



# Principles of Sound Financial Management

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
Policy 1 Fiscal Planning and Budgeting .....	4
Policy 2 Fund Balance.....	7
Policy 3 Revenues.....	9
Policy 4 Expenditures .....	11
Policy 5 Grants.....	12
Policy 6 Cost of Service and User Fees .....	13
Policy 7 Capital Improvement Program.....	15
Policy 8 Capital Asset Accounting and Replacement .....	17
Policy 9 Cash Management and Investment.....	18
Policy 10 Debt Management.....	19
Policy 11 Utility Enterprise Funds .....	21
Policy 12 Economic Development .....	22
Policy 13 Risk Management.....	24
Policy 14 Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting .....	25
Police 15 Policy Review.....	27

## Introduction

The City of Littleton “the City” is a rule municipality operating under its City Charter. The city functions under a council-manager form of government with the City Council consisting of seven members, four elected by district and three at large.

The city has an important responsibility to its citizens to carefully account for public funds, to manage its finances wisely, and to plan for the adequate funding of services desired by the public, including the provision and maintenance of public facilities. In times of tight budgets, of major changes in federal and state policies toward local government, and of limited growth in the city's tax base, the city needs to ensure that it is capable of adequately funding and providing those government services desired by the community. Ultimately, the city's reputation and success will depend on the public's awareness and acceptability of the management and delivery of these services.

These adopted Principles of Sound Financial Management establish guidelines for the city's overall fiscal planning and management. These principles are intended to foster and support the continued financial strength and stability of the City of Littleton as reflected in its financial goals. The city's financial goals are broad, fairly timeless statements of the financial position the city seeks to attain:

- To deliver quality services in an affordable, efficient and cost-effective basis providing full value for each tax dollar.
- To maintain an adequate financial base to sustain a sufficient level of municipal services, thereby preserving the quality of life in the City of Littleton.
- To have the ability to withstand local and regional economic fluctuations, to adjust to changes in the service requirements of our community, and to respond to changes in Federal and State priorities and funding as they affect the city's residents.
- To maintain a high bond credit rating to ensure the city's access to the bond markets and to provide assurance to the city's taxpayers that the city government is well managed and financially sound.

Following these principles will enhance the city's financial health as well as its image and credibility with its citizens; the public in general, bond rating agencies and investors. To achieve these purposes as the City of Littleton continues to grow and develop, it is important to regularly engage in the process of financial planning including reaffirming and updating these financial guidelines. Policy changes will be needed as the city continues to grow and become more diverse and complex in the services it provides, as well as the organization under which it operates to provide these services to its citizens.

A number of source documents provide the financial policies for the City. The State Constitution and the City Charter provide the basic legal requirements and timelines for policies; while the City Council approves ordinances and resolutions that provide more specific direction that responds to the needs of the city.

## **Policy 1**

### **Fiscal Planning and Budgeting**

Fiscal planning refers to the process of identifying resources and allocating those resources among numerous and complex competing purposes. The primary vehicle for this planning is the preparation, monitoring and analysis of the city's budget. It is increasingly important to incorporate a long-term perspective and to monitor the performance of the programs competing to receive funding.

- 1.1 The City Manager shall submit to the City Council a proposed annual budget, based on Council's established goals, and shall execute the budget as finally adopted, pursuant to 29-1-101 of the Colorado Revised Statutes. The city will budget revenues and expenditures on the basis of a fiscal year which begins January 1 and ends on December 31. The city manager is required to submit a budget for the ensuing fiscal year no later than September fifteenth (15th) of each year. In accordance with Section 77 of the city charter, not less than thirty (30) days prior to the first day of the next fiscal year, the council shall adopt the budget and a bill for the appropriation ordinance, which will become effective five (5) days after final publication. If the appropriations for the budget year have not been made by December 31 of the current fiscal year, then ninety percent of the amount appropriated in the current fiscal year for operation and maintenance expenses shall be deemed reappropriated for the budget year.
- 1.2 The city will prepare a five-year long-range financial forecast that will incorporate both revenue and expenditure estimates for the city's major operating funds. The five-year revenue forecast will identify revenues that are anticipated to be sustainable over the five year period. The five-year long-range forecast will be updated annually and presented to the City Council during the city budget process or more often as requested by council.
- 1.3 The city will prepare a budget in accordance with Government Finance Officers Association policies and best practices and its Distinguished Budget Award Program. The budget will contain the following:
  - a) Revenue estimates from all revenue sources by major category, by fund;
  - b) Expenditure estimates by department, program levels or major expenditure category, by fund;
  - c) Estimated fund balance or cash balance by fund;
  - d) Debt service, by issue, detailing principal and interest amounts;
  - e) Proposed personnel staffing levels;
  - f) A detailed schedule of capital projects;
  - g) Comparative figures for revenues and expenditures for at least two prior years.
  - g) Any additional information, data, or analysis requested of management by the City Council.
- 1.4 The city maintains its financial records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) which recommends using the modified accrual basis for the General Fund, Special Revenue Funds, Capital Projects Fund and Internal Service Funds. The budgets for the enterprise funds and the TABOR Enterprises are adopted on a basis

