

RESOLUTION NO. 2021-09-75

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER, TEXAS, ADOPTING THE CITY OF LANCASTER FINANCIAL POLICY PROVIDING FOR PRUDENT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OF ALL FUNDS TO ENABLE THE CITY TO MAINTAIN A LONG TERM STABLE AND POSITIVE FINANCIAL CONDITION AND PROVIDE GUIDELINES FOR THE DAY-TO-DAY PLANNING AND OPERATION OF THE CITY'S FINANCIAL MATTERS; PROVIDING THAT THE SAME SHALL BE IMPLEMENTED; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Lancaster Financial Policy is reviewed annually as part of the budget preparation process; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Lancaster Financial Policy provides for financial management through integrity, prudent stewardship, planning, accountability, full disclosure and communication regarding all City funds;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LANCASTER, TEXAS:**

**SECTION 1.** The City of Lancaster Financial Policy, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Exhibit "A", having been reviewed by the City Council of the City of Lancaster, Texas, and found to be acceptable and in the best interest of the City and its citizens is hereby in all things approved; and, the City Manager and staff shall implement and execute the procedures and policies adopted therein.

**SECTION 2.** This resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its passage, as the law and charter in such cases provide.

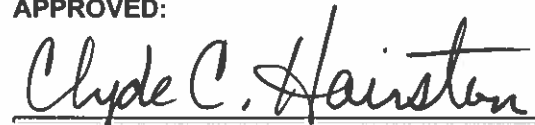
**DULY PASSED** and approved by the City Council of the City of Lancaster, Texas, on this the 13th day of September, 2021.

**ATTEST:**



Sorangel O. Arenas, City Secretary

**APPROVED:**



Clyde C. Hairston, Mayor

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**



David T. Ritter, City Attorney

**City of Lancaster, Texas**  
**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**  
**POLICY**  
**September 13, 2021**



**Lancaster**



**2019**

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CITY OF LANCASTER, TEXAS  
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The goal of the Financial Management Policy is to enable the City to achieve a long-term, stable and positive financial condition. The watchwords of the City's financial management include integrity, prudent stewardship, planning, accountability, and full disclosure. The purpose of the Financial Management Policy is to provide guidelines for planning and directing the City's day to day financial affairs and to assist staff in developing recommendations to the Mayor or City Council. Specifically, this policy framework mandates the pursuit of the following fiscal objectives:

- I. Revenues**  
Design, maintain and administer a revenue system that will assure a reliable, equitable, diversified and sufficient revenue stream to support desired City services.
- II. Expenditures**  
Identify priority services, establish and define appropriate service levels and administer the expenditure of available resources to assure fiscal stability and the effective and efficient delivery of services.
- III. Fund Balance/Working Capital/Net Assets**  
Maintain the fund balance, working capital and net assets of the various operating funds at levels sufficient to protect the City's credit worthiness as well as its financial position from emergencies.
- IV. Capital Expenditures and Improvements**  
Annually review and monitor the condition of the City's capital equipment and infrastructure, setting priorities for its replacement and renovation based on needs, funding alternatives and availability of resources.
- V. Debt Management**  
Establish guidelines for debt financing that will provide needed capital equipment and infrastructure improvements while minimizing the impact of debt payments on current and future revenues.
- VI. Cash Management and Investments**  
Invest the City's operating cash to ensure the absolute safety of principal, provide for necessary liquidity and optimize yield in accordance with the City's adopted Investment Policy.

