects generally involve significant financial contributions from such private development through impact fees, developer extension agreements, LIDs, and other means. Once a project has been approved by the City Council in the CIP, project scheduling is a priority to maintain.
- G. **Local Improvement Districts (LID):** This policy limits the use of LIDs to specific instances. Examples of when future LIDs may be formed are as follows: 1) where old agreements exist committing property owners to LID participation on future projects; 2) when current development activity or very recently past development activity has exempted these projects from the assessment of Transportation Impact Fees; 3) when a group of property owners wish to accelerate development of a certain improvement; 4) when a group of property owners desire a higher standard of improvement than the City's project contemplates; or 5) when a group of property owners request city assistance in LID formation to fund internal neighborhood transportation facilities improvements, which may or may not have city funding involved. If city funding is proposed by the project sponsors (property owners), they shall so request of the City Council (through the City Clerk) in writing before any LID promotion activity begins. The City Manager shall analyze such request within 45 days and report his conclusions and recommendation to Council for their consideration. The Council shall by motion affirm or deny the recommendation. The council's affirmative motion to financially participate shall expire in 180 days unless the project sponsors have submitted a sufficient LID petition by that time.

In the event the request is for street resurfacing in advance of the City's normal street resurfacing cycle, the City's contribution shall not exceed 50 percent of all project



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eligible costs.

On capital projects whose financing depends in part on an LID, interim financing will be issued to support the LID's portion of the project budget at the same time or in close proximity to the issuance of the construction contract. The amount of the interim financing shall be the current estimate of the final assessment roll as determined by the administering department.

If the project is 100 percent LID funded, interim financing shall be issued either in phases (i.e., design phase and construction phase) or up front in the amount of the entire estimated final assessment roll, whichever means is estimated to provide the lowest overall cost to the project as determined by the Finance and Asset Management Department.

- H. **Non-Utility CIP Maintenance and Operating (M&O) Costs:** Proposals for CIP project funding shall include the estimated future M&O cost, to provide full cost disclosure. Such M&O costs anticipated to be incurred in the upcoming biennium should be included in operating budget proposals for funding consideration. As of 2011, funding for existing CIP M&O is provided by a distribution of the City's Sales Tax revenue, split between 75 percent General Fund and 25 percent CIP. The dollar amount for CIP M&O is adjusted upward each year by the anticipated Consumer Price Index for all Urban Consumers (CPI-U) after first making any necessary adjustments (e.g., partial vs full-year costs) and eliminating any one-time items. The distribution amounts should be reviewed periodically by the council for reasonableness and potential adjustment.
- I. **Preserve Existing Capital Infrastructure Before Building New Facilities:** It is the City's policy to ensure that adequate resources are allocated to preserve the City's existing infrastructure before targeting resources to build new facilities that also have operating and maintenance obligations. This policy addresses the need to protect the City's historical investment in capital facilities and to avoid embarking on a facility enhancement program, which when coupled with the existing facilities requirements, the City cannot afford to adequately maintain.
- J. **New Facilities Should Be of High Quality, Low Maintenance, Least Cost:** This policy has guided the development and execution of the CIP Plan through an emphasis on lowest life-cycle cost. Projects should only be built if the necessary funding to operate them is provided. Also, priority is given to new facilities that have minimal ongoing maintenance costs to limit the impact upon both the CIP and the operating budget.



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- K. **Public Input for Capital Projects:** The City makes a serious commitment to public involvement. All the City's long-range plans have been developed through an extensive citizen involvement program. Citizen involvement occurs at the long-range plan development stage, during CIP review and adoption, during master planning processes, during design and construction of specific projects, and through public processes associated with city boards and commissions. Public hearings are held during the CIP Plan development process to allow the public to comment on the recommended projects. The projects themselves call for an extensive public outreach effort, allowing those most closely effected to influence the design of the projects. While public input is essential to the successful implementation of the CIP Plan, staff and the council must also remain conscious of the overall effect upon costs when responding to requests of project neighbors.
- L. **Basis for Project Appropriations:** During the City Council's biennial CIP Plan review, the City Council will appropriate the estimated project costs for the biennium for all projects in the CIP Plan. Subsequent adjustments to appropriation levels for amendments to the CIP Plan may be made by the City Council at any time.
- M. **Balanced CIP Plan:** The CIP Plan is a balanced seven-year plan. This means that for the entire seven-year period, revenues will be equal to project expenditures in the Plan. It is anticipated that the plan will have more expenditures than revenues in single years of the Plan, but this imbalance will be corrected using interim financing as needed. However, over the life of the seven-year plan, all planned interim debt will be repaid and all Plan expenditures, including interest costs on interim debt will be provided for with identified revenues. Any project funding plan, in which debt is not retired within the current seven-year Plan, must have specific City Council approval.
- N. **Use of Debt in the CIP:** The CIP is viewed as a long-term program that will continually address capital requirements far into the future. As such, the use of long-term debt has been minimized, allowing the City to put money into actual projects that benefit Bellevue residents and businesses rather than into interest payments to financial institutions. To that end, this policy limits debt to short-term obligations, primarily for cash flow purposes. Debt incurred will be paid back before the end of the current CIP. Finance and Asset Management staff monitors CIP cash flow regularly and utilize fund balances to minimize the amount of borrowing required. Projected financing costs are included within a project in the General Government program area. There are exceptions to this policy for extraordinary circumstances, where councilmanic or voted long-term debt have been issued to achieve major City goals that otherwise could not have been achieved or would have been delayed an unacceptable amount of time.
- O. **Finance and Asset Management Director's Authority to Borrow:** The Finance and Asset Management Director is authorized to initiate interim and long-term borrowing measures, as they become necessary, as identified in the current CIP Plan.



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- P. CIP Plan Update and Amendment: The CIP Plan will be updated at least biennially as a part of the City's biennial budget process. The City Council may amend the CIP Plan at any time if a decision must be made and action must be taken before the next CIP review period. The City Council has delegated authority to the City Manager to administratively approve CIP Plan adjustments, except for changes in project scope or changes that total more than 10 percent of a project's adopted CIP Plan budget (unless a 10 percent adjustment is less than \$10,000), or regardless of the percentage, budget changes totaling more than \$100,000. The council has further authorized the City Manager to administratively approve the acceleration of project schedules so long as they can be accomplished without causing cash flow problems and with the understanding that any controversial issues would be brought before the City Council. All project additions or deletions must be approved by the City Council.
- Q. Formalization of Monetary Agreements: All agreements between the City and outside jurisdictions shall be in writing specifying the financial terms of the agreement, the length of the agreement, and the timing of any required payments. Formalization of these agreements will protect the City's interests. Program areas shall make every effort to promptly request any reimbursements that are due the City. Where revenues from outside jurisdictions are ongoing, these requests shall be made at least quarterly, unless alternative arrangements are approved by the City Manager or City Council.
- R. Projected Grant Revenues: At the Finance and Asset Management Director's discretion, grant-funded capital expenditures are budgeted prior to the specific grant award. City overhead or indirect costs for grant-funded programs will be included in all grant proposals, where permitted. With grant-funded capital acquisitions, the city will attempt to recover ongoing M&O costs, and replacement costs associated with the acquisition.
- S. Projected Revenues from Future Land Sales: The City recognizes that City-owned land is an asset that can be sold to finance CIP projects. With this in mind, the City shall cautiously allow land sale proceeds to be used as a funding source by program areas that have oversight responsibility for the land. The land shall be valued based on an appraisal performed either by the Civic Services or an outside appraisal company. A conservative value shall be used to provide a cushion for economic shifts. The timing of the proceeds shall be estimated based on the length of time the property is likely to be on the market. However, if the land does not sell in a timely manner or its value turns out to be overestimated, then the program area must either reallocate revenue sources from other projects within its area, find an agreeable replacement funding source, or cease work on the project, if possible.
- T. Land Sale Remnants: The City is frequently left with property remnants following the completion of a project that required rights-of-way (ROW) acquisition. These remnants represent an asset to the program area that purchased them. If the project selling the land remnants is still active, the revenue from the sale shall be receipted as land sale proceeds in the project, therefore serving to partially offset the ROW acquisition costs. If the project is already completed at the time of the remnant sale, the land sale proceeds can either be used by the selling program area to help fund



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another of that program area's projects, or they can be deposited in the Land Purchase Revolving Fund for future use by the purchasing program area.

- U. **Applicable Project Charges:** CIP projects should reflect all costs that can be clearly shown to be necessary and applicable. Staff charges to CIP projects will be limited to time spent actually working on those projects and shall include an overhead factor to cover the applicable portion of that person's operating cost.

XII. Intergovernmental Revenues

Many service costs of the City are influenced by other governments, either because of service overlap or service mandates imposed by the county, state, or federal government. The City should take advantage of opportunities to enhance service delivery through intergovernmental cooperation, shared revenues, and grants while aggressively opposing mandates that distort local service priorities.

- A. **Grants Should Not Fund Ongoing Services:** The City will refrain from using grants to meet ongoing service delivery needs. In the City's financial planning, grants will be treated in the same manner as all other temporary and uncertain resources and will not be used to fund ongoing, basic service needs. With grant-funded capital acquisitions, the City will attempt to recover ongoing maintenance and operating costs, and replacement costs associated with the acquisition.
- B. **Grant Agreements Reviewed for Compliance with Regulations:** All grant agreements will be reviewed by the appropriate city staff, including Finance and Asset Management, City Attorney's Office, and sponsoring department, to ensure compliance with state, federal, and city regulations.
- C. **Budgeting for Grant Expenditures:** At the City Manager's discretion, grant-funded capital expenditures are budgeted prior to the specific grant award. City overhead or indirect costs for grant-funded programs will be included in all grant proposals, where permitted. With grant-funded capital acquisitions, the City will attempt to recover ongoing maintenance and operating costs, and replacement costs associated with the acquisition.
- D. **Protecting the City's Interests:** The City will aggressively oppose state or federal actions that mandate expenditures that the City Council considers unnecessary. The City will pursue intergovernmental funding to support the incremental cost of those mandates.
- E. **Intergovernmental Agreements:** The City will work with other governments to identify the jurisdiction most capable and appropriate to provide specific public services. All intergovernmental agreements and contracts for service delivery will be brought forward to the City Council for approval.

XIII. Accounting, Auditing & Financial Reporting Policies

The City shall maintain a system of financial monitoring, control, and reporting for all operations and funds to provide effective means of ensuring that overall city goals and objectives are met.

- A. **Accounting Records and Reporting:** The City will maintain its accounting records in



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accordance with state and federal law and regulations. Budgetary reporting will be in accordance with the state's budget laws and regulations. The City will report its financial condition and results of operations in accordance with state regulations and generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) applicable to governments.

- B. Auditing: The State Auditor will annually perform the City's financial and compliance audit. Their opinions will be contained in the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). Results of the annual audit shall be provided to the council in a timely manner.
- C. Excellence in Financial Reporting: As an additional independent confirmation of the quality of the City's financial reporting, the City will annually seek to obtain the Government Finance Officers Association Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The ACFR will be presented in a way designed to communicate with citizens about the financial affairs of the City.
- D. Simplified Fund Structure: The City will minimize the number of funds. The funds will be categorized in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) for reporting purposes, although some funds may be functional classifications but may also be referred to by City of Bellevue fund types.

XIV. Investment Policy

The City shall maintain a current investment policy.

As an additional independent confirmation of the integrity of the City's Investment Policy, the City's policy has been certified by the Municipal Treasurers' Association of the United States and Canada.

XV. Debt Management Policy

The City shall maintain a current debt policy.