consistent with GAAP (which is the accrual basis) except that bond proceeds are treated as other financing sources, capital outlay and debt service are treated as expenditures and depreciation and capital contributions are not budgeted. Although the city's budget is prepared on basis that differs from GAAP, the city will attempt to minimize these differences between the budget basis of accounting and GAAP.

- 1.5 The operating budget will be based on the principle that current operating expenditures, including debt service, will be funded with current revenues. Funds will pay the indirect cost charges for services provided by another fund. The budget will not use one-time (non-recurring) sources to fund continuing (recurring) uses, postpone expenditures, or use external borrowing for operational requirements. The budget will incorporate the best available estimates of revenues and expenditures.
- 1.6 A system will be used to facilitate position control. The number of full-time and regular part-time employees on the payroll shall not exceed the total number of positions authorized by the City Council. Additional temporary appointment of employees can be made with the approval of the City Manager. The budget will identify the resources required to support the authorized staffing.
- 1.7 Priority Based Budgeting may be utilized in the budget process to ensure alignment with Council goals and organization strategic efforts. Data will be used to support budgetary decisions.
- 1.8 Ideas for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the city's programs and the productivity of its employees will be considered during the budget process.
- 1.9 Purchase orders remaining open at the end of the fiscal year will be considered for reappropriation in the subsequent fiscal year through a supplemental budget appropriation in the respective fund.
- 1.10 The city shall establish appropriate management controls to monitor expenditure budgets to ensure they do not exceed authorizations. For operating budgets, this control shall be exercised at the department/fund level. For capital budgets, this control shall be at the project level.
- 1.11 Periodic reports will be prepared on the status of the General Fund budget and revenue trends will be prepared and provided to the City Council.
- 1.12 If a deficit is projected during the course of a fiscal year, the city will take steps to reduce expenditures, increase revenues or, if a deficit is caused by an emergency, consider using the Unassigned General Fund Balance. The City Manager may institute a cessation during the fiscal year on hirings, promotions, transfers, capital equipment purchases, and capital projects. Such action will not be taken arbitrarily or without knowledge of the City Council.
- 1.13 A policy will be maintained that provides for levels of approval by the City Manager and/or Council. The policy will address the transfer of expenditure authority between funds, transfer of expenditure authority over base amounts, transfer of expenditure

authority to and from personnel, contractual, commodities or capital outlay accounts, transfer of expenditure authority between capital projects, transfer of expenditure authority to or from debt service accounts, and transfer of expenditure authority to or from contingency accounts.

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## Policy 2 Fund Balance

Fund balance is an important indicator of the city's financial position. Maintaining reserves is considered a prudent management practice. Adequate fund balances are maintained to allow the city to continue providing services to the community in case of unexpected emergencies or requirements and/or economic downturns.

- 2.1 In an effort to ensure the continuance of sound financial management of public resources, the City of Littleton's Unassigned General Fund Balance will be maintained to provide the city with sufficient working capital and a comfortable margin of safety to address emergencies, sudden loss of revenue or operating needs, and unexpected downturns without borrowing.

This policy establishes the amounts the city will strive to maintain in its General Fund balance, the conditions under which fund balance may be spent, and the method by which fund balances will be restored. These amounts are expressed as goals, recognizing that fund balance levels can fluctuate from year to year in the normal course of operations for any local government.