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- VII. Intergovernmental Relations**  
Coordinate efforts with other governmental agencies to achieve common policy objectives, share the cost of providing governmental services on an equitable basis and support appropriate favorable legislation at the state and federal level.
- VIII. Grants**  
Aggressively investigate, pursue and effectively administer federal, state, local and foundation grants-in-aid, which address and support the City's current priorities and policy objectives.
- IX. Economic Development**  
Initiate, encourage and participate in economic development efforts to create job opportunities and strengthen the local economy and tax base.
- X. Fiscal Monitoring**  
Prepare and present reports for the current and multi-year periods that analyze, evaluate and forecast the City's financial performance and economic condition.
- XI. Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting**  
Comply with prevailing federal, state and local statutes and regulations. Conform to generally accepted accounting principles as promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA).
- XII. Internal Controls**  
Establish a system of internal controls designed to maintain an environment to provide management with reasonable assurance that assets are safeguarded against loss from unauthorized use or disposition.
- XIII. Risk Management**  
Prevent and/or reduce the financial impact to the City due to claims and losses through prevention, transfer of liability and/or a program of self-insurance of the liability.
- XIV. Operating Budget**  
Develop and maintain a balanced budget for operating funds that presents a clear understanding of the goals of the City Council, service levels and performance standards. A Balanced Budget is defined as revenues and any appropriated fund balance equal expenditures.
- XV. Five Year Plans**  
Long term financial planning is intended to ensure sustainability of programs and integrate operating and capital financial planning.

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## **I. Revenues**

The City shall use the following guidelines to design, maintain and administer a revenue system that will assure a reliable, equitable, diversified and sufficient revenue stream to support desired City services.

### **A. Balance and Diversification in Revenue Sources**

The City shall strive to maintain a balance and diversified revenue system to protect the City from fluctuations in any one source due to changes in economic conditions that adversely impact that source.

### **B. User Fees**

For services that benefit specific users, where possible the City shall establish and collect fees to recover the cost of those services. Where feasible and desirable, the City shall seek to recover full direct and indirect costs. City staff shall review user fees on a regular basis to calculate their full cost recovery levels, to compare them to the current fee structure and to recommend adjustments where necessary.

### **C. Property Tax Revenues/Tax Rate**

The City shall strive to reduce its reliance on residential property tax revenues by revenue diversification, implementation of user fees and economic development. The City shall also strive to minimize tax rate increases.

### **D. Utility/Enterprise Funds User Fees**

Utility rates and enterprise funds user fees shall be set at levels sufficient to cover operating expenditures, meet debt obligations, provide additional funding for capital improvements and provide adequate levels of working capital and debt coverage.

### **E. Administrative Services Charges**

The City shall prepare a cost allocation plan to determine the administrative services charges due to the General Fund from enterprise funds for overhead and staff support. Where appropriate, the enterprise funds shall pay the General Fund for direct services rendered.

### **F. Revenue Estimates for Budgeting**

In order to maintain a stable level of service, the City shall use a conservative, objective and analytical approach when preparing revenue estimates for current and multi-year periods. The process shall include analysis of probable economic changes and their impacts on revenues, historical collection rates and trends in revenues. This approach should reduce the likelihood of actual revenues falling short of budget estimates during the year and should avoid mid-year service reductions.

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### **G. Revenue Collection and Administration**

The City shall maintain high collection rates for all revenues by keeping the revenue system as simple as possible in order to facilitate payment. In addition, since revenue should exceed the cost of producing it, the City shall strive to control and reduce administrative costs. The City shall pursue to the full extent allowed by state law all delinquent taxpayers and other overdue in payments to the City. The fees based on user charges shall be reviewed annually to ensure continuing coverage of the cost of services. The City shall revise user fees with review of the City Council to adjust for the costs of inflation and additional recovery increments. The City shall review and adopt utility rates annually that shall generate revenues required to fully cover operating expenditures, meet the legal restrictions of all applicable bond covenants, and provide for an adequate level of working capital needs. A method is established whereby the General and administrative services performed on the Enterprise Fund's behalf. The process shall be documented and disclosed to the City's auditors for review. All revenue collections will be consolidated under Finance and be audited annually.

## **II. Expenditures**

The City shall use the following guidelines to identify necessary services, establish appropriate service levels and administer the expenditure of available resources to assure fiscal stability and the effective and efficient delivery of services.

### **Current Funding Basis**

The City shall operate on a current funding basis. Expenditures shall be budgeted and controlled so as not to exceed current revenues plus the planned use of fund balance accumulated through prior year savings.

### **Avoidance of Operating Deficits**

The City shall take timely corrective action if at any time during the fiscal year expenditure and revenue re-estimates are such that an operating deficit is projected at year-end.

### **Maintenance of Capital Assets**

Within the resources available each fiscal year, the City shall maintain capital assets and infrastructure at a sufficient level to protect the City's investment, to minimize future replacement and maintenance costs and to continue service levels.