XVI. Budget Ordinances and Resolutions

To view current Ordinances and Resolutions please visit:

<http://www.codepublishing.com/WA/Bellevue/?BellevueOT.html>

- Ordinance 6689, Human Services Funding
- Ordinance 6690, Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
- Ordinance 6691, Behavioral Health and Housing-Related Housing Stability Program
- Ordinance 6692, Updating Development Services Fees
- Ordinance 6693, Water Rates and Charges
- Ordinance 6694, Sewer Rates and Charges
- Ordinance 6695, Storm and Surface Water Rates and Charges
- Ordinance 6696, Business and Occupation Tax
- Ordinance 6697, 2023 Property Taxes



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- Ordinance 6698, 2023-2024 Budget and 2023-2029 CIP Budget Adoption
- Resolution 10164, Banking of the Maximum Amount of Levy Capacity



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Sections:

- 35A.34.010 Legislative intent
- 35A.34.020 Application of chapter
- 35A.34.030 Definitions
- 35A.34.040 Biennial budget authorized -- Limitations
- 35A.34.050 Budget estimates -- Submittal
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- 35A.34.240 Funds -- Quarterly report of status
- 35A.34.250 Contingency fund -- Creation
- 35A.34.260 Contingency fund -- Withdrawals
- 35A.34.270 Unexpended appropriations
- 35A.34.280 Violations and penalties

35A.34.010 Legislative intent

See RCW 35.34.010.

35A.34.020 Application of chapter

This chapter applies to all code cities which have by ordinance adopted this chapter authorizing the adoption of a fiscal biennium budget. [1985 c 175 § 34.]

35A.34.030 Definitions

Unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.



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1. "Clerk" includes the officer performing the functions of a finance or budget director, comptroller, auditor, or by whatever title the officer may be known in any code city.
2. "Department" includes each office, division, service, system, or institution of the city for which no other statutory or charter provision is made for budgeting and accounting procedures or controls.
3. "Legislative body" includes the council, commission, or any other group of officials serving as the legislative body of a code city.
4. "Chief administrative officer" includes the mayor of cities having a mayor-council plan of government, the commissioners in cities having a commission plan of government, the manager, or any other city official designated by the charter or ordinances of such city under the plan of government governing the same, or the budget or finance officer designated by the mayor, manager, or commissioners, to perform the functions, or portions thereof, contemplated by this chapter.
5. "Fiscal biennium" means the period from January 1 of each odd-numbered year through December 31 of the next succeeding even-numbered year.
6. "Fund" and "funds" where clearly used to indicate the plural of "fund" means the budgeting or accounting entity authorized to provide a sum of money for specified activities or purposes.
7. "Funds" where not used to indicate the plural of "fund" means money in hand or available for expenditure or payment of a debt or obligation.
8. Except as otherwise defined in this chapter, municipal accounting terms used in this chapter have the meaning prescribed by the state auditor pursuant to RCW 43.09.200. [1985 c 175 § 35.]

35A.34.040 Biennial budget authorized – Limitations

All code cities are authorized to establish by ordinance a two-year fiscal biennium budget. The ordinance shall be enacted at least six months prior to commencement of the fiscal biennium and this chapter applies to all code cities which utilize a fiscal biennium budget. Code cities which establish a fiscal biennium budget are authorized to repeal such ordinance and provide for reversion to a fiscal year budget. The ordinance may only be repealed effective as of the conclusion of a fiscal biennium. However, the city shall comply with chapter 35A.33 RCW in developing and adopting the budget for the first fiscal year following repeal of the ordinance. [1985 c 175 § 36.]

35A.34.050 Budget estimates – Submittal

On or before the second Monday of the fourth month prior to the beginning of the city's next fiscal biennium, or at such other time as the city may provide by ordinance or charter, the clerk shall notify in writing the head of each department of a city to file with the clerk within fourteen days of the receipt of such notification, detailed estimates of the probable revenue from sources



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other than ad valorem taxation and of all expenditures required by the department for the ensuing fiscal biennium. The notice shall be accompanied by the proper forms provided by the clerk, prepared in accordance with the requirements and classification established by the state auditor. The clerk shall prepare the estimates for interest and debt redemption requirements and all other estimates, the preparation of which falls properly within the duties of the clerk's office. The chief administrative officers of the city shall submit to the clerk detailed estimates of all expenditures proposed to be financed from the proceeds of bonds or warrants not yet authorized, together with a statement of the proposed method of financing them. In the absence or disability of the official or person regularly in charge of a department, the duties required by this section shall devolve upon the person next in charge of such department. [1995 c 301 § 55; 1985 c 175 § 37.]

35A.34.050 Budget estimates – Classification and segregation

On or before the second Monday of the fourth month prior to the beginning of the city's next fiscal biennium, or at such other time as the city may provide by ordinance or charter, the clerk shall notify in writing the head of each department of a city to file with the clerk within fourteen days of the receipt of such notification, detailed estimates of the probable revenue from sources other than ad valorem taxation and of all expenditures required by the department for the ensuing fiscal biennium. The notice shall be accompanied by the proper forms provided by the clerk, prepared in accordance with the requirements and classification established by the state auditor. The clerk shall prepare the estimates for interest and debt redemption requirements and all other estimates, the preparation of which falls properly within the duties of the clerk's office. The chief administrative officers of the city shall submit to the clerk detailed estimates of all expenditures proposed to be financed from the proceeds of bonds or warrants not yet authorized, together with a statement of the proposed method of financing them. In the absence or disability of the official or person regularly in charge of a department, the duties required by this section shall devolve upon the person next in charge of such department. [1995 c 301 § 55; 1985 c 175 § 37.]

35A.34.060 Budget estimates — Classification and segregation

All estimates of receipts and expenditures for the ensuing fiscal biennium shall be fully detailed in the biennial budget and shall be classified and segregated according to a standard classification of accounts to be adopted and prescribed by the state auditor after consultation with the Washington finance officers association, the association of Washington cities, and the association of Washington city managers. [1995 c 301 § 56; 1985 c 175 § 38.]

35A.34.070 Proposed preliminary budget

On or before the first business day in the third month prior to the beginning of the biennium of a city or at such other time as the city may provide by ordinance or charter, the clerk or other person designated by the charter, by ordinances, or by the chief administrative officer of the city shall submit to the chief administrative officer a proposed preliminary budget which shall set forth the complete financial program of the city for the ensuing fiscal biennium, showing the expenditure program requested by each department and the sources of revenue by which each such program is proposed to be financed.



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The revenue section shall set forth in comparative and tabular form for each fund the actual receipts for the last completed fiscal biennium, the estimated receipts for the current fiscal biennium, and the estimated receipts for the ensuing fiscal biennium, which shall include the amount to be raised from ad valorem taxes and unencumbered fund balances estimated to be available at the close of the current fiscal biennium. However, if the city was not utilizing a fiscal biennium budget for the previous three years, it shall set forth its fiscal years' revenues to reflect actual and estimated receipts as if it had previously utilized a biennial budgetary process.

The expenditure section shall set forth in comparative and tabular form for each fund and every department operating within each fund the actual expenditures for the last completed fiscal biennium, the appropriations for the current fiscal biennium, and the estimated expenditures for the ensuing fiscal biennium. However, if the city was not utilizing a fiscal biennium budget for the previous three years, it shall set forth its fiscal years' expenditures to reflect actual and estimated levels as if it had previously utilized a biennial budgetary process. The expenditure section shall further set forth separately the salary or salary range for each office, position, or job classification together with the title or position designation thereof. However, salaries may be set out in total amounts under each department if a detailed schedule of such salaries and positions be attached and made a part of the budget document. [1985 c 175 § 39.]

35A.34.080 Preliminary budget

The chief administrative officer shall prepare the preliminary budget in detail, making any revisions or additions to the reports of the department heads deemed advisable by such chief administrative officer. At least sixty days before the beginning of the city's next fiscal biennium the chief administrative officer shall file it with the clerk as the recommendation of the chief administrative officer for the final budget. The clerk shall provide a sufficient number of copies of such preliminary budget and budget message to meet the reasonable demands of taxpayers therefore and have them available for distribution not later than six weeks before the beginning of the city's next fiscal biennium. [1985 c 175 § 40.]

35A.34.090 Budget message — Hearings

1. In every city, a budget message prepared by or under the direction of the city's chief administrative officer shall be submitted as a part of the preliminary budget to the city's legislative body at least sixty days before the beginning of the city's next fiscal biennium and shall contain the following:
 - a. An explanation of the budget document;
 - b. An outline of the recommended financial policies and programs of the city for the ensuing fiscal biennium;
 - c. A statement of the relation of the recommended appropriation to such policies and programs;
 - d. A statement of the reason for salient changes from the previous biennium in appropriation and revenue items; and



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- e. An explanation for any recommended major changes in financial policy.
2. Prior to the final hearing on the budget, the legislative body or a committee thereof shall schedule hearings on the budget or parts thereof, and may require the presence of department heads to give information regarding estimates and programs. [1985 c 175 § 41.]

35A.34.100 Budget — Notice of hearing

Immediately following the filing of the preliminary budget with the clerk, the clerk shall publish a notice once a week for two consecutive weeks stating that the preliminary budget for the ensuing fiscal biennium has been filed with the clerk, that a copy thereof will be made available to any taxpayer who will call at the clerk's office therefor, that the legislative body of the city will meet on or before the first Monday of the month next preceding the beginning of the ensuing fiscal biennium for the purpose of fixing the final budget, designating the date, time, and place of the legislative budget meeting, and that any taxpayer may appear thereat and be heard for or against any part of the budget. The publication of the notice shall be made in the official newspaper of the city if there is one, otherwise in a newspaper of general circulation in the city. If there is no newspaper of general circulation in the city, then notice may be made by posting in three public places fixed by ordinance as the official places for posting the city's official notices. [1985 c 175 § 42.]

35A.34.110 Budget — Hearing

The legislative body shall meet on the day fixed by RCW 35A.34.100 for the purpose of fixing the final budget of the city at the time and place designated in the notice thereof. Any taxpayer may appear and be heard for or against any part of the budget. The hearing may be continued from day to day but not later than the twenty-fifth day prior to commencement of the city's fiscal biennium. [1985 c 175 § 43.]

35A.34.120 Budget — Adoption

Following conclusion of the hearing, and prior to the beginning of the fiscal biennium, the legislative body shall make such adjustments and changes as it deems necessary or proper and, after determining the allowance in each item, department, classification, and fund, shall by ordinance adopt the budget in its final form and content. Appropriations shall be limited to the total estimated revenues contained therein including the amount to be raised by ad valorem taxes and the unencumbered fund balances estimated to be available at the close of the current fiscal biennium. Such ordinances may adopt the final budget by reference. However, the ordinance adopting the budget shall set forth in summary form the totals of estimated revenues and appropriations for each separate fund and the aggregate totals for all such funds combined.

A complete copy of the final budget as adopted shall be transmitted to the state auditor and to the association of Washington cities. [1995 c 301 § 57; 1985 c 175 § 44.]



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35A.34.130 Budget — Mid-biennial review and modification

The legislative authority of a city having adopted the provisions of this chapter shall provide by ordinance for a mid-biennial review and modification of the biennial budget. The ordinance shall provide that such review and modification shall occur no sooner than eight months after the start nor later than conclusion of the first year of the fiscal biennium. The chief administrative officer shall prepare the proposed budget modification and shall provide for publication of notice of hearings consistent with publication of notices for adoption of other city ordinances. City ordinances providing for a mid-biennium review and modification shall establish procedures for distribution of the proposed modification to members of the city legislative authority, procedures for making copies available to the public, and shall provide for public hearings on the proposed budget modification. The budget modification shall be by ordinance approved in the same manner as are other ordinances of the city.