- 2.2 It is the intent of the city to limit use of Unassigned General Fund balances to address unanticipated, non-recurring needs or known and planned future obligations. Fund balances shall not normally be applied to recurring annual operating expenditures. Unassigned balances may, however, be used to allow time for the city to restructure its operations in a deliberate manner, but such use will only take place in the context of long- term financial planning.
- 2.3 Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution requires three percent (3%) reserve for declared emergencies, which excludes financial emergencies. The use of this reserve is restricted to the purpose for which it was established and can be used solely for declared emergencies. Any usage of Emergency Reserves must be appropriated by the City Council. However, the City Manager may utilize these funds when immediate action must be taken to protect the health and safety of residents. When this occurs, the City Manager shall provide a summary report to the Council as soon as practical on the usage of these funds. In the event these "Emergency Reserve" funds are used, the city shall strive to restore the General Fund Emergency Reserve to the three percent (3%) level within the same fiscal year in which the event occurred.
- 2.4 The city will maintain additional General Fund "Operating Reserves". The minimum reserve amount is eight percent (8%) of approved General Fund operating expenditures with the desired maximum not to exceed eighteen percent (18%) at the end of the five year long range forecast. The Operating Reserve is intended to be a reserve for unforeseen and unexpected reductions in revenues or expenditures that are greater than the current year revenues and is included in unassigned Fund Balance in the General Fund. Included in this 8-18% reserve amount is the TABOR reserve of 3% as noted in the preceding paragraph.

Any use of the Operating Reserve funds must include a repayment plan that projects to

restore the Operating Reserve to the percentage level approved by city council within two fiscal years following the fiscal year in which the event occurred.

- 2.5 Funds in excess of the TABOR reserve described in the paragraphs above, will be Unassigned Fund Balance, unless otherwise assigned in accordance with GASB Statement #54.
- 2.6 The City Manager or designee is authorized to classify available fund balance for specific purposes in accordance with Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement #54. It is the policy of the city that expenditures for which more than one category of fund balance could be used, that the order of use is: Restricted Fund Balance, Committed Fund Balance, Assigned Fund Balance, and Unassigned Fund Balance.

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## **Policy 3**

### **Revenues**

A top priority of the city council is to improve the fiscal health of the city. In order to provide funding for service delivery, the city must have reliable revenue sources. These revenues must be assessed and collected equitably, timely, and efficiently.

As a home rule municipality, the city has the ability to determine the extent to which fees should be used to fund city facilities, infrastructure and services. Fees are charged to customers, citizens, and other parties for city services and must be commensurate with the service provided. Fee amount should recapture the cost of providing these services. The city relies on user fees and charges to supplement other revenue sources in order to provide public services.

- 3.1 The city will analyze future potential sources of revenue, as well as the usefulness and cost effectiveness of all city services and programs as part of the budget process each year. Such analysis will be reported to council for consideration in the review of each budget proposal.
- 3.2 While diversifying the revenue base is preferred, the city depends heavily on sales and use tax to fund daily operations. This results in an economic sensitivity, specifically in the General Fund and the Capital Projects Fund. The General Fund revenue base consists of sales and use taxes, property taxes, intergovernmental revenues, fines and forfeitures, charges for services, license and permits, and other revenue sources.
- 3.3 The city will strive to maintain a diversified and stable revenue base to shelter it from economic changes or short-term fluctuations by doing the following:
  - a) Periodically conducting a cost of service study to determine if all allowable fees are being properly calculated and set at an appropriate level.
  - b) Establishing new charges and fees as appropriate and as permitted by law.
  - c) Pursuing legislative change, when necessary, to permit changes or establishment of user charges and fees.
  - d) Collecting all revenues, late penalties and related interest as allowed by law.
  - e) Establishing reserve policies to allow for possible economic downturns.
- 3.4 The finance department will provide a monthly sales and use tax summary report on revenue collections and trends.
- 3.5 The city may establish user fees and charges for certain services provided to users receiving a specific benefit.
- 3.6 On a regular basis, the city will conduct a cost of service study to identify the full cost of providing a service for which fees are charged. The calculation of full cost will include all reasonable and justifiable direct and indirect cost components.

- 3.7 User fees shall be reviewed 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. Competing policy objectives may result in reduced user fees and charges that recover only a portion of service costs.
- 3.8 The city shall establish cost allocation models to determine the administrative service charges due to the appropriate operating fund for overhead and staff support provided to another fund.

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## Policy 4

### Expenditures

Management must ensure compliance with the legally adopted budget. In addition, purchases and expenditures must comply with legal requirements and policies and procedures set forth by the city.

- 4.1 Expenditures will be controlled by an annual appropriated budget at the fund level. The city manager and finance director have authority to transfer any unencumbered appropriation balance or portion thereof from one classification of expenditure to another within the same department, office or agency, in accordance with Section 78 of the city charter: provided that such transfers over \$100,000 per transaction would require formal council consent. The City Council shall establish appropriations through the budget process. Written procedures will be maintained for administrative approval and processing of certain budget transfers within funds. A list of all budget transfers will be provided to city council quarterly.
- 4.2 Department heads are responsible for monitoring expenditures to prevent exceeding their total departmental budget. It is the responsibility of these department heads to immediately notify the city's finance department and the City Manager of any circumstances that could result in a departmental budget being exceeded.
- 4.3 The city will maintain a purchasing system that provides needed commodities and services in a timely manner to avoid interruptions in the delivery of services. All purchases shall be made in accordance with the city's purchasing policies, guidelines and procedures and applicable state and federal laws. The city will endeavor to obtain supplies, equipment and services that provide the best value.
- 4.4 A system of appropriate internal controls and procedures using best practices shall be maintained for the procurement and payment processes. The city will endeavor to make all payments within the established terms.

## **Policy 5**

### **Grants**

Many grants require Council's appropriation of funds, either for the original grant or to continue programs after the grant funding has expired. Council should review these grant opportunities prior to determining whether application should be made for these grant funds.

- 5.1 The city shall apply for only those grants that are consistent with the objectives and high priority needs previously identified by Council. The potential for incurring ongoing costs, to include the assumption of support for grant-funded positions from local revenues, will be considered prior to applying for a grant.
- 5.2 All grant submittals shall be reviewed for their cash match requirements, their potential impact on the operating budget, and the extent to which they meet the city's policy objectives. When the potential for expenditures is \$50,000 or more, departments should seek Council approval prior to submission of the grant application. Should time constraints under the grant make this impossible, the department shall obtain written approval to submit the grant application from the City Manager and then, at the earliest feasible time, seek formal Council approval. Council will be informed of any financial obligations that will be incurred by the city. If there is a cash match requirement, the source of funding shall be identified prior to application.
- 5.3 The city shall terminate grant-funded programs and associated positions when the grant has expired and funds are no longer available unless alternate funding is identified.

## Policy 6

### Capital Facility Impact Fees

The Council's policy is that to the extent reasonable, growth should pay for itself and that existing residents and existing services are not financially burdened by new growth. As such, the Council has adopted a schedule of capital facility impact fees. Capital facility impact fees are one-time charges assessed to applicants for nonresidential and residential development in the city to fund capital improvements needed to address demand attributable to new development for fire, museum, police, facilities, library and transportation. Developer contributed assets will be considered for credits against the impact fee. Appropriate development fees are an important component in the overall strategy for financing capital improvements.

- 6.1 The city's objectives for development impact fees shall include the following:
  - a) Support the reasonable cost of growth.
  - b) Consider the impact of growth on existing residents.
  - c) Develop cost justified development fees.
  - d) Address infrastructure requirements.
  - e) Promote economic development.
  - f) Provide financial capacity.
  
- 6.2 In general, development impact fees must be based on a rational analysis. This analysis will include:
  - a) a reasonable assessment of the impacts of growth on the city's capital needs as identified in an infrastructure improvement plan;
  - b) a determination that the amount of the fee does not exceed the reasonable cost to provide capacity to accommodate growth;
  - c) a separate accounting of funds collected; and
  - d) an identification of potential liabilities or offsets to recognize other financial commitments resulting from development.
  
- 6.3 Colorado statutes enable the use of impact fees and dictate the following fee requirements:
  - a) Impact fees are a one-time payment levied on new development;
  - b) Funds can only be used for capital infrastructure projects;
    - Applicable projects must have a five year life;
    - No funds can be diverted for operations, maintenance, repair or facility replacement purposes.
  - c) Fee revenues must be segregated from other general revenues and used for the purposes for which they were collected.
  - d) Fees but must be imposed on all forms of development and cannot be limited to one type of land use;
  - e) Impact fee revenues must be used for capital infrastructure expansion. No funds can be used for correction of existing system deficiencies; and
  - f) There must be a reasonable expectation of benefit by the fee payer.
  
- 6.4 Development impact fees may be utilized for a public infrastructure purpose such as:
  - a) Libraries

- b) Museums
  - c) Parks, recreation facilities, trails and open space
  - d) Buildings for fire and/or police
  - e) Equipment that has at least a five-year lifetime
  - f) General government
  - g) Transportation (streets and infrastructure)
- 6.5 The city will monitor the use of impact fees and will provide an annual impact fee report according to Colorado Revised Statute, 29-1-803.
- 6.6 The city shall conduct a review of its capital facility impact fees on a periodic basis.