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### **Periodic Program Reviews**

Periodic program reviews for efficiency and effectiveness shall be performed. Programs not meeting efficiency and effectiveness objectives shall be brought up to required standards or be subject to reduction or elimination.

### **Purchasing**

The City shall make every effort to maximize any discounts offered by creditors/vendors. Vendors with balances due the City will have payments due to the vendor offset against the amount due the city. The City will follow state law concerning the amount of purchase requiring formal bidding procedures and approval by the City Council. For purchases where competitive bidding is not required, the City shall seek to obtain the most favorable terms and pricing possible. Every effort will be made to include minority business enterprises in the bidding process.

Quarterly reports shall be prepared showing actual expenditures compared to the adopted budget. Modifications within the operating categories (materials, supplies, and services) and/or modifications within the personnel and capital categories may be made with the approval of the City Manager.

Where appropriate, performance measures and productivity indicators shall be used as guidelines and reviewed for efficiency and effectiveness. This information shall be included in the annual budgeting process.

Purchases shall be made in conformation with the States formal bidding process and requirements. Recommendations of bids and contracts in excess of \$50,000 shall be presented to City Council for their formal approval.

### **III. Fund Balance/Working Capital/Net Assets**

In accordance with the requirements of Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement Number 53, the City shall use the following guidelines to explain and define the purpose of fund balance, working capital and retained earnings of the various operating funds. The City will describe fund balance as follows: (1) Un-spendable – portion of net resources that cannot be spent, i.e. assets that will never convert to cash or not convert during the current period, or resources that must be maintained intact pursuant to legal or contractual requirements. (2) Restricted – portion of net resources that are required to be reserved by external legal restrictions such as debt covenants, grantors, contributors or other governments. (3) Committed – portion of fund balance that represents resources whose use is constrained by limitations that the City



imposes upon itself by council action and require council action to release. (4) Assigned – portion of fund balance that reflects the City’s intended use of resources. (5) Unassigned-surplus fund balance.

The City shall use the following guidelines to maintain the fund balance, working capital and net assets of the various operating funds at levels sufficient to protect the City’s creditworthiness as well as its financial position from unforeseeable emergencies.

**General Fund Unassigned Fund Balance**

The City shall strive to maintain the General Fund unassigned fund balance at an amount equal to a minimum of twelve (12) percent of the general operating budget with a target of reaching eighteen (18) percent and a maximum of twenty-five (25) percent. The City will maintain an unallocated fund balance of an amount equal to a minimum of twelve (12) percent of the general operating budget. Any excess above the minimum will be designated to the Capital Improvement Program and the Equipment Replacement Program. These designations will be reviewed annually and authorized by the Council. The minimum twelve (12) percent unallocated fund balance will be used to avoid cash-flow interruptions, generate interest income, reduce need for short-term borrowing and assist in maintaining an investment-grade bond rating.

**Other Operating Funds Unrestricted Net Assets; Enterprise Working Capital**

In other operating funds, the City shall strive to maintain a positive unrestricted net assets position to provide sufficient reserves for emergencies and revenue shortfalls. The unallocated fund balance of other funds should be maintained as follows:

<u>Fund</u>	<u>Minimum</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Maximum</u>
Water/Wastewater	12.00%	18.00%	25.00%
Airport Fund	12.00%	18.00%	25.00%
Golf Fund	12.00%	18.00%	25.00%

Debt Service Funds 12% of Current Year Debt Payment

**Use of Fund Balance/Net Assets**

Fund Balance/Net Assets shall be used only for emergencies, non-recurring expenditures, major capital purchases that cannot be accommodated through current year savings, and as designated by Council. Should such use reduce the balance below the appropriate level set as the objective for that fund, recommendations will be made on how to restore it.

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Periodic review of cash flow position shall be performed to determine performance of cash management and investment policies. A detailed policy structure shall be followed with respect to Cash/Treasury Management. The underlying theme shall be that idle cash shall be invested with the goals and objectives as identified in the City's Investment Policy.

Procedures shall be taken so as to maximize any discounts offered by creditors. Current liabilities shall be paid within 30 days of receiving the invoices. Accounts receivable procedures shall target for a maximum of 60 days of service.

#### **IV. Capital Infrastructure and Equipment Replacement**

##### **Capital Expenditures and Improvements**

The City shall annually review and monitor the condition of the City's capital equipment and infrastructure, setting priorities for its replacement and renovation based on needs, funding alternatives and availability of resources.

##### **Capital Improvements Program**

The City shall annually review the Capital Improvements Program (CIP), potential new projects and the current status of the City's infrastructure, replacement and renovation needs, updating the program as appropriate. All projects, ongoing and proposed, shall be prioritized based on an analysis of current needs and resource availability, for every project, all operation, maintenance and replacement expenditures shall be fully casted. The CIP shall also present the City's long-term borrowing plan, debt payment schedules and other debt outstanding or planned, including general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, certificates of obligation and lease/purchase agreements.

##### **Replacement of Capital Assets (Equipment) on a Regular Schedule**

The City shall annually prepare a schedule for the replacement of its non-infrastructure capital assets. Within the resources available each fiscal year, the City shall replace these assets according to this schedule.

##### **Capital Expenditure Financing**

The City recognizes that there are several methods of financing capital requirements. It can budget the funds from current revenues; it can take the funds from fund balance/retained earnings as allowed by the Fund Balance/Net Assets Policy; it can utilize funds from grants and foundations or it can borrow money through debt. Debt financing includes general obligation bonds, revenue bonds,

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certificates of obligation, lease/purchase agreements and certificates of participation. Guidelines for assuming debt are set forth in the Debt Policy Statements.

A Capital Improvement Program shall be adopted for a period of five (5) years and reviewed annually for prioritization, based on analysis of the City's infrastructure. The replacement and maintenance for capital items shall also be projected for the next five (5) years. Future maintenance shall be fully cost, providing sufficient funding for future maintenance and replacement. The City shall identify the estimated costs and potential funding sources for each capital project proposal before it is submitted to council for approval. The City shall determine the least costly financing method for all new projects.

Where applicable, assessments, pro-rata charges or other user-based fees should be used to fund capital projects which have a limited benefit to the whole City.

Assets shall be maintained to protect the government's investment and minimize the future replacement and maintenance costs. The Annual operating budget shall provide for adequate maintenance and issuance of all capital plant and equipment.

## **V. Debt Management**

The City shall use the following guideline for debt financing which will provide needed capital equipment and infrastructure improvements while minimizing the impact of debt payments on current and future revenues.

### **Use of Debt Financing**

Debt financing, including general obligation bonds, revenue bonds, certificates of obligation and lease/purchase agreements, shall only be used to purchase capital assets. Debt payments should be structured to provide that capital assets, which are funded by the debt, have a longer life than the debt associated with those assets. Long Term Debt shall not be used for operating purposes. The life of the bonds shall not exceed the useful life of the projects.

### **Amortization of Debt**

The City shall structure new best issue payment schedules to utilize the City's declining debt payment schedules to keep tax increases for debt to a minimum. Capital projects that, by their character or size, are outside the normal core service projects will require careful evaluation of financial feasibility.

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### **Affordability Targets**

The City shall use an objective analytical approach to determine whether it can afford to assume new debt beyond the amount it retires each year. This process shall compare generally accepted standards of affordability to the current values for the City. These standards shall include debt per capita, debt as a percent of taxable value, debt service payments as a percent of current revenues and current expenditures and the level of overlapping net debt of all local taxing jurisdictions. The process shall also examine the direct costs and benefits of the proposed expenditures as determined in the City's annual update of the Capital Improvements Planning Program. The decision on whether or not to assume new debt shall be based on these costs and benefits and on the City's ability to "afford" new debt as determined by the aforementioned standards. The City shall use cities with similar bond ratings for debt ratio benchmarks.

### **Sale Process**

The City shall use a competitive bidding process in the sale of debt unless the nature of the issue warrants a negotiated bid. In situations where a competitive bidding process is not elected, the bond counsel/advisors shall present the reasons why to the City. Also, the City shall participate in the selection of the underwriter with the assistance of the bond counsel/advisors in the case of a negotiated bid.

### **Rating Agencies Presentations**

Full disclosure of operations and open lines of communications shall be made to the bond rating agencies. City staff, with assistance of financial advisors, shall prepare the necessary materials and presentation to the rating agencies.

### **Continuing Disclosure**

The City is committed to continuing disclosure of financial and pertinent credit information relevant to the City's outstanding securities.

### **Debt Refunding**

City staff and the financial advisor shall monitor the municipal bond market for opportunities to obtain interest savings by refunding outstanding debt.

When appropriate, self-supporting revenue bonds shall be issued before general obligation bonds. Interest earnings on bond proceeds shall be credited to the appropriate bond/capital fund. The bonds shall have a provision which allows them to be recalled after the tenth year of issue.

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The Debt Service Fund(s) reserves should equal ten percent (10%) of the current year's debt payment. This minimum does not include the amounts accruing for the next debt payment.

The City shall be actively involved in the selection of all bond counsel, advisors, underwriters, and paying agents. The City shall evaluate the merits of rotating professional advisors and consultants and the kinds of services and fee structures available from independent financial advisors, investment banking firms and commercial banks. Also, the City shall carefully itemize and scrutinize all costs associated with the issuance of bonds.

The City shall explore all funding alternatives in addition to long-term debt including leasing, grants, and other aid, developer contributions, capital recovery fees, and current funds.

The City will establish and maintain an equipment replacement fund. If any equipment is secured through a lease/purchase agreement, it will have a useful life of at least five (5) years.

## **VI. Cash Management and Investments**

The City's available cash shall be invested according to the standard of prudence set forth in Section 2256.0066 of the Texas Government Code. The following shall be the objectives of the City of Investment Policy listed in their order of importance: preservation of capital and protection of investment principal, maintenance of sufficient liquidity to meet anticipated cash flows, diversification to avoid unreasonable market risks and attainment of a market value rate of return. The investment income derived from pooled investment accounts shall be allocated to contributing funds based upon the proportions of respective average balances relative to total pooled balances.

## **VII. Intergovernmental Relations**

The City shall coordinate efforts with other governmental agencies to achieve common policy objectives, share the cost of providing government services on an equitable basis and support appropriate favorable legislation at the state and federal levels.

### **Inter local Cooperation in Delivering Services**

In order to promote the effective and efficient delivery of services, the City shall work with other local jurisdictions to share on an equitable basis the costs of services, to share facilities and to develop joint programs to improve service to its citizens.

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### **Legislative Program**

The City shall cooperate with other jurisdictions to actively oppose any state or federal regulation or proposal that mandates additional City programs or services and does not provide the funding for implementation.

## **VIII. Grants**

The City shall seek, apply for, obtain and effectively administer federal, state and foundation grants-in-aid that address the City's current and future priorities and policy objectives.

### **Grant Guidelines**

The City shall seek, apply for and obtain those grants that are consistent with priority needs and objectives identified by Council.

### **Grant Review**

The City shall review all grant submittals for their cash or in-kind match requirements, their potential impact on the operating budget and the extent to which they meet the City's policy objectives. If there are cash match requirements, the source of funding shall be identified and approved prior to application, as set forth in the Grant Policy.

## **IX. Economic Development**

The City shall initiate, encourage and participate in economic development efforts to create job opportunities and strengthen the local economy and tax base.

### **Commitment to Expansion and Diversification**

The City shall encourage and participate in economic development efforts to expand Lancaster's economy and tax base, to increase local employment and to invest when there is a defined specific long-term return. These efforts shall not only focus on new areas but on redevelopment of older areas and other established sections of Lancaster where development can generate additional jobs and other economic benefits.

### **Increase Non-Residential Share of Tax Base**

The City's economic development program shall seek to expand the non-residential share of the tax base to decrease the tax burden on residential homeowners.

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### **Coordinate Efforts with Other Jurisdictions**

The City's economic development program shall encourage close cooperation with other local jurisdictions to promote the economic well-being of this area.