A complete copy of the budget modification as adopted shall be transmitted to the state auditor and to the association of Washington cities. [1995 c 301 § 58; 1985 c 175 § 45.]

35A.34.140 Emergency expenditures — Nondebtable emergencies

Upon the happening of any emergency caused by violence of nature, casualty, riot, insurrection, war, or other unanticipated occurrence requiring the immediate preservation of order or public health, or for the property which has been damaged or destroyed by accident, or for public relief from calamity, or in settlement of approved claims for personal injuries or property damages, or to meet mandatory expenditures required by law enacted since the last budget was adopted, or to cover expenses incident to preparing for or establishing a new form of government authorized or assumed after adoption of the current budget, including any expenses incident to selection of additional or new officials required thereby, or incident to employee recruitment at any time, the city legislative body, upon the adoption of an ordinance, by the vote of one more than the majority of all members of the legislative body, stating the facts constituting the emergency and the estimated amount required to meet it, may make the expenditures therefor without notice or hearing. [1985 c 175 § 46.]

35A.34.150 Emergency expenditures — Other emergencies — Hearing

If a public emergency which could not reasonably have been foreseen at the time of filing the preliminary budget requires the expenditure of money not provided for in the budget, and if it is not one of the emergencies specifically enumerated in RCW 35A.34.140, the city legislative body before allowing any expenditure therefore shall adopt an ordinance stating the facts constituting the emergency and the estimated amount required to meet it and declaring that an emergency exists.

The ordinance shall not be voted on until five days have elapsed after its introduction, and for passage shall require the vote of one more than the majority of all members of the legislative body of the city.

Any taxpayer may appear at the meeting at which the emergency ordinance is to be voted on and be heard for or against the adoption thereof. [1985 c 175 § 47.]



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35A.34.160 Emergency expenditures — Warrants — Payment

All expenditures for emergency purposes as provided in this chapter shall be paid by warrants from any available money in the fund properly chargeable with such expenditures. If, at any time, there is insufficient money on hand in a fund with which to pay such warrants as presented, the warrants shall be registered, bear interest, and be called in the same manner as other registered warrants as prescribed in RCW 35A.21.110. [1985 c 175 § 48.]

35A.34.170 Registered warrants — Payment

In adopting the final budget for any fiscal biennium, the legislative body shall appropriate from estimated revenue sources available, a sufficient amount to pay the principal and interest on all outstanding registered warrants issued since the adoption of the last preceding budget except those issued and identified as revenue warrants and except those for which an appropriation previously has been made. However, no portion of the revenues which are restricted in use by law may be appropriated for the redemption of warrants issued against a utility or other special purpose fund of a self-supporting nature. In addition, all or any portion of the city's outstanding registered warrants may be funded into bonds in any manner authorized by law. [1985 c 175 § 49.]

35A.34.180 Adjustment of wages, hours and conditions of employment

Notwithstanding the appropriations for any salary or salary range of any employee or employees adopted in a final budget, the legislative body of any city may, by ordinance, change the wages, hours, and conditions of employment of any or all of its appointive employees if sufficient funds are available for appropriation to such purposes. [1985 c 175 § 50.]

35A.34.190 Forms — Accounting — Supervision by state

The state auditor is empowered to make and install the forms and classifications required by this chapter to define what expenditures are chargeable to each budget class and to establish the accounting and cost systems necessary to secure accurate budget information. [1995 c 301 § 59; 1985 c 175 § 51.]

35A.34.200 Funds — Limitations on expenditures — Transfers and adjustments

1. The expenditures as classified and itemized in the final budget shall constitute the city's appropriations for the ensuing fiscal biennium. Unless otherwise ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction, and subject to further limitations imposed by ordinance of the city, the expenditure of city funds or the incurring of current liabilities on behalf of the city shall be limited to the following:
 - a. The total amount appropriated for each fund in the budget for the current fiscal biennium, without regard to the individual items contained therein, except that this limitation does not apply to wage adjustments authorized by RCW 35A.34.180;
 - b. The unexpended appropriation balances of a preceding budget which may be carried



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- forward from prior fiscal periods pursuant to RCW 35A.34.270;
- c. Funds received from the sale of bonds or warrants which have been duly authorized according to law;
 - d. Funds received in excess of estimated revenues during the current fiscal biennium, when authorized by an ordinance amending the original budget; and
 - e. Expenditures authorized by budget modification as provided by RCW 35A.34.130 and those required for emergencies, as authorized by RCW 35A.34.140 and 35A.34.150.
2. Transfers between individual appropriations within any one fund may be made during the current fiscal biennium by order of the city's chief administrative officer subject to such regulations, if any, as may be imposed by the city legislative body. Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 43.09.210 or of any statute to the contrary, transfers, as authorized in this section, may be made within the same fund regardless of the various offices, departments, or divisions of the city which may be affected.
 3. The city legislative body, upon a finding that it is to the best interests of the city to decrease, revoke, or recall all or any portion of the total appropriations provided for any one fund, may, by ordinance, approved by the vote of one more than the majority of all members thereof, stating the facts and findings for doing so, decrease, revoke, or recall all or any portion of an unexpended fund balance, and by said ordinance, or a subsequent ordinance adopted by a like majority, the moneys thus released may be reappropriated for another purpose or purposes, without limitation to department, division, or fund, unless the use of such moneys is otherwise restricted by law, charter, or ordinance. [1985 c 175 § 52.]

35A.34.205 Administration, oversight, or supervision of utility — Reimbursement from utility budget authorized

Whenever any code city apportions a percentage of the city manager's, administrator's, or supervisor's time, or the time of other management or general government staff, for administration, oversight, or supervision of a utility operated by the city, or to provide services to the utility, the utility budget may identify such services and budget for reimbursement of the city's current expense fund for the value of such services. [1991 c 152 § 4.]

35A.34.210 Liabilities incurred in excess of budget

Liabilities incurred by any officer or employee of the city in excess of any budget appropriations shall not be a liability of the city. The clerk shall issue no warrant and the city legislative body or other authorized person shall approve no claim for an expenditure in excess of the total amount appropriated for any individual fund, except upon an order of a court of competent jurisdiction or for emergencies as provided in this chapter. [1985 c 175 § 53.]



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35A.34.220 Funds received from sales of bonds and warrants — Expenditures

Moneys received from the sale of bonds or warrants shall be used for no other purpose than that for which they were issued and no expenditure shall be made for that purpose until the bonds have been duly authorized. If any unexpended fund balance remains from the proceeds realized from the bonds or warrants after the accomplishment of the purpose for which they were issued, it shall be used for the redemption of such bond or warrant indebtedness. Where a budget contains an expenditure program to be financed from a bond issue to be authorized thereafter, no such expenditure shall be made or incurred until after the bonds have been duly authorized.

[1985 c 175 § 54.]

35A.34.230 Revenue estimates — Amount to be raised by ad valorem taxes

At a time fixed by the city's ordinance or city charter, not later than the first Monday in October of the second year of each fiscal biennium, the chief administrative officer shall provide the city's legislative body with current information on estimates of revenues from all sources as adopted in the budget for the current biennium, together with estimates submitted by the clerk under RCW 35A.34.070. The city's legislative body and the city's administrative officer or the officer's designated representative shall consider the city's total anticipated financial requirements for the ensuing fiscal biennium, and the legislative body shall determine and fix by ordinance the amount to be raised the first year of the biennium by ad valorem taxes. The legislative body shall review such information as is provided by the chief administrative officer and shall adopt an ordinance establishing the amount to be raised by ad valorem taxes during the second year of the biennium. Upon adoption of the ordinance fixing the amount of ad valorem taxes to be levied, the clerk shall certify the same to the county legislative authority as required by RCW 84.52.020.

[1985 c 175 § 55.]

35A.34.240 Funds — Quarterly report of status

At such intervals as may be required by city charter or city ordinance, however, being not less than quarterly, the clerk shall submit to the city's legislative body and chief administrative officer a report showing the expenditures and liabilities against each separate budget appropriation incurred during the preceding reporting period and like information for the whole of the current fiscal biennium to the first day of the current reporting period together with the unexpended balance of each appropriation. The report shall also show the receipts from all sources. [1985 c 175 § 56.]

35A.34.250 Contingency fund — Creation

Every city may create and maintain a contingency fund to provide moneys with which to meet any municipal expense, the necessity or extent of which could not have been foreseen or reasonably evaluated at the time of adopting the annual budget, or from which to provide moneys for those emergencies described in RCW 35A.34.140 and 35A.34.150. Such fund may be supported by a budget appropriation from any tax or other revenue source not restricted in use by law, or also may be supported by a transfer from other unexpended or decreased funds made available by ordinance as set forth in RCW 35A.34.200. However, the total amount accumulated



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in such fund at any time shall not exceed the equivalent of thirty-seven and one-half cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation of property within the city at such time. Any moneys in the emergency fund at the end of the fiscal biennium shall not lapse except upon reappropriation by the council to another fund in the adoption of a subsequent budget. [1985 c 175 § 57.]

35A.34.260 Contingency fund — Withdrawals

No money shall be withdrawn from the contingency fund except by transfer to the appropriate operating fund authorized by a resolution or ordinance of the legislative body of the city, adopted by a majority vote of the entire legislative body, clearly stating the facts constituting the reason for the withdrawal or the emergency as the case may be, specifying the fund to which the withdrawn money shall be transferred. [1985 c 175 § 58.]

35A.34.270 Unexpended appropriations

All appropriations in any current operating fund shall lapse at the end of each fiscal biennium. However, this shall not prevent payments in the following biennium upon uncompleted programs or improvements in progress or on orders subsequently filled or claims subsequently billed for the purchase of material, equipment, and supplies or for personal or contractual services not completed or furnished by the end of the fiscal biennium, all of which have been properly budgeted and contracted for prior to the close of such fiscal biennium, but furnished or completed in due course thereafter.

All appropriations in a special fund authorized by ordinance or by state law to be used only for the purpose or purposes therein specified, including any cumulative reserve funds lawfully established in specific or general terms for any municipal purpose or purposes, or a contingency fund as authorized by RCW 35A.34.250, shall not lapse, but shall be carried forward from biennium to biennium until fully expended or the purpose has been accomplished or abandoned, without necessity of reappropriation.

The accounts for budgetary control for each fiscal biennium shall be kept open for twenty days after the close of such fiscal biennium for the purpose of paying and recording claims for indebtedness incurred during such fiscal biennium; any claim presented after the twentieth day following the close of the fiscal biennium shall be paid from appropriations lawfully provided for the ensuing period, including those made available by provisions of this section, and shall be recorded in the accounts for the ensuing fiscal biennium. [1985 c 175 § 59.]

35A.34.280 Violations and penalties

Upon the conviction of any city official, department head, or other city employee of knowingly failing, or refusing, without just cause, to perform any duty imposed upon such officer or employee by this chapter, or city charter or city ordinance, in connection with the giving of notice, the preparing and filing of estimates of revenues or expenditures or other information required for preparing a budget report in the time and manner required, or of knowingly making expenditures in excess of budget appropriations, the official or employee shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars for each separate violation. [1985 c 175 § 60.]



2023-2024 Budget

Waterworks Utility

Financial Policies



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

2023-2024 Administrative Updates

The Waterworks Utility Financial Policies reflect the following proposed updates as part of the 2023-2024 Budget process:

III. System Expansion and Connection Policies

Section C. Use of Revenues

No change is made to the Council-adopted policy. In January 2022 City Council adopted Ordinances 6640, 6641, and 6642 relating to waiver of connection charges for affordable housing. These ordinances added the option for property owners to, at their discretion, pay the amount of Capital Recovery Charges in full. Discussion is updated to reflect this change.

Section D. Affordable Housing Consideration

In January 2022 City Council adopted Ordinances 6640, 6641, and 6642 relating to waiver of connection charges for affordable housing. The newly adopted policy described in the ordinances replaces the prior language in this section.

IV. RATE POLICIES

Section F. Rate Structures - Water

No change is made to the Council-adopted policy. Discussion is updated to reflect current practices.

Section H. Rate Uniformity

No change is made to the Council-adopted policy. Discussion is updated to reflect current state law.

V. OPERATING RESERVE POLICIES

Section A. Operating Reserve Levels

No change is made to the Council-adopted policy. Summary of Recommended Reserve Levels is updated to reflect proposed 2023-2024 budget.

Section B. Management of Operating Reserves

No change is made to the Council-adopted policy. Discussion is updated to clarify definitions of target and minimum reserves.



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

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Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

Introduction

The Waterworks Utility is the financial consolidation of the Sewer, Storm & Surface Water and Water Utilities of the City of Bellevue for debt rating and coverage purposes as established in Ordinance No.'s 2169, 2845, 3158 and 4568. It pledges the strengths and revenues of the three separate Utilities for the common financial good while keeping each Utility financially separate for budgeting, rate-setting, revenues, expenditures, debt and accounting.

These "Financial Policies" apply uniformly to the Sewer, Storm & Surface Water and Water Utilities with few, unique exceptions which are identified separately. This update reflects changes consistent with current long-range financial planning, particularly with regard to renewal and replacement funding, the use of debt and rate policies. They supersede the Financial Policies, which were adopted under Resolution No. 5967 in 1995.

These policies do not stand-alone. They must be taken in context with the other major City and Utilities documents and processes. For instance, each Utility has its own System Plan, which documents its unique objectives, planning, operations and capital needs. These System Plans have historically had a 20-year planning horizon. Future System Plans will need to evaluate long term renewal and replacement of aging facilities, much of which were constructed in the 1950's and 1960's during periods of high growth rates and are approaching the end of their useful life. Life cycle costs should be considered in planning the future capital facilities and infrastructure needs.

The Utility has a seven-year Capital Investment Program (CIP) Plan which is updated with each biennial budget cycle. These CIP programs include specific near-term capital projects that are consistent with each Utility System Plan and are developed in response to system needs for renewal and rehabilitation, system capacity to accommodate growth, and other system needs. Generally, capital projects are described as over \$100,000, involving development of new physical infrastructure, reconstruction of existing infrastructure, acquisition of land or existing facilities, and involving City funding or other agency funding when project implementation is the responsibility of the City.

I. General Policies

A. Fiscal Stewardship

The Waterworks Utility funds and resources shall be managed in a professional manner in accordance with applicable laws, standards, City financial practices and these Financial Policies.

Discussion:

It is incumbent on Utility management to provide professional fiscal management of utility funds and resources. This requires thorough knowledge of and conformance with



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

the City financial management processes and systems as well as applicable laws and standards. It also requires on-going monitoring of revenues and expenses in order to make decisions and report to City officials, as needed, regarding the status of Utilities financing. Independent financial review, analysis and recommendations should be undertaken as needed.

B. Self-sufficient Funding

Each Utility shall remain a self-supporting enterprise fund.

Discussion:

The revenues to each Utility primarily come from customer charges dependent on established rates. State law requires that utility funds be used only for utility purposes. Since each Utility has somewhat differing service areas, it is essential for ratepayer equity that they be kept financially separate and accountable. The City's General Fund can legally contribute to the Utility funds but does not. The City budgeting process includes a balanced and controlled biennial Utility budget. This requires careful preparation of expense and revenue projections that will be reviewed by City management, the Environmental Services Commission, the general public and the City Council prior to approval of any change in Utility rates.

C. Comprehensive Planning Policies

The Water Utility System Plan shall be updated every ten years as required by state statute; the Wastewater and Storm & Surface Water System Plans shall be updated as required by changed conditions or regulatory requirements, between every six to ten years. All Utility system plans shall use a 20-year planning horizon or greater, and shall consider life cycle costs to identify funding needs. Studies to analyze specific geographic areas or issues, such as Storm & Surface Water sub-basin plans, Wastewater capacity and flow studies, or Water pressure zone studies and seismic impact will be completed as required using similar criteria for planning infrastructure needs.

Discussion

Substantial portions of the City utility systems were constructed in the 1950's and 1960's. These systems are approaching the end of their useful life as illustrated on the following Exhibit 1 - Watermain Replacement Spending and Exhibit 2 - Sewermain Replacement Spending. The storm & surface water infrastructure is of similar age but has not yet been graphed. It most likely has a relatively shorter expected life span. Asset assessment for all utility systems is an ongoing work priority. The Utility is implementing an asset management strategy that results in an infrastructure replacement schedule based upon age, condition, and the risk and consequence of failure, rather than a replacement schedule based on age alone. Assumptions for survivor curves and useful lives are revisited periodically. These were assessed in 2004



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

and updated for the most recent engineering and financial findings. Significant changes include the adjustment of replacement costs to current price levels, categorization of pipe assets based on expected useful lives, and replacement of major non-pipe Utility assets such as pump stations and reservoirs. The Exhibits illustrate an example survival replacement curve based on preliminary estimates only. As real needs are determined, they will replace the estimated curves. Renewal and/or replacement will require substantial reinvestment in the future and have major rate impacts if large portions of the systems have to be replaced in relatively short periods of time. The actual useful life of underground utilities is difficult to determine and the best available data is needed to be able to plan for the orderly and timely renewal and/or replacement. For this purpose, the comprehensive plans need to have at least 20 year planning horizons and must address the aging of the Utility systems.

Long term system planning for the Utility systems is required in order to assure that future financial needs are anticipated and equitable funding plans can be developed. In order to keep funding plans current, utility system plans need to be updated between six and ten years. State law requires ten years for water system plans. Wastewater system plans are not mandated to be updated on a prescribed cycle, however updating them between six and ten years is the common standard of practice. Stormwater system plans similarly have no state or federal mandate for updating, however with the implementation of the NPDES General Permit, it is reasonable to expect significant changes within two 5-year permit terms to warrant a system plan update. Depending on the significance of the changes, the Storm system plan may require updating sooner than after two 5-year permit cycles. These Financial Policies will be reviewed and updated as needed.

Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

Exhibit 1
Watermain Replacement Spending
(Based on 75-Year Expected Asset Life)

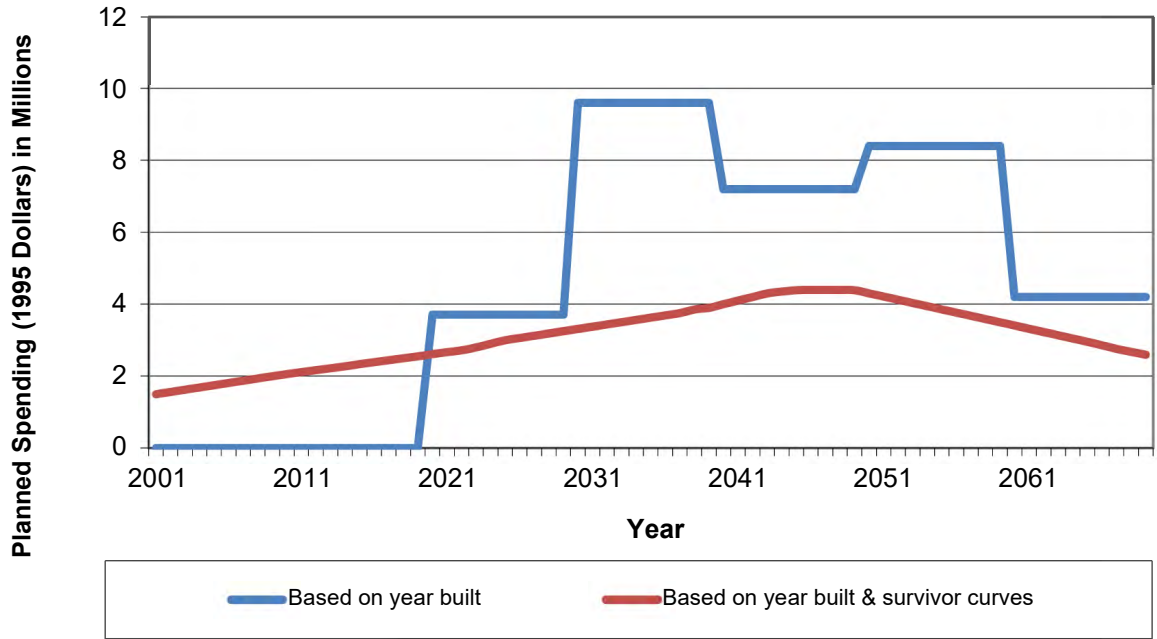
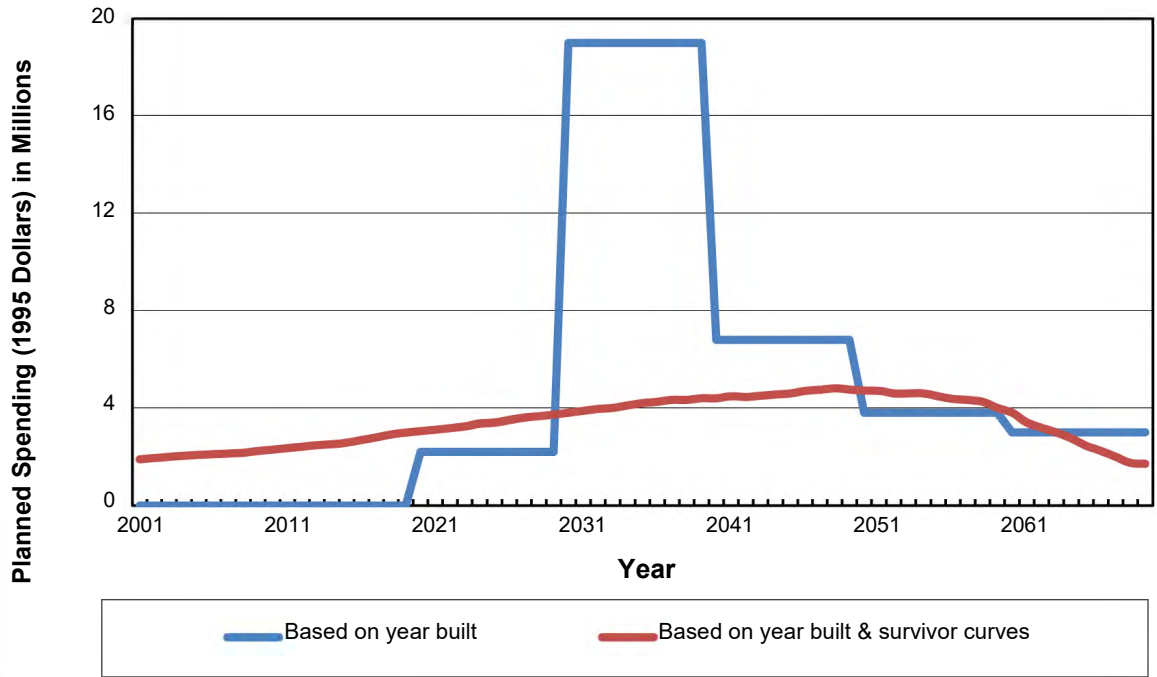


Exhibit 2
Sewermain Replacement Spending
(Based on 75-Year Expected Asset Life)





Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

II. CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAM POLICIES

A. General Scope

The Utilities Capital Investment Program (CIP) will provide sufficient funds from a variety of sources for implementation of both short- and long-term capital projects identified in each Utility System Plan and the City-wide Capital Investment Program as approved by the City Council.