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## **Policy 7**

### **Capital Improvement Program**

The purpose of the Capital Improvement Program is to systematically identify, plan, schedule, finance, track and monitor capital projects to ensure cost-effectiveness as well as conformance to established policies.

- 7.1 The City Manager will annually submit a fiscally constrained, multi-year Capital Improvement Program for review by the City Council pursuant to the timeline established in the annual budget preparation schedule. The Capital Improvement Program will incorporate a methodology to determine a general sense of project priority according to developed criteria.
- 7.2 The Capital Improvement Program shall provide:
  - a) A statement of the objectives of the Capital Improvement Program and the relationship with the city's General Plan, department master plans, necessary service levels, and expected facility needs.
  - b) An implementation program for each of the capital improvements that provides for the coordination and timing of project construction among various city departments.
  - c) An estimate of each project's costs, anticipated sources of revenue for financing the project, and an estimate of the impact of each project on city revenues and operating budgets. The operating impact information shall be provided for the period covered in the city's current five year Capital Improvement Program. No capital project shall be funded unless operating impacts have been assessed and the necessary funds can be reasonably anticipated to be available when needed.
  - d) For the systematic improvement, maintenance, and replacement of the city's capital infrastructure as needed.
  - e) A schedule of proposed debt requirements, if any.
- 7.3 The city will match programs and activities identified in the Capital Improvement Program with associated funding sources.
- 7.4 The performance and continued use of capital infrastructure is essential to delivering public services. Deferring essential maintenance and/or asset replacement can negatively impact service delivery and increase long term costs. As such, the city will periodically assess the condition of assets and infrastructure and appropriately plan for required major maintenance and replacement needs. Efforts will be made to allocate sufficient funds in the multi-year capital plan and operating budgets for condition assessment, preventative and major maintenance, and repair and replacement of critical infrastructure assets.
- 7.5 The city's objective is to incorporate "Pay-As-You-Go" funding (using available cash resources) in the annual Capital Improvement Program. This will supplement funding from other sources such as IGAs, bonds, impact fees and grants.
- 7.6 The first year of the adopted capital plan will be the capital budget for that fiscal year.

- 7.7 Staff will monitor projects in progress to ensure their timely completion or the adjustment of the Capital Improvement Program as approved by Council if a project is delayed or deferred. Periodic status reports will be presented to City Council to share project progress and identify significant issues associated with a project.
- 7.8 Within 90 days of the completion of a capital project any remaining appropriated funds for the project will revert to the fund balance of the funding source.
- 7.9 The Capital Improvement Program will be updated annually as a multi-departmental effort.

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**Policy 8**  
**Capital Asset Accounting and Replacement**

An effective capital asset accounting system is important in managing the city's capital asset investment.

- 8.1 The city will account for and maintain a schedule of individual capital assets in accordance with written capital asset procedures. For financial reporting purposes, capital assets recorded in the capital asset accounting system will meet the following criteria:
- a) Have estimated useful lives in excess of one year.
  - b) Have values greater than or equal to \$5,000 for all assets, and
  - c) Are capable of being identified, tracked and accounted for.

All items not meeting the above criteria will be recorded as operating expenditures.

- 8.2 The city will provide replacement funding for certain fleet vehicles, certain computer equipment, and other assets as deemed necessary. Replacement funds or reserves will be determined as part of the annual budget process.
- 8.3 City departments shall maintain proper procedures and effective internal controls to track and safeguard capital assets, conduct periodic inventory of assets and maintain assets in working condition.

## **Policy 9**

### **Cash Management and Investment**

Cash management includes the activities undertaken to ensure maximum cash availability and reasonable investment yield on a government's idle cash, and the cash collection function.

- 9.1 The city shall maintain and comply with a written Investment Policy that has been approved by the City Council. The Finance Director, or his designee, shall invest all funds of the city according to the approved Investment Policy.
- 9.2 The city will collect, deposit and disburse all funds on a schedule that ensures optimum cash availability for investment.
- 9.3 Cash shall be pooled for investment purposes.
- 9.4 The investment income derived from the pooled investment accounts shall be allocated to the contributing funds based upon the proportion of the respective balances relative to the total pooled balance in the investment portfolio. Interest earnings shall be distributed to the individual funds on a monthly basis.
- 9.5 Bond funds will be segregated from all other funds for arbitrage and accounting purposes.
- 9.6 The city will project the cash needs of the city to optimize the efficiency of the city's investment and cash management program.
- 9.7 The city shall maintain a list of brokers/dealers approved for investment purposes from authorized firms.
- 9.8 Ownership of the city's investment securities will be protected through third party custodial safekeeping.
- 9.9 All city bank accounts shall be reconciled and reviewed on a monthly basis.
- 9.10 The Finance Director shall provide the City Council with periodic investment reports.
- 9.11 The city's investment processes will be in accordance with written internal controls and procedures.
- 9.12 The city will provide a cash collection, handling, training and procedures program for all departments affected.

## **Policy 10**

### **Debt Management**

The city utilizes long term debt to finance capital projects with long useful lives. Financing capital projects with debt provides for an "intergenerational equity" as the actual users of the capital asset pay for its cost over time, rather than one group of users paying in advance for the costs of the asset.

The purpose of this debt management policy is to provide for the preservation and eventual enhancement of the city's bond ratings, the maintenance of adequate debt service reserves, compliance with debt instrument covenants and provisions, compliance with Internal Revenue Service Regulations, and required disclosures to investors, underwriters and rating agencies.

These policy guidelines will also be used when evaluating the purpose, necessity and condition under which debt will be issued. These policies are meant to supplement the legal framework of public debt laws provided by the Colorado Constitution, State Statutes, City Charter, federal tax laws and the city's current bond resolutions and covenants.

The city's charter limits the city's bonded debt capacity (outstanding principal) to certain percentages of the city's assessed valuation by the type of project to be constructed. Projects involving water and/or sewer improvements issued without an election shall not exceed 5% of assessed valuation. There is a limit of 3.7% of assessed valuation for any other general- purpose project.

- 10.1 All projects funded with city general obligation bonds, other than sewer and/or water, will only be undertaken with voter approval as required through a city bond election.
- 10.2 Water and/or sewer general obligation bonds, may be issued without an election if the total of existing and proposed bonds shall not exceed 5% of the assessed valuation of the taxable property within the City as shown by the last preceding assessment for tax purposes.
- 10.3 The overall debt management policy of the city will ensure that financial resources of the city are adequate in any general economic situation to not preclude the city's ability to pay its debt when due.
- 10.4 The city will not use long-term debt to fund current operations or smaller projects that can be financed from current revenues or resources. The city will first attempt to utilize "pay as you go" capital financing and/or the use of operating funds or impact fees where applicable.
- 10.5 The issuance of variable rate debt by the city will be subject to the most careful review and will be issued only in a prudent and fiscally responsible manner.
- 10.6 The city shall attempt to combine debt issuances in order to minimize issuance costs.
- 10.7 Revenue bonds may be issued in accordance with Colorado Revised Statutes.
- 10.8 The investment of bond proceeds shall at all times be in compliance with the city's Investment and Portfolio Policies and meet all requirements of bond covenants.

- 10.9 The city shall comply with all U.S. Internal Revenue Service arbitrage rebate requirements for bonded indebtedness.
- 10.10 The city shall comply with Colorado Revised Statutes and all other legal requirements regarding the issuance of bonds and certificates of the city or its debt issuing authorities.
- 10.11 The city will maintain regular contact with rating agencies through telephonic conferences, meetings, or visits on and off-site. The city will secure ratings on all bonds issued when economically feasible.
- 10.12 The city's Finance Department shall maintain a debt profile for all bonds issued and update the profile on an annual basis. The debt profile shall include specific information regarding the size and type of debt issued, projects financed by the bonds, debt service schedules and other pertinent information related to each specific bond issue.

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**Policy 11**  
**Utility Enterprise Funds**

Government utility enterprises generate revenue to recover the cost of providing wastewater and solid waste services. User charges are established to recover the cost of providing these services.

- 11.1 Separate funds will be established and maintained to properly account for each utility operation. Utility funds will not be used to subsidize the operations of other non-utility funds. Interfund charges will be assessed for the administrative support of the Sewer Utility Enterprise Fund.
- 11.2 The city will establish rates and fees at levels that recover the total direct and indirect costs, including operations, capital outlay, unrestricted cash reserve requirements, debt service and debt coverage requirements for wastewater and solid waste services. Rates will be reviewed in conjunction with the city's annual capital planning and budgeting processes.
- 11.3 All existing sewer rates and charges will be reviewed periodically to recommend necessary rate adjustments. Bond covenants may exist that require maintaining a minimum debt coverage ratio of at least 1.10 times.
- 11.4 The City of Littleton's Enterprise Operating Fund working capital will be maintained to provide the city with a comfortable margin of safety to address emergencies and unexpected declines in revenue without borrowing. The cash reserve balance (working capital) goal for the wastewater enterprise operating funds will be at least eight percent (8%) of the operating expenditures for the fiscal year.
- 11.5 The city will maintain a "Rate Stabilization Fund" in Wastewater Funds of as per bond requirements, if any. In the event the "Rate Stabilization Fund" is used, the city shall strive to restore the Fund to the required percentage level, currently three percent (3%), within the next fiscal year following the fiscal year in which the fund was used.
- 11.6 A rate stabilization fund will be established for the water and wastewater funds if the city issues variable rate debt. The goal of the stabilization fund will be to be sufficient to support the use of variable rate debt within these enterprise operations.
- 11.7 Solid waste rates and charges will be established and reviewed periodically. The city will separate wastewater treatment and collection fees and expenses with the goal that these two services will independently support themselves, creating sufficient revenues to recover expenditures and maintain specified cash balances (working capital).

## **Policy 12**

### **Economic Development**

The Council has established an economic incentives policy that supports strengthening the quality of life for our citizens, visitors, and businesses and fosters a long-term economic sustainable vision. The city encourages developers to bring forward incentive requests for projects that maintain or improve our community's quality of life and focus on the long-term economic sustainability and character of the community.

- 12.1 The city will strive to expand and diversify its economic base by attracting and expanding targeted industries to the city. Special emphasis will be given to targeted industries that will employ the local labor force in professional, technical and skilled labor positions. Such business and industry will be sited and developed in accordance with the plans, policies and ordinances of the city.
- 12.2 To be considered for an incentive agreement, all projects must align with one or more of the following:
  - a) City-Wide Plan,
  - b) Comprehensive Plan,
  - c) Relevant design standards, and
  - d) City Council's Goals and Objectives
- 12.3 Projects will be evaluated on how they incorporate elements of the general criteria listed below and specific requirements based on project type, in addition to financial considerations.
  - a) How the project represents significant private-sector financial investment
  - b) How the project demonstrates highest and best use of the property
  - c) How the project provides a positive fiscal and economic impact to the city
  - d) How the project mitigates any perceived or potential negative impacts to the surrounding area
  - e) How the project demonstrates a long-term commitment to the city
  - f) How the project is developed in a sustainable and environmentally conscious manner
- 12.4 All projects must incorporate elements of the General Criteria listed above in additional to specific requirements based on the following project types:
  - a) Retail Development - A retail development may be considered for an incentive agreement if the proposed project:
    1. Adds new and unique tenant(s) to the market and/or trade area, and
    2. Minimizes the impacts of consumer expenditure cannibalization from existing businesses in the city

- b) Primary Employment - A commercial development which includes a substantial primary employment component may be considered for an incentive agreement if the proposed project:
    - 1. Provides quality employment opportunities for Littleton’s citizens and the region, and
      - a. Minimum of 50 net new jobs at a pay rate equal to 66% (not including benefits) of the area per capita income
    - 2. Displays a significant investment in the property by purchasing real property within the city, and/or making significant capital improvements
  - c) Commercial/Mixed-Use Annexation - Littleton may provide incentives to enable the annexation of developed, partially developed, or vacant land that is commercial or mixed-use in nature if the project/property:
    - 1. Is contiguous to the city limits and is a geographically logical addition, and
    - 2. Is reasonably served by the city and its service/infrastructure providers
  - d) Redevelopment/Revitalization - A redevelopment and/or revitalization project may be considered for an incentive agreement if the proposed project:
    - 1. Improves the financial performance and viability of the existing property, and
    - 2. Enhances the area and reflects the character of the community
  - a) Residential Development - Residential development that meets the needs of the community and that makes and dedicates to the city any capital improvements beyond those required by the code, may qualify for an impact fee credit under §11-7-4 of the Littleton City Code
- 12.5 The city may consider a variety of development incentives that clearly benefit the city. Incentives to pursue economic development objectives and implementation strategies may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
- a) Sales Tax reimbursement
  - b) Use Tax reimbursement
  - c) Construction Use Tax reimbursement
  - d) Fee Credits/ Refunds
  - e) Grant Programs
  - f) Other available incentives on a case-by-case basis as the city council deems appropriate.
- 12.6 The project will be evaluated and the city manager determines whether the proposed incentive agreement will be presented to city council for consideration in a public meeting. Littleton’s City Council considers all incentive requests on a case-by-case basis, and ultimately reserves the right to approve or reject any proposed incentive agreement.
- 12.7 Preference may be given to applications from within the Littleton Blvd., Belleview, North Broadway, and Santa Fe corridors.