### **Use of Other Incentives**

The City shall use tax re-investment zones as allowed by law and shall seek new sources to encourage business expansion. The City shall also coordinate with state and federal agencies on offering any incentive programs they may provide for potential economic expansion.

## **X. Fiscal Monitoring**

Reports shall be prepared and presented on a regular basis to analyze, evaluate and forecast the City's financial performance and economic condition for the current year and for multi-years.

### **Financial Status and Performance Reports**

Quarterly reports shall be prepared comparing expenditures and revenues to current budget for fiscal year-to-date, and to prior year actual fiscal year-to-date.

### **Five-Year Forecast of Revenues and Expenditures**

A five-year forecast of revenues and expenditures, including a discussion of major trends affecting the City's financial position, shall be prepared. The forecast shall examine critical issues facing the City, economic conditions and the outlook for the upcoming budget year. The document shall incorporate elements of the International City Management Association financial trend monitoring system, providing further insight into the City's financial position and alerting the Council to potential problem areas requiring attention.

## **XI. Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting**

The City shall comply with prevailing local, state and federal regulations. Its accounting practices and financial reporting shall conform to generally accepted accounting principles promulgated by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB), the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) and the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The City Council shall select an independent firm of certified public accountants to perform an annual audit of all operations. The City shall continue to participate in the Government Finance Officers Association's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting program and the Texas

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Comptroller's Office Leadership Circle program promoting financial transparency.

The City will follow a five-year review and optional rotation of external (independent) auditors. The auditors must demonstrate that they have the experience and adequate staffing to handle the City's audit in a timely manner. The audited financial statements should be prepared within 120 days of the close of the fiscal year.

Annual reporting will be done within the guidelines set forth in the Governmental Accounting and Auditing Financial Review and under the standards currently being set by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. Interim activity reports will be made available to council and management.

Full disclosure will be provided in the financial statements and bond representations.

Financial systems will be maintained to monitor expenditures and revenues on a monthly basis with a thorough analysis and adjustment (if required) at mid-year.

The City will strive to maintain accounting policies and practices in the preparation of its annual financial report. The report will be presented to the Governmental Finance Officers Association for review of qualifications that meet those necessary to obtain the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

## **XII. Internal Controls**

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for developing citywide written guidelines on accounting, cash handling, and other financial matters that will be approved by the City Manager. The Chief Financial Officer will assist department heads as needed in tailoring these guidelines into detailed written procedures to fit each department's specific requirements.

Each department head is responsible to ensure that good internal controls are followed throughout his or her department, that all finance department guidelines on accounting and internal controls are implemented, and that all independent auditor internal control recommendations are addressed.



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### **XIII. Risk Management**

The City will utilize a safety program, an employee health program and a risk management program to prevent and/or reduce the financial impact on the City from claims and losses. Transfer of liability for claims will be utilized where appropriate via transfer to other entities through insurance and/or by contract. Prevention of claims through the safety program and the employee health program will be employed.

### **XIV. Operating Budget**

The City shall establish an operating budget, which shall link revenues and expenditures to the goals of the City Council. It will be the City's goal to participate in the Government Finance Officers Association's Distinguished Budget Presentation Award program and to obtain the award annually.

Current operating revenue will be sufficient to support current operating expenditures. Debt or bond financing will not be used to finance current expenditures. Deferrals, short-term loans, or one-time sources shall be avoided as budget balancing techniques. Annually recurring revenue will not be less than annually recurring operating budget expenditures (operating budget minus capital outlay) or Council may authorize the City Manager to utilize unrestricted fund balance to make up the difference.

The City has developed a program to integrate performance measures and productivity indicators within the annual budget.

### **XV. Five Year Financial Plans**

#### **Capital Improvement Plan**

The City shall prepare annually a five-year Capital Improvements Plan that incorporates all capital funds, existing and planned, showing planned projects by phase and by fiscal year. The first year of this CIP shall constitute the City's capital budget for the year.

#### **Long Range Financial Forecast**

The City shall prepare annually a Long Range Financial Forecast that projects revenue and expenditures for the General, Utility, Debt Service and any other major fund for a five-year period. The forecast shall attempt to determine the impact on future revenue and expenditures from changes in the economy, population change, and implementation of the CIP including planned bond sales.