Financial planning for long-term capital investment shall be based on principles that result in smooth rate transitions, maintain high credit ratings, provide for financial flexibility and achieve inter-generational equity.

Discussion:

These near-term capital projects are supported by each Utility system plan which provides guidance for prioritizing which projects to include in the 7-year CIP. Several programs of general scope are also included to allow for on-going projects that are less specifically identified due to their consistent scope within the program.

In addition to these near-term projects, funding should be provided for long-term capital reinvestment in the system to help minimize large rate impacts as the systems near the end of their useful life and have to be renewed or replaced. Ordinance No. 4783 (Attachment A) established a Capital Facilities Renewal & Replacement (R&R) Account for each Utility to provide a funding source for this purpose. Other policies describe how this Account is to be funded and expended.

A reinvestment policy by itself, without some form of planned and needed expenditure, could lead to excessive or unneeded expenditures, or conversely unnecessary accumulations of cash reserves. The reinvestment policy needs to tie the planned expenditures over time with a solid, long-term financial plan that is consistent with these policies.

The actual needs for the renewal/replacement expenditures should relate to the on-going need to minimize system maintenance and operating costs consistent with providing safe and reliable service, the age and condition of the system components, and any regulatory or technical drivers. In essence, infrastructure should be replaced when it is needed and before it fails. As such, the goal setting measure of how much is an appropriate annual or periodic reinvestment in renewals and replacement of existing assets should be compatible with the age and condition of the infrastructure and its particular circumstances.

B. Funding Levels

Funding for capital investments shall be sustained at a level sufficient to meet the



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projected 20 year (or longer) capital program costs.

Funding from rate revenues shall fund current construction and engineering costs, contributions to the Capital Facilities Renewal and Replacement (R&R) Account, and debt service, if any.

Inter-generational equity will be assured by making contributions to and withdrawals from the R&R Account in a manner which produces smooth rate transitions over a 20 year (or longer) planning period.

On an annual basis, funding should not fall below the current depreciation of assets expressed in terms of historical costs less any debt principal payments.

Discussion:

These policies are based on the experience gained by developing a long-term Capital Replacement Funding Plan. In absence of such a plan, the range of capital investment funding should fall between the following minimum and maximum levels:

The minimum annual rate funding level would be based on the current depreciation of assets expressed in terms of historical costs, less any debt principal payments.

The maximum annual rate funding level would be based on the current depreciation of assets expressed in terms of today's replacement costs, less any debt principal payments.

The minimum level based on historical cost depreciation approximates the depletion of asset value. Some of the cost may already be in the rates in the form of debt service. Depreciation less debt principal repayment provides a minimum estimate of the cost of assets used. Any funding level below this amount defers costs to future rate payers and erodes the Utility's equity position, which puts the Utility's financial strength and viability at risk.

The maximum level based on replacement cost depreciation represents full compensation to the utility, in terms of today's value, for the depletion of assets. The replacement cost depreciation, again less debt principal repayment, provides a ceiling to an equitable definition of "cost of service".

The purpose of long-term capital reinvestment planning is to establish a target funding level which is based on need and to assure that funds will be available for projected capital costs in an equitable manner. The best projection of the needed capital reinvestment is based on a "survival curve" approach, approximating the timing and cost



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of replacing the entire system. This defines the projected financial needs and allows determination of equitable rate levels, funding levels for current capital construction and engineering, contributions to and withdrawals from the R&R Account, and the use of debt, if any. It also provides a means to project depreciation on both historical cost and replacement cost basis which are used to calculate minimum and maximum funding levels, debt to fixed asset ratios, and debt coverage levels, if debt is used. These later measures can be used to assure that the financial plan meets conventional standards.

C. Use of Debt

The Utilities should fund capital investment from rates and other revenue sources and should not plan to use debt except to provide rate stability in the event of significantly changed circumstances, such as disasters or external mandates.

Resolution No. 5759 (Attachment B) states that the City Council will establish utility rates/charges and appropriations in a manner intended to achieve a debt service coverage ratio (adjusted by including City taxes as an expense item) of approximately 2.00. Please note that the Moody's Investor Services rating should be Aa2 (not Aa as stated in Resolution No. 5759).

Discussion:

The Utilities are in a strong financial position and have been funding the Utility Capital Investment Program from current revenues for a number of years. The current 20 year and 75 year capital funding plans conclude that the entire long-term renewal and replacement program can be funded without the use of debt if rates are planned and implemented uniformly over a sufficient period. Customers will pay less over the long-term if debt is avoided, unless it becomes truly necessary due to unforeseen circumstances such as a disaster or due to changes in external mandates. Having long-term rate stability also assures inter-generational equity without the use of debt because the rate pattern is similar to that achieved by debt service.

Use of low interest rate debt such as the Public Works Trust Fund loans, by offering repayment terms below market rates, investment earnings or even inflation, should be viewed as a form of grant funding. When available or approved, such sources should be preferred over other forms of rate or debt funding, including use of available resources. Since such reserves would generate more interest earnings than the cost of the loan, the City's customers would be assured to benefit from incurring such debt.

D. Capital Facilities Renewal & Replacement (R&R) Account

1. **Sources of Funds**

Revenues to the R&R Account may include planned and one-time transfers from the operating funds, transfers from the CIP Funds above current capital needs,



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

unplanned revenues from other sources, Capital Recovery Charges, Direct Facility Connection Charges and interest earned on the R&R Account.

2. Use of Funds

Funds from the R&R Account shall be used for system renewal and replacement as identified in the CIP. Because these funds are invested, they may be loaned for other purposes provided repayment is made consistent with the need for these funds and at appropriate interest rates. Under favorable conditions, these funds may be loaned to call or decrease outstanding debt.

3. Accumulation of Funds

The R&R Account will accumulate high levels of funds in advance of major expenses. These funds will provide rate stability over the long-term when used for this purpose and should not be used for rate relief.

Discussion:

Revenues from Capital Recovery Charges, Direct Facility Connection Charges and interest earned on the R&R Account are deposited directly into the R&R Account. Other transfers are dependent on the long-term financial forecast, current revenues and expenses, and CIP cash flows. The long-term financial forecast projects a certain funding level for the transfers to the CIP and the R&R Accounts. Rates should be established consistent with this long-term financial plan and will generate the funds for such transfers. Setting rates at lower levels may result in current rate payers contributing less than their fair share for long-term equity.

R&R Account funds must only be used for the purpose intended; that is, the long-term renewal and replacement of the utility systems. They may be used for other purposes if it is treated as a loan, which is repaid with appropriate interest in time for actual R&R needs for those funds.

These accounts are each projected to accumulate tens of millions of dollars in order to meet the anticipated costs for the actual projects at the time of construction. It is the intent of these policies that these reserve funds will not be used for other purposes or to provide rate relief because that would defeat the long-term equity and could lead to the need for the use of debt to fund the actual needs when they occur.



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

III. System Expansion and Connection Policies

A. Responsibilities

Those seeking or who are required to have Utility service are responsible for extending and/or upgrading the existing Utility systems prior to connecting.

Discussion:

It is the responsibility of the party seeking Utility service to make and pay for any extensions and/or upgrades to the Utility systems that are needed to provide service to their property. The extensions or upgrades must be constructed to City standards and requirements. This is typically accomplished through a Developer Extension Agreement with the City wherein requirements are documented, standards are established, plans are reviewed and construction is inspected and approved. Service will not be provided until these requirements are met.

The philosophical underpinning of this policy is that “growth pays for growth”. Historically, developers constructed much of the City’s utility infrastructure. If the infrastructure eventually would benefit more than the initial developer, the Utility signed a Latecomer Agreement to reimburse the original financier from charges to those connecting and receiving benefit at a later point in time. When the cost to extend and/or upgrade the system to accommodate development or redevelopment is beyond the means of a single developer, the Utility has employed a variety of methods to assist in the construction of the necessary infrastructure. Local Improvement Districts (LID’s) historically have been used to provide financing for infrastructure for new development, with the debt paid over time by the property owners. Most of the older Utilities infrastructure was financed by this method.

The Utility has in some cases up-fronted the infrastructure construction for new development or redevelopment from rate revenues which are later reimbursed with interest, in whole or in part, by subsequent development through direct facility connection charges (see Cost Recovery Policy). Examples are the water and sewer infrastructure for Cougar Mountain housing development and Central Business District (CBD) redevelopment. Another example is the use of the Utility’s debt capacity to provide for development infrastructure whereby the City sells bonds at lower interest rates than can private development, constructs the infrastructure, and collects a rate surcharge from the benefited area to pay off the bonds. Examples of this type of financing include the Lakemont development drainage infrastructure and the Meydenbauer Drainage Pipeline in the CBD.

B. Cost Recovery

The Utility shall establish fees and charges to recover Utility costs related to: (1) development services, and (2) capital facilities that provide services to the



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

property.

The Utility may enter into Latecomer Agreements with developers for recovery of their costs for capital improvements, which benefit other properties in accordance with State law. The Utility will add an administrative charge for this service.

Discussion:

In general, Utility costs related to development services are recovered through a variety of fees and charges. There are fixed rates for some routine services based on historical costs and inflation. There are fixed plus direct cost charges and applicable overhead for developer extension projects to cover the lengthy but variable level of development review and inspection typically required to implement these projects. These rates are reviewed periodically to ensure that the cost recovery is appropriate.

When the means of providing the infrastructure to serve a new development or redevelopment are beyond the means of a single developer, the Utility may elect to assist the developer by using: LID's, Latecomer Agreements, special debt (to be paid by special rate surcharges), up-fronting the costs from Utility rate revenues (to be reimbursed by future developers with interest through direct facility connection charges), or other lawful means. It is the intent of this policy to fully recover these costs, including interest, so as to reimburse the general rate payer.

Latecomer charges allow cost recovery for developers and private parties, for facilities constructed at their own expense and transferred to the Utility for general operation. Properties subsequently connecting to those systems will pay a connection charge that will be forwarded to the original individual or developer or the current owner depending on the terms of the Latecomer Agreement. The Utility collects an overhead fee on this charge for processing the agreements and repayments.

C. Use of Revenues

All capital-related revenues such as Capital Recovery Charges and Direct Facility Connection Charges should be deposited in the Capital Facilities Renewal & Replacement Accounts.

Discussion:

Capital Recovery Charges are collected from all newly developed properties in the form of monthly rate surcharges over a ten year period to reimburse the Utility for historical costs that have been incurred by the general rate base to provide the necessary facilities throughout the service area. Pursuant to Ordinances 6640, 6641, and 6642, Capital Recovery Charges may also be paid in full at the discretion of the affected property



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owner. These Capital Recovery Charges should be deposited in the Capital Facilities Renewal & Replacement Accounts.

Direct Facility Connection Charges are collected for capital improvements funded by the City as described above in Section 2 under Cost Recovery. The total cost of the improvement is allocated to the area of benefit and distributed on an equitable basis such as per residential equivalent unit. Interest is collected in accordance with State law.

D. Affordable Housing Consideration

The Utility may waive capital recovery charges with respect to construction of shelters or affordable housing projects as found by the director, provided there is non-utility revenue available to reimburse the city for the charges waived.

Discussion:

The City has adopted Ordinances 6640, 6641, and 6642 relating to connection charges for sewer, water, and storm and surface water, respectively. Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 35.92.380 provides for the waiver or delay of connection charges for low-income households. Utility connection charges are fees paid by all development so that each connecting property bears its proportional share of the cost of public sewer, water, and stormwater systems.

Waived fees should not be made up by increased rate pressure on existing ratepayers. While there is a public benefit in incentivising the development of shelters or affordable housing projects, City policy requires that growth pay for growth, and that existing customers not be burdened by the cost of growth. The adopted City ordinances ensure that, if a waiver is granted, it will be accompanied by non-utility revenue such as grants or other funds.

IV. **Rate Policies**

A. Rate Levels

Rates shall be set at a level sufficient to cover current and future expenses and maintain reserves consistent with these policies and long-term financial forecasts.

Changes in rate levels should be gradual and uniform to the extent that costs (including CIP and R&R transfers) can be forecast.

Cost increases or decreases for wholesale services shall be passed directly through to Bellevue customers.

Local and/or national inflation indices such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) shall be used as a basis for evaluating rate increases.



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At the end of the budget cycle, fund balances that are greater than anticipated and other one-time revenues should be transferred to the R&R account until it is shown that projected R&R account funds will be adequate to meet long-term needs, and only then used for rate relief.

Discussion:

A variety of factors including rate stability, revenue stability, the encouragement of practices consistent with Utility objectives and these Waterworks Utility Financial Policies are considered in developing Utility rates. The general goal is to set rates as low as possible to accomplish the on-going operations, maintenance, repair, long-term renewal and replacement, capital improvements, debt obligations, reserves and the general business of the Utility.

Long-range financial forecast models have been developed for each of the Utilities, which include estimated operating, capital and renewal/replacement costs for a 75 year period in order to plan for funding long-term costs. Operating costs are assumed to remain at the same level of service and don't include impacts of potential changes due to internal, regional or federal requirements. Capital costs, including renewal/replacement, are projected based on existing CIP costs and approximated survival curves for the infrastructure. The models are used to project rate levels that will support the long-term costs and to spread rate increases uniformly over the period. This is consistent with the above policy that changes in rate levels should be gradual and uniform. Uniform rate increases help ensure that each generation of customers bears their fair share of costs for the long-term use and renewal/replacement of the systems.

The biennial budget process provides an opportunity to add to or cut current service levels and programs. The final budget, with the total authorized expenses including transfers to the CIP Fund and the R&R Account, establishes the amount of revenue required to balance the expenses. A balanced budget is required. The budgeted customer service revenue determines the level of new rates. For example, if the current rates do not provide sufficient revenues to meet the projected expenses, the costs have to be reduced or the rates are increased to make up the shortfall.

For purposes of these policies, wholesale costs are defined as costs to the Utilities from other regional agencies such as the Seattle Public Utilities and/or the Cascade Water Alliance (CWA), and King County Department of Natural Resources for sewer treatment and any agreed upon Storm & Surface Water programs. Costs which are directly based on the Utilities' revenues or budgets such as taxes, franchise fees and reserve levels that increase proportionally to the wholesale increases are included within the definition of wholesale costs.



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B. Debt Coverage Requirements

Utility rates shall be maintained at a level necessary to meet minimum debt coverage levels established in the bond covenants and to comply with Resolution No. 5759 which establishes a target coverage ratio of 2.00.

Discussion:

In 1994, Council adopted Resolution No. 5759 that established a policy, which mandates the Utilities to maintain a target combined debt coverage ratio of approximately 2.00, to further protect the City's historically favorable Utility revenue bond ratings.

C. Frequency of Rate Increases

Utility rates shall be evaluated annually and adjusted as necessary to meet budgeted expenses including wholesale cost increases and to achieve financial policy objectives.

Discussion:

In 1996, the City changed to a biennial budget process and adopted a two-year Utilities budget including separate rates for 1997 and 1998. This practice will continue on a biennial basis. However, Utility rates will be evaluated on an annual basis and adjusted as necessary to ensure that they are effectively managed to achieve current and future financial policy objectives. Annual rate reviews will include preparation of forecasts covering a twenty-year period for Utility revenues, expenditures, reserve balances and analysis of the impact of various budgetary elements (i.e. CIP transfers, R&R Account transfers, debt service costs, debt coverage levels, operating expenses, and reserves) on both current and future rate requirements.

D. Rate Structure - Sewer

The Sewer Utility rate structure will be based on a financial analysis considering cost-of-service and other policy objectives, and will provide for equity between customers based on use of the system and services provided.

Discussion:

In 1993, a Sewer Rate Study was performed that resulted in Council approval of a two-step, volume-based rate structure for single-family customers based on winter average metered water volumes instead of the traditional flat rate structure. Flat rate structures were seen as inequitable to low-volume customers who paid the same amount as high volume customers. Rates are based on the level of service used, rather than the availability of service.

The revenue requirements are based on the "average" single-family winter average volume calculated annually from the billing database. The charge for an individual customer is based on their winter average and then charged at that level each bill for the entire year to avoid charging for irrigation use. The customer's winter average is



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

based upon the prior year's three winter bills because the current year's bills include winter months, which would result in the average constantly changing. Customers without prior winter averages to use for a basis are charged at the "average" volume until they establish a "winter-average" or sufficient evidence that their use is significantly different than the "average".

E. Rate Structure - Storm & Surface Water

The Storm & Surface Water Utility rate structure will be based on a financial analysis considering cost-of-service and other policy objectives, and will provide adjustments for actions taken under approved City standards to reduce related service impacts.

Discussion:

In the existing Storm & Surface Water rate structure, customer classes are defined by categories of development intensity, i.e., undeveloped, lightly developed, moderately developed, heavily developed and very heavily developed. Based on theoretical run-off coefficients for each of these categories, higher rates are charged for increasing degrees of development to reflect higher run-off resulting from that development. Under this structure, billings for both residential and non-residential customers are determined by total property area and rates assigned to applicable categories of development intensity. Customers providing on-site detention to mitigate the quantity of run-off from their property receive a credit equal to a reduction of one rate level from their actual development intensity. Property classified as "wetlands" is exempt from Storm & Surface Water service charges.

Large properties, over 35,000 square feet, with significantly different levels of intensity of development may be subdivided for rate purposes in accordance with Ordinance No. 4947. In addition, properties with no more than 35,000 square feet of developed area in the light and moderate intensity categories may, at the option of the owner, defer charges for that portion of the property in excess of 66,000 square feet. The property owner may apply for a credit against the Storm & Surface Water charge when they can demonstrate that the hydrologic response of the property is further mitigated through natural conditions, on-site facilities, or actions of the property owner that reduce the City's costs in providing Storm & Surface Water quantity or quality services.

Future design of a water quality rate component will also use cost-of-service principles to assign defined water quality costs to customer classes, according to their proportionate contribution to Utility service demand. It is anticipated that these rate structure revisions will also provide financial incentives to customers taking approved actions to mitigate related water quality impacts.



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

F. Rate Structures - Water

The water rate structure will be based on a financial analysis considering cost-of service and other policy objectives, and shall support water conservation and wise use of water resources.

Discussion:

The water rate structure consists of fixed monthly charges based on the size of the customer's water meter and volume charges, which vary according to customer class and the actual amount of water that the customer uses. There are three different meter rate classifications: domestic, irrigation and fire standby. The different charges are based on a cost-of-service study.

State law and the wholesale water supply contract require the Utility to encourage water conservation and wise use of water resources. Seattle first established a seasonal water volume rate structure for this purpose in 1989 with higher rates in the summer than in the winter. In 1990, based on a water rate study and the desire to provide a conservation-pricing signal to our customers, the City adopted an increasing block rate structure for local volume rates. The rate structure was revised in 1991 to pass through an increase in wholesale water costs, which also included a higher seasonal water rate for summer periods. The block water rate structure was revised again in 1997 and in 2015, to incorporate new cost-of-service results.

An increasing block rate structure, charges higher unit rates for successively higher water volumes used by the customer. The current rate structure has four rate steps for single-family customers, based on metered water volumes. All irrigation-metered water is charged at a separate, higher rate. Because multi-family and commercial classes do not fit well in an increasing block rate approach due to wide variations in their size and typical water use requirements, seasonal rates, with and without irrigation, were established for these customers. This rate structure will be thoroughly reviewed, as more historical information is available on the effect of the increasing block and seasonal rate structure.

G. Rate Equity

The rate structure shall fairly allocate costs between the different customer classes. Funding of the long-term Capital Investment Program also provides for rates that fairly spread costs over current and future customers.

Discussion:

As required under State law, Utility rates will provide equity in the rates charged to different customer classes. In general, rates by customer class are designed to reflect the contribution by a customer group to system-wide service demand, as determined by cost-of-service analysis. The RCW also authorizes utility rates to be designed to



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

accomplish "any other matters, which present a reasonable difference as a ground for distinction". For example, increasing water rates for irrigation and higher levels of use is allowed to encourage the wise use and conservation of a valuable resource. Formal rate studies are periodically conducted to assure ongoing rate equity between customer classes and guide any future rate modifications necessary to support changing Utility program or policy objectives.

Contributions from current rates to the R&R Account also provide equity between generations of rate payers by assuring that each user pays their fair share of capital improvements, including renewal and replacement, over the long-term. (See sections B and D under the Capital Investment Program Policies).

H. Rate Uniformity

Rates shall be uniform for all utility customers of the same class and level of service throughout the service area. However, special rates or surcharges may be established for specific areas, which require extraordinary capital investments and/or maintenance costs. Revenues from such special rates or surcharges and expenses from capital investments and/or extraordinary maintenance shall be accounted for in a manner to assure that they are used for the intended purposes.

Discussion:

The City Water and Sewer Utilities originally formed by assuming ownership of three separate operating water districts and two sewer districts. In the assumption agreements, each included a provision that requires the Utility to uniformly charge all customers of the same class throughout the entire service area. The basic rates are set for all customers, inside and outside of the City, except for local utility taxes in Bellevue and Medina, and franchise fees in Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Medina, and Yarrow Point. Unlike the Water and Sewer Utilities, the Storm & Surface Water Utility only serves areas within the City limits.

Under state law, Utilities are required to charge uniform rates to all customers in a given customer class. The only exception permitted is for certain low-income customers (see below).

However, RCW 35.92.010 authorizes utilities to consider differences in the cost of service to various customers, location of customers within the service area, and other such factors that present a reasonable basis for distinction. When conditions in particular service areas require extraordinary capital improvement or maintenance costs to be incurred, special rates or surcharges may be adopted to recover those costs directly from properties contributing to the specific service demand, instead of assigning that cost burden to the general Utility rate base. This will only apply for costs above and



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

beyond normal operations, maintenance and capital improvements. For example, rate surcharges were used to recover debt service costs for capital facilities in Lakemont and the CBD. An additional rate surcharge for Lakemont properties was collected for extraordinary maintenance costs of the storm water treatment facility.

I. Rate Assistance

Rate assistance programs shall be provided for specific low-income customers as permitted by State law.

Discussion:

Continual increases in all utility rates have had a significant impact on low-income customers. The City has adopted a rate discount or rebate program for disabled customers and senior citizens over 62 years old and with income below certain levels as permitted under State law and defined in Ordinance No. 6451. It discounts Utility rates by 70 percent, with the discount capped at a basic service level. Customers that indirectly pay for Utility charges through their rent can obtain a rebate for the prior year's Utility charges on the same criteria. The City also has an Emergency Assistance Program for low-income, direct-billed customers experiencing a financial shock and who are not otherwise qualified for the discount program offered to disabled customers and senior citizens. The cost of these programs is absorbed in the overall Utility expenses and is recovered through the rate base. The City also offers a Utility Occupation Tax rebate, provided by the General Fund, to all low-income citizens who live in the Bellevue Utilities service area.

V. **Operating Reserve Policies**

A. Operating Reserve Levels

The Utilities' biennial budget and rate recommendations shall provide funding for working capital, operating contingency, and plant emergency reserve components on a consolidated basis in accordance with the attached Summary of Recommended Consolidated Reserve Levels table and as subsequently updated.

Discussion:

Utility resources not spent for operations remain in the fund and are referred to as reserves. At the end of each year, these funds are carried forward to the next year's budget and become a revenue source for funding future programs and operations. Under the terms of this policy, the Utility budget is targeted to include a balance of funds for the specific purposes stated above. While included in the total operating budget, these reserves will only be available for use pursuant to these reserve policies. Setting aside these budget resources in the reserve balance will help to ensure continued financial rate stability in future Utility operations and protect Utility customers from service disruptions that might otherwise result from unforeseen economic or



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

emergency events.

The working capital reserve is maintained to accommodate normal cyclical fluctuations within the two month billing cycle and during the budget year. These are higher for Water than for Sewer and Storm & Surface Water due to more variable revenues and expenditures. They are described in terms of a number of days of working capital as a percentage of a full-year's budget.

The operating contingency reserve protects against adverse financial performance or budget performance due to variations in revenues or expenses. Again, the Water Utility is most susceptible to year-to-year variations in water demand. They are described in terms of percentages of budgeted wholesale costs and operations and maintenance (O&M) costs.

The plant emergency contingency reserve provides protection against a system failure at some reasonable level. The Storm & Surface Water Utility requires the largest reserve due to the risk of major flood damage to Utility facilities. Water and Sewer Utilities protect against the cost of a major main break or failure. These do not protect against the loss of facilities that are covered by the City's Self-Insurance to which the Utilities pay annual premiums nor are they sufficient to respond to a major disaster, such as a major earthquake.

The reserves of the three utilities have historically been treated separately. This protects against cross-subsidy, thereby retaining rate equity for each utility, each of which has different customers. However, it results in higher reserve targets, with more funds retained than otherwise may be needed. Sharing risks among utilities can reduce reserves. This does not require that reserves actually be consolidated into a single fund, but simply that individual reserve targets reflect the strength provided by the availability of cross-utility support. Under the "consolidated" scenario, cash shortfalls in one reserve could be funded through inter-utility loans, to be repaid from future rates. The likelihood that a serious shortfall would occur in more than one fund at the same time is slight and the benefits of lower overall reserve levels will benefit rate payers. Also, the rate policies and the debt coverage policy will ensure that there will be a strong financial response to any significant shortfall. The risk is considered a prudent financial policy.

Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

City of Bellevue

Summary of Recommended Consolidated Reserve Levels*

Type of Reserve	Water		Wastewater		Storm Drainage	
	Basis	Level	Basis	Level	Basis	Level
Working Capital – Reserves against revenue and expense fluctuations within the 2 month billing cycle and during the budget year.	48 days of budgeted O&M costs (excludes debt service, capital funding).	\$6,514,400	30 days of Metro costs and 20 days of City O&M costs (excludes debt service, capital funding).	\$4,239,800	29 days of budgeted O&M costs (excludes debt service, capital funding).	\$1,192,300
Operating Contingency – Reserves against annual budget shortfalls due to poor financial performance.	7.5% of water purchase costs and 11.0% of other water O&M costs.	\$4,640,400	2.0% of Metro costs and 5.0% of other wastewater O&M costs.	\$1,671,500	2.5% of O&M costs.	\$375,200
Plant Emergency Contingency – Reserves against failure of a major facility or piece of equipment.	Cost for repair of water main break.	\$100,000	Cost of repair for wastewater main break.	\$100,000	Based on potential net cost of flood damage.	\$500,000
Less: Allowance for duplicating or offsetting reserves	None.	\$0	Working Capital and Operating Contingency include offsetting reserves equal to 2.0% of all O&M.	(\$1,148,000)	None.	\$0
Less: Allowance for consolidating reserves	2.5% of O&M expenses for interfund charges between utilities.	(\$660,800)	1.0% City O&M for interfund charges between utilities.	(\$174,500)	1.0% of City O&M for interfund charges between utilities.	(\$150,100)
	Share of reduced plant emergency reserve.	(\$15,000)	Share of reduced plant emergency reserve.	(\$15,000)	Share of reduced plant emergency reserve.	(\$70,000)
	Lesser of min. working capital or plant emergency reserves.	(\$85,000)	Lesser of min. working capital or plant emergency reserves.	(\$85,000)	Lesser of min. working capital or plant emergency reserves.	(\$220,000)
Total		\$10,494,000		\$4,588,800		\$1,627,400

* - Reserve levels based on proposed 2023 Utility budgets.



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

For this purpose, O&M costs are the entire annual operating budget of the Utility less the annual debt service, Capital Investment Program transfers and R&R Account transfers. Independent reserve levels are the levels that would be required by an individual Utility Fund (Water, Sewer and Storm & Surface Water) at any point in time to cover financial obligations if any one of the three reserve components were called for; i.e., working capital, operating contingency or plant emergency. At any single time, the full independent reserve levels should be available for the individual stated purpose, again because it is unlikely that all three components would be called for at once. For example, the Water Utility needs \$100,000 available for an emergency repair but it is not likely that the Sewer Utility will need \$100,000 and the Storm & Surface Water Utility will need \$500,000 all at the same point in time.

The consolidated basis is for budget and rate setting purposes only, to reduce the total revenue requirement by considering the reserve risk shared between the three utilities. The dual reserve levels should be considered as circumstances evolve.

In 2004, the Financial Consulting Solution Group (FCSG) performed an analysis of recommended changes to the Water Utility's working capital and operating contingency reserves to reflect the new wholesale water contract with CWA and to update reserve levels for current conditions. Under the new contract, billing practices for wholesale costs have changed as follows:

CWA payment occurs before the associated revenues are collected, resulting in a greater lag between wholesale expense and when revenues are collected.

CWA payments are distributed over the whole year based on predetermined percentages and not based on actual consumption during the year. Due to seasonal revenue variation, there is an accumulative deficit in revenues prior to the peak revenue period.

In addition, the total costs to Bellevue are now largely fixed for the year due to the "take or pay" nature of the contract between CWA and Seattle Public Utilities. This shifts the risk during a poor water sales year to the City since there will not be a corresponding reduction in water purchase costs when water sales are down.

Changes in both billing practices as well as the fixed nature of the wholesale costs will result in an increase in required reserves for working capital and operating contingency for the Water Fund.

As part of their 2004 analysis, FCSG recommended increasing working capital operating reserve requirements for the Water fund from 48 days of budgeted O&M costs



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

(excluding debt service and capital funding) to 70 days. The change was primarily related to an expected increase in seasonal revenue variation resulting from Cascade's fixed monthly billing percentages. However, our experience has been that since implementing the change in 2005 there has been essentially no increase in seasonal revenue variation. As a result, beginning in 2011, working capital operating reserve requirements for the Water fund will be reduced from 70 days of budgeted O&M costs (excluding debt service and capital funding) to the original level of 48 days.

B. Management of Operating Reserves

Related to the recommended target reserve levels, a working range of reserves is established with minimum and target levels. Management of reserves will be based on the level of reserves with respect to these thresholds, as follows:

Above target - Reserve levels will be reduced back to the target level by transferring excess funds to the R&R Accounts in a manner consistent with the long-range financial plan.

Between Minimum and Target - Rate increases would be imposed sufficient to ensure that: 1) reserves would not fall below the minimum in an adverse year; and 2) reserves would recover 50% of the shortfall from target levels in a normal year. Depending on the specific circumstances, either of these may be the constraint, which defines the rate increase needed.

Below Minimum - Rate increases would be imposed sufficient to ensure that even with adverse financial performance, reserves would return at least to the minimum at the end of the following year. To meet this "worst case" standard, a year of normal performance would be likely to recover reserve levels rapidly toward target levels.

Negative Balance - Reserves would be borrowed from another utility to meet working capital needs. Similar to the "below minimum" scenario, rate increases would be imposed sufficient to ensure that even with adverse financial performance, reserves would return from the negative balance to at least the minimum target at the end of the following year, which would allow for loan repayment within that time frame.

Discussion:

Target and minimum reserves are established as part of each fund's long-range financial plan. Management to target reserve levels reflects the recommended reserve levels summarized in section V.A, plus consideration of additional reserves necessary to accommodate one-time costs and planned rate smoothing.



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

"Adverse financial performance" or "worst case" are defined by the 95% confidence interval based on historical patterns. The worst case year is currently defined as a year with sales volumes 15% below the sales volume for a normal year. This was determined by using statistical measurements of sales volumes for 18 years with a 95% confidence interval. That is, in any given year there is only a 5% chance that the worst case year would be more than 15% below the normal year. Another way to say the same thing is that in 19 out of 20 years the worst case year would not be more than 15% below the normal year.

Maintaining the 95% confidence interval, as more and more data becomes available, a worst case year could change upward or downward from the 15% variation from a normal year.

The recommended reserve policies are premised on the vital expectation that reserves are to be used and reserve-levels will fluctuate. Although budget and rate planning are expected to use the target reserve number, reserve levels planned to remain static are by definition unnecessary. It is therefore important to plan for managing the reserves within a working range between the minimum and target levels as stated in the above policies. There may be situations in short-range financial planning where reserves are maintained above target levels to overcome peaks in actual expenses.

In the event of an inter-utility loan, the balance for the borrowing utility would essentially be any cash balance less the amount owed. The lending utility would count the note as a part of its reserves, so that it does not unnecessarily increase rates to replenish reserves that are loaned.

In this management approach, there is still a risk that a major plant emergency could exceed the amount reserved. Such a major shortfall would require rate action to assure a certain level of replenishment in one year. To avoid rate spikes due to this type of action, they should be considered on a case-by-case basis. This will provide the flexibility to use debt or capital reserves in lieu of operating reserves to cover the cost and allow a moderated approach to replenishing reserves out of rates.

C. Asset Replacement Reserves

Utility funds will maintain separate Asset Replacement Accounts to provide a source of funding for future replacement of operating equipment and systems.

Anticipated replacement costs by year for the upcoming 20-year period, for all Utility asset and equipment items, will be developed as a part of each biennial budget preparation process. Budgeted contribution to the Asset Replacement



Waterworks Utility Financial Policies

Account will be based on the annual amount needed to maintain a positive cash flow balance in the Asset Replacement Account over the 20-year forecast period. At a minimum, the ending Asset Replacement Account balance in each Utility will equal, on average, the next year's projected replacement costs for that fund.

The Utilities Department will observe adopted Equipment Rental Fund (ERF) and Information Services budget policies and procedures in formulating recommendations regarding specific equipment items to be replaced.

Discussion:

Providing reserves for equipment and information technology systems replacement allows monies to be set aside over the service life of these items to pay for their eventual replacement and alleviate one-time rate impacts that these purchases might otherwise require. Annual revenues set aside for this purpose will be based on aggregate Utility asset replacement cash flow needs over the long-term forecast period, instead of individual asset replacement amounts. This strategy will allow Utilities to minimize the progressive build-up of excess Asset Replacement Account balances that would result from creating and funding separate reserve accounts for individual Utility asset and equipment items.