## **Policy 13**

### **Risk Management**

Risk management has become increasingly important in guarding against economic loss and in ensuring public safety in a time of increasing public liability and litigation. Risk management is involved in the identification, evaluation, and treatment of the city's risk.

- 13.1 The city shall make diligent efforts to prevent or mitigate the loss of city assets and to reduce the city's exposure to liability through training, safety, risk financing and the transfer of risk when cost effective.
- 13.2 When cost effective, the city shall manage its exposure to risk through self-insurance or through the purchase of traditional third-party insurance in the following areas: general liability, automobile liability, public officials' errors and omissions, police professional liability, and property loss.
- 13.3 When cost effective, the city will further control its exposure to risk through the use of "hold harmless" agreements in city contracts and by requiring contractors to carry liability insurance, including errors and omissions coverage for architectural, engineering, and other applicable professional firms.
- 13.4 Insurance reserves shall be maintained at a level which, together with any purchased insurance, will adequately indemnify the city's assets and its elected officials, officers and directors against loss. A regular study will be conducted for potential liability areas and shall be used as a basis for determining self-insurance reserves based on historical loss data. The city will strive to fully fund actual and estimated liabilities including reserves for incurred-but-not-reported (IBNR) claims.
- 13.5 The city will identify and disclose material contingent liabilities in the city's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).
- 13.6 Cost allocations to various funds will be based on an analysis of contributing factors.

## Policy 14

### Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting

Accounting, auditing and financial reporting form the informational infrastructure for public finance. Internal and external financial reports provide important information to the city's legislative body, management, citizens, investors and creditors.

- 14.1 The city will comply with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States (GAAP), as well as Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS) and Generally Accepted Governmental Auditing Standards (GAGAS) in its accounting and financial reporting, as contained in the following publications, as applicable:
- a) Codification of Governmental Accounting and Financial Reporting Standards, issued by the Governmental Accounting Standard Board (GASB) as well as earlier standard setting boards.
  - b) Pronouncements of the Financial Accounting Standards Board, (FASB) issued prior to December 1, 1989.
  - c) Governmental Accounting, Auditing, and Financial Reporting (GAAFR), issued by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) of the United States and Canada.
  - d) Financial Management Manual, prepared by the State of Colorado.
  - e) Audits of State and Local Governmental Units, an industry audit guide published by the American Institute of Certified Public Accounts (AICPA) and any applicable Statements of Position (SOPs) and Statements of Auditing Standards (SASs) issued by the AICPA.
  - f) Government Auditing Standards (also known as the Yellow Book), issued by the Controller General of the United States.
  - g) Uniform Guidance, issued by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
- 14.2 Monthly financial reports will be made available to all departments summarizing financial activity and comparing actual revenues and expenditures with budgeted amounts.
- 14.3 A system of internal accounting controls and procedures will be maintained to provide reasonable assurance of the safeguarding of assets, the proper recording of financial transactions of the city, and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- 14.4 In accordance with State law and City Charter requirements, a comprehensive financial audit, including an audit of federal grants according to the Single Audit Act and the OMB Uniform Guidance (if applicable), will be performed annually by an independent public accounting firm, with the objective of expressing an opinion on the city's financial statements. The city will prepare its financial statements in accordance with applicable standards and will account for its operations in a manner consistent with the goal of obtaining an unmodified opinion from its auditors.
- 14.5 The city will prepare a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) in accordance

with the principles and guidelines established by the Government Finance Officers Association "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" program. Staff will endeavor to provide the CAFR, the Single Audit, and the Management Letter to the City Council for a third quarter Council meeting each year for the preceding fiscal year or as required by the Colorado Revised Statutes or City Charter. Staff will endeavor to provide the CAFR to the Government Finance Officers Association by July 31 of each year for review in the Certificate program.

- 14.6 The city's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) will include the bond related on-going disclosure requirements and will fully disclose all significant events and financial and related issues. The city will provide the CAFR to the bond rating agencies, municipal bond insurers, national bond disclosure repositories and other interested parties.

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## **Policy 15 Policy Review**

By their nature policies must change and evolve over time. As with any other policies, these financial policies should be subject to periodic review and revision.

- 15.1 The City Council will periodically review and affirm the financial policies contained in this document.

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