



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICY

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City of Great Bend, KS

Comprehensive Financial Management Policy

PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Financial Management Policy assembles all of the City's financial policies in one document. They are a tool to ensure that the City is financially able to meet its immediate and long-term service objectives. The individual policies contained herein serve as guidelines for both the financial planning and internal financial management of the City.

The City of Great Bend is accountable to its citizens for the use of public dollars. Municipal resources must be wisely used to ensure adequate funding for the services, public facilities, and infrastructure necessary to meet the community's present and future needs. These policies safeguard the fiscal stability required to achieve the City's goals and objectives.

OBJECTIVES

In order to achieve its purpose, the Comprehensive Financial Management Policy has the following objectives for the City's fiscal performance.

- To guide City Council and management policy decisions that have significant fiscal impact.
- To set forth operating principles that minimize the cost of government and financial risk.
- To employ balanced and fair revenue policies that provide adequate funding for desired programs.
- To maintain appropriate financial capacity for present and future needs.
- To promote sound financial management by providing accurate and timely information on the City's financial condition.
- To secure the highest possible credit and bond ratings by meeting or exceeding the requirements of bond rating agencies through sound, conservative financial decision making.
- To ensure the legal use of financial resources through an effective system of internal controls.
- To promote cooperation and coordination with other governments and the private sector in the financing and delivery of services.
- To link long-term financial planning with short-term daily operations.

Policy I

Fund Balance and Reserves

Fund balance measures the net financial resources available to finance expenditures of future periods. Rating agencies examine fund balance when considering the overall economic health and credit quality of the City. Reserves 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.

1.01 The City shall achieve and maintain a minimum Unreserved Fund Balance of 10% of the General Fund's annual operating budget.

1.02 The Unreserved Fund Balance of the City's General Fund should not be used to support recurring operating expenditures outside of the current budget year.

1.03 The City will maintain adequate contingencies in funds statutorily prohibited from carrying a fund balance in excess of 5% from the previous year. These funds will be used to avoid cash-flow interruptions, generate interest income, eliminate the need for short-term borrowing, provide funding flexibility for unanticipated needs and opportunities, and sustain operations during unanticipated emergencies and disasters.

Policy II

Budgeting

The budget is one of the most important documents the City prepares since it identifies the services to be provided and how the services are to be financed. Budgeting is an essential element of the financial planning, control, and evaluation process of municipal government. During the budget process, the City shall reorganize both short-term needs and objectives in relation to the long-term goals of the City. The annual budget will be prepared and adopted in accordance with state laws.

2.01 The City Administrator will prepare a budget in accordance with the guidelines established by the Government Finance Officers Association.

2.02 The City Administrator shall develop annually a Budget Preparation Calendar outlining the preparation and adoption timelines for the proposed budget.

2.03 Budget packages for the preparation of the budget, including forms and instructions, shall be distributed to City departments to complete. Departments shall prepare and return their budget proposals to the City Administrator, as required in the Budget Preparation Calendar.

2.04 During the annual 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.

2.05 Budgeting procedures will attempt to identify distinct functions and activities and to allocate budget resources to perform these functions and activities as required.

2.06 Duplication of services and inefficiency in delivery should be eliminated wherever identified. The City will continue to examine alternative service delivery options for all City functions. Alternatives for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the City's programs and the productivity of its employees will be considered during the budget process.

2.07 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.

2.08 Officials and department heads are required to monitor revenues and control expenditures to prevent exceeding the amount of expenditures budgeted for their department as well as accurately tracking and projecting revenues.

2.09 The City will maintain a Equipment Replacement Schedule which provides a five-year estimate of the funds necessary to maintain and replace the City's equipment. The Equipment Replacement Schedule will be updated as part of the budget process and will be presented to the City Council as part of the annual budget document.

2.10 The City will maintain a Capital Improvement Plan which provides a ten-year estimate of the funds necessary to finance the City's capital projects. The Capital Improvement Plan will be updated as part of the Capital Improvement Program and will be included in the annual budget document.

2.11 It is the City's policy not to fund mid-year requests from outside organizations except under extraordinary circumstances.