Attachment A Ordinance 4783

ORIGINAL

WP0459C-ORD
06/27/95

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

ORDINANCE NO. 4783

AN ORDINANCE creating utility capital replacement accounts for the Water, Sewer and Storm and Surface Water Utilities within the Utility Capital Investment Fund for the purpose of accumulating funding for long term replacement of utility facilities.

WHEREAS, the Utilities 1995 Cost Containment Study prepared by Financial Consulting Solutions Group, Inc. (FCSG) recommends that current utility rates recover from the ratepayers amounts which at a minimum are equal to the depreciated value of the original cost of utility facilities and at a maximum are amounts equal to the replacement value of utility infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, FCSG recommends that utility funds not needed for current expenditure be placed in a replacement account to be used in the future in combination with current revenues and/or debt financing to replace capital facilities nearing the end of their useful life; and

WHEREAS, implementation of FCSG's recommendations would promote intergenerational rate equity and provide more stable rates to customers over the long term; and

WHEREAS, the Council desires to make an initial, 1995 deposit of \$600,000 in savings from the Water Fund into the new capital replacement account for the Water Utility; now, therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON, DOES ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The purpose of this ordinance is to establish capital facilities replacement accounts within the Utility Capital Investment Fund in order to assure a future funding source for replacement of utility facilities nearing the end of their useful life. The City Council will determine each year, as part of the adoption of the utilities operating budgets, how much, if any, utility revenue during the upcoming year shall be designated for transfer to a replacement account. The City Council may also authorize the receipt of other funds directly into these capital facility replacement accounts. Once deposited the funds will accumulate with interest. The decision regarding when and how to utilize such accumulated funds for the replacement of utility facilities will be made as part of the Utility Comprehensive Plans and Utility Capital Investment Program approval process.



Attachment A Ordinance 4783

ORIGINAL

WP0459C-ORD
06/27/95

Section 2. The following new accounts are established in the Utility Capital Investment Fund:

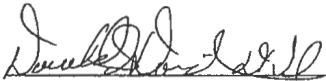
Capital Facilities Replacement Account - Sewer
Capital Facilities Replacement Account - Water
Capital Facilities Replacement Account - Storm and Surface Water

Section 3. There is hereby authorized the 1995 transfer from the Water Utility Operating Fund to the Capital Facilities Replacement Account - Water the amount of \$600,000.

Section 4. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force five days after its passage and legal publication.

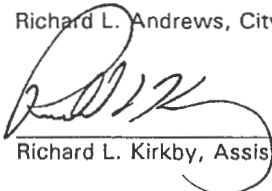
PASSED by the City Council this 24th day of July, 1995, and signed in authentication of its passage this 24th day of July, 1995.

(SEAL)


Donald S. Davidson, DDS, Mayor

Approved as to form:

Richard L. Andrews, City Attorney


Richard L. Kirkby, Assistant City Attorney

Attest:


Myrna L. Basich, City Clerk

Published July 28, 1995



Attachment B Resolution 5759

WP0254C-RES
03/03/94

CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON

RESOLUTION NO. 5759

A RESOLUTION relating to financial policy for the Waterworks Utility and adopting a debt service coverage policy for the Waterworks Utility

WHEREAS, the City of Bellevue is consistently recognized for its prudent financial management; and

WHEREAS, the City of Bellevue's Water and Sewer Bonds are currently rated Aa by Moody's Investor Services and AA- by Standard & Poor's Corporation, which are considered to be excellent ratings; and

WHEREAS, these excellent ratings result in lower interest costs on the City's Water and Sewer bonds, which, in turn, may result in lower water, sewer and storm drainage costs; and

WHEREAS, it is important to the rating agencies and to the financial community that the City articulate its financial goals for its Waterworks Utility; and

WHEREAS, a desirable debt service coverage ratio, the ratio of revenues available for debt service to the annual debt service requirement, positively affects the Utility's bond ratings; and

WHEREAS, the City Council deems it in the City's best interest to establish a debt service coverage policy target for the purpose of protecting its current bond rating and to allow for the development of financial projections, NOW, THEREFORE,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLEVUE, WASHINGTON, DOES RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The City Council hereby adopts the following debt service coverage policy for the bonds issued by the City's Waterworks Utility.

The City Council will establish utility rates/charges and appropriations in a manner intended to achieve a debt service coverage ratio (adjusted by including City taxes as an expense item) of approximately 2.00. The City Council authorizes the Waterworks Utility to utilize this policy in development of pro



Attachment B
Resolution 5759

WP0254C-RES
03/03/94

forma projections which will be disseminated to the bond rating agencies and to the financial community generally.

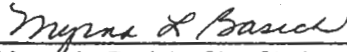
PASSED by the City Council this 7th day of March,
1994, and signed in authentication of its passage this 8th day of
March, 1994.

(SEAL)



Donald S. Davidson, DDS, Mayor

Attest:



Myrna L. Basich, City Clerk



2023-2024 Budget

Solid Waste Fund

Reserve Policy



Solid Waste Reserve Policy

2023-2024 Administrative Updates

The Solid Waste Reserve Policy reflects the following proposed updates as part of the 2023-2024 Budget process.

Working Capital

No change is made to the Council-adopted policy. Discussion is updated to clarify accounting for grant funds.

Target Solid Waste Reserves

No change is made to the Council-adopted policy. Summary of Target Solid Waste Reserves is updated to reflect proposed 2023-2024 budget.



Solid Waste Reserve Policy

Reserve Levels

Consistent with other Utility funds, this policy recommends that some resources be budgeted as reserves to provide funding for working capital and emergencies. Setting aside reserves will help to ensure continued financial rate stability in future Solid Waste operations, and protect customers from service disruptions that might otherwise result from unforeseen economic or emergency events. While included in the total operating budget, these reserves will only be available for use pursuant to these reserve policies.

The Solid Waste Fund provides funding for two main functions:

1. Administration of the Solid Waste Collection Contract (Contract) and related outreach, education and technical assistance activities; and,
2. Administration of waste prevention and recycling grant-funded projects.

The fund's two sources of income are fees and grant monies, as described below:

1. Administrative Fees: These are paid into the Solid Waste Fund by the solid waste collection contractor per the terms of the Contract. These funds provide the base funding for personnel, supplies, programs and activities.
2. Grants: The Solid Waste Fund receives grant dollars from several agencies for waste prevention and recycling projects. Grant agencies reimburse the Solid Waste Fund for project expenses quarterly or annually, depending on the terms of the grant agreement.

Reserve components are as follows:

1. Working Capital

Working capital reserves are necessary to accommodate normal cyclical fluctuations within the Solid Waste fund. There are two elements for this reserve component; one element supports Solid Waste Management and the other supports the grant-funded programs.

The solid waste collection/disposal and recycling programs have predictable revenues and expenditures. However, the Solid Waste Fund has a single revenue source, its solid waste collection contractor. Two consecutive withheld payments would deplete and exceed a typical 45-day reserve. Therefore the reserve is set at 75 days.

The grant-funded programs are pre-funded through the Operating Grants/Donations fund and reimbursement requests are made quarterly or annually, depending on the grant agency agreement. While most grant agencies pay reimbursement requests within 45 days of receipt, the existing reimbursement billing schedule can result in carrying project expenses for up to a year before funds are received. For this reason,



Solid Waste Reserve Policy

reserves equal to 100% of anticipated grant funding are included to support cash-flow. Although grant revenues and expenses are accounted for in the Operating Grants/Donations fund, sufficient reserves are maintained in the Solid Waste fund to ensure programs have sufficient funding to continue uninterrupted.

2. Emergencies

A reserve component has historically been used by the Solid Waste Fund to pay for recovery from emergencies such as windstorms, and therefore has been viewed as a necessary element of the Solid Waste Fund Reserve Policy. While the Emergency Reserve portion of the Solid Waste Fund is too small to fully support debris management in a major disaster, it is reasonable to expect to use it for smaller recovery efforts. The Solid Waste Fund has been used three times for windstorm recovery in the past two decades. The cost of these activities has ranged from \$30,000 to \$75,000 on a per event basis. It seems prudent to prepare for a “reasonable worst case” scenario rather than a least cost scenario. Therefore, a \$75,000 (in 2012 dollars) plus inflation target has been selected. The basis for this component is the cost of a supplemental windstorm debris pick-up by a contractor. This reserve level amount is adjusted by the annual CPI.

3. Consolidated Reserve

A consolidated reserve that compensates for duplicate reserves could be used to reduce the target reserve level. The emergencies reserve and the working capital reserve are consolidated at the working capital reserve level, which is the higher of the two. Further consolidation is not recommended as the grant cash flow reserve is in use constantly throughout the year.

4. Other Reserve Components

No reserve components are necessary for capital expenditures, operating contingency, debt service, liability or asset replacement since the majority of the operations are contracted and are not the City’s responsibility. Reserves will be updated at each biennial budget development period.

Solid Waste Reserve Policy

Target Solid Waste Reserves			
<u>Type of Reserve</u>	<u>Basis</u>	<u>2023 Level</u>	<u>2024 Level</u>
WORKING CAPITAL – Reserves against revenue and expense fluctuations			
- Solid Waste collection/disposal and recycling programs	75 days of budgeted O&M	\$212,095	\$227,511
- Grant funded programs	100% of anticipated grant budget	\$320,962	\$409,932
EMERGENCIES	\$75,000 (2012 dollars) adjusted for annual CPI	\$95,364	\$98,931
CONSOLIDATED RESERVE ADJ		(\$95,364)	(\$98,931)
Target Reserve		<u>\$532,786</u>	<u>\$637,442</u>

Management of the Reserve

The current Solid Waste Fund Reserve Policy is premised on the expectation that the reserves are to be used and reserve levels will fluctuate. It is therefore important to plan for managing the reserves within a working range. There may be situations in short-range financial planning where reserves are maintained above or below target levels.

The target reserve level will be established during the budget development process. Related to the recommended target reserve levels, a working range of reserves is established with minimum and target levels. Management of the reserves will be based on the level of reserves with respect to these thresholds, as follows:

Above Target

Since the Solid Waste Fund does not have a Renewal & Replacement (R&R) account to transfer excess funds to, reserve levels will be held in the Solid Waste Fund until sufficient amount has accumulated to be budgeted and used for one of the following:

- Return funds to customers through decreased rates
- Provide additional services to customers
- Fund a high priority project



Solid Waste Reserve Policy

Between Minimum and Target

Rate increases would be implemented sufficient to ensure that:

- Reserves would not fall below the minimum in an adverse year; and
- Reserves would recover 50% of the shortfall from target levels in a normal year.

Depending on the specific circumstances, either of these may be the constraint that describes the rate increase needed.

Below Minimum

Rate increases would be implemented sufficient to ensure that even with adverse financial performance, reserves would return at least to the minimum at the end of the following year. To meet this “worst case” standard, a year of normal performance would be likely to recover reserve levels toward target levels.

Negative Balance

Reserves would be borrowed from another fund within the City to meet working capital needs. As with the “below minimum” scenario, rate increases would be implemented sufficient to ensure that even with adverse financial performance, reserves would return from the negative balance to at least the minimum target at the end of the following year, which would allow for loan repayment within that time frame.

Surplus funds are those funds over and above the target reserve level. As part of the biennial budget review, Council would direct the use of excess reserves.

The reserve minimum is the amount needed to maintain cash flow needs over the course of the year. This would be the amount of the grant cash flow reserve, plus the working capital reserve.