Policy III Revenues

The City collects revenues, primarily in the form of property taxes, sales taxes, permits, and user fees to provide services and meet operational needs. The structure, fluctuation, and collection of revenues are examined by rating agencies to determine the City's credit quality.

3.01 The City will maintain a diversified and stable revenue system to shelter it from short-term fluctuations in any one revenue source.

3.02 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 projects.

3.03 The City will strive to keep a total revenue mix that encourages growth and keeps Great Bend economically competitive, and a City of choice for people to live in and do business.

3.04 Major revenue sources should provide for the following principles:

- a) **Vertical Equity.** Revenue sources should provide appropriate treatment of taxpayers at different levels of economic well being.
- b) **Horizontal Equity.** Revenue sources should treat taxpayers with the same income or wealth equally.
- c) **Neutrality.** Revenue sources should not unduly influence economic decisions by consumers or businesses except for targeted development or redevelopment programs approved by the City Council.
- d) **Administrative and Compliance Costs.** Revenue administration and enforcement should not absorb an undue percentage of total revenue.

3.05 The City will establish all user charges and fees at a level related to the cost of providing the services.

3.06 The City will estimate its annual revenues by an objective and analytical process.

3.07 It shall be the goal of the City that all Enterprise Funds shall be self-supporting.

Policy IV

Capital Improvement Program and Fixed Assets

The City's assets are held primarily in the form of infrastructure, physical assets, or capital plant, such as streets, buildings, and equipment. Sound infrastructure is an important aspect of the quality of life, economic development, and the credit quality of the City.

Dedicating resources to capital investment is appropriate for a growing city such as Great Bend. Committing to and implementing the City's Capital Improvement Program will protect its capital assets and minimize future maintenance and replacement costs.

4.01 The City Administrator will submit annually a ten-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for review by the City Council. The CIP should include capital improvements for all agencies for which the City sets tax rates, makes levies or approves budgets or programs. The CIP shall include an estimate of the cost and of the anticipated sources of revenue for financing the capital improvements and an estimate of the impact of each capital improvement on City revenues and the capital and operating budget.

4.02 The City will match programs and activities identified in the CIP with associated matching revenue sources. Such revenues as the public safety equipment, airport, and library levies, as well as revenues generated from user fees and enterprise funds are to be used exclusively for the purpose for which they were paid.

4.03 Upon completion of any capital project, remaining appropriated funds in that project will be returned to the undesignated capital projects fund, or when required, used to buy down or retire existing debt.

4.04 When current revenues or resources are available for capital improvement projects, consideration will be given first to those capital assets with the shortest useful life and/or to those capital assets whose nature makes them comparatively more difficult to finance with bonds or lease financing.

4.05 Nonrecurring revenues not required to meet the fund balance objectives in Policy No. 1 may be used for nonrecurring capital expenditures or the early retirement of existing City debt.

Policy V **Debt Management**

The City will maintain a high credit rating in the financial community to: 1) assure the City's taxpayers that the City government is well managed and financially sound; 2) obtain reduced borrowing costs.

5.01 Debt financing will not be considered appropriate for any recurring purpose such as current operating and maintenance expenditures. The City will use debt financing only for one-time capital improvement projects and unusual equipment purchases, and only under the following circumstances:

- when the project is included in the City's ten-year Capital Improvement Plan; or
- when the project involves acquisition of equipment that cannot be purchased outright without causing an unacceptable spike in the property tax rate, or unacceptable depletion of reserves; or
- when the project is the result of growth-related activities within the community that require unanticipated and unplanned infrastructure or capital improvements by the City; and
- when the project's useful life, or the projected service life of the equipment, will be equal to or exceed the term of the financing; and
- when there are designated revenues sufficient to service a debt, whether from project revenues, other specified and reserved resources, or infrastructure cost sharing revenues.

5.02 The following criteria will be used to evaluate pay-as-you-go versus debt financing in funding capital improvements:

Factors which favor pay-as-you-go financing include circumstances where:

- the project can be adequately funded from available current revenues and fund balances;
- the project can be completed in an acceptable timeframe given the available revenues;
- additional debt levels could adversely affect the City's credit rating or repayment sources; or
- market conditions are unstable or suggest difficulties in marketing a debt.

Factors which favor long-term debt financing include circumstances where:

- revenues available for debt issues are considered sufficient and reliable so that long-term financing can be marketed with an appropriate credit rating, which can be maintained;
- market conditions present favorable interest rates and demand for City debt financing;
- a project is mandated by state or federal government and current revenues or fund balances are insufficient to pay project costs;

- a project is immediately required to meet or relieve capacity needs and existing unprogrammed cash reserves are insufficient to pay project costs; or
- the life of the project or asset financed is five years or longer.

5.03 City debt will be structured to achieve the lowest possible net interest cost to the City given market conditions, the urgency of the capital project, and the nature and type of any security provided. City debt will be structured in ways that will not compromise the future flexibility to fund projects. Moreover, to the extent possible, the City will design the repayment of its overall debt issues so as to rapidly recapture its credit capacity for future use. As a benchmark, the City shall strive to repay at least 30% of the principal amount of its bonded debt within five years and at least 60% within ten years.

5.04 The decision on whether or not to assume new general obligation or Public Building Council bonds shall, in part, be based on (a) costs and benefits, (b) the current conditions of the municipal bond market, and (c) the City's ability to assume new general obligation bonds as determined by the aforementioned benchmarks.

5.05 The City may issue bonds secured solely by dedicated non-advalorem revenue streams if doing so will yield clearly identifiable advantages. For the City to issue revenue bonds, a primary objective will be to minimize risk through the use of adequate coverage requirements while remaining in compliance with overall debt management policy objectives. The City will adhere and where necessary take actions to ensure compliance with all outstanding revenue bond covenants.

5.06 The City shall maintain a watchful attitude over the issuance of special assessment bonds for benefit district improvements.

5.07 The City shall not assume more debt than it retires each year if it will cause the City to exceed 50% of the Kansas statutory limit of 30% of the City's assessed valuation without conducting an objective analysis of the community's ability to assume and support additional debt service payments and of the probable impact of the additional debt on the City's bond ratings.

5.08 The City will consider debt financing for the acquisition, replacement, or expansion of physical assets (including land) only if a capital project has a useful life longer than the term of the bond issue supporting it. Debt will be used only to finance capital projects and equipment, except in the case of unforeseen emergencies. Debt will not be issued for periods exceeding the useful life or average useful lives of the project or projects to be financed.

5.09 City debts will be amortized for the shortest period consistent with a fair allocation of costs to current and future beneficiaries or users, and in keeping with other related provisions of this policy.

5.10 The City normally shall issue bonds with a maximum life of 20 years or less for general obligation bonds, Public Building Council bonds, and revenue bonds, and 15 years or less for special assessment bonds.

5.11 Unless specific compelling reasons exist there shall be no "balloon" bond repayment schedules, which consist of low annual payments and one large payment of the balance due at the end of the term. There shall always be at least interest paid in the first fiscal year after a bond sale and principal repayment starting no later than the second fiscal year after the bond issue.

5.12 Call provisions for bond issues shall be made as short as possible consistent with the lowest interest cost to the City. Unless specific compelling reasons exist, all bonds shall be callable only at par.

5.13 At a minimum, the City will seek to amortize general obligation bonds with level principal and interest costs over the life of the issue. Pushing higher costs to future years in order to reduce short-term budget liabilities will be considered only when natural disasters or extraordinary or unanticipated external factors make the short-term cost of general obligation bonds prohibitive.

5.14 Any capital financing proposal of a City division, agency, or utility involving the pledge or other extension of the City's credit through sale of bonds, execution of loans or leases, or otherwise involving directly or indirectly the lending or pledging of the City's credit, shall be referred to the Finance Department for review before such pledge is considered by the City Councilors.

5.15 All payment of general obligation bonds and special assessment bonds shall be from the City's Bond & Interest Fund. The fund balance in the Bond & Interest Fund will be maintained at a level equal to or greater than 5% of the total principal and interest payable from that Fund for the upcoming semi-annual debt service payment. Furthermore, the fund balance will be managed to eliminate or minimize arbitrage rebate liability.

5.16 The City will utilize external bond counsel for all debt issues. All debts issued by the City will include a written opinion by Bond Counsel affirming that the City is authorized to issue the debt, stating that the City has met all Federal and State constitutional and statutory requirements necessary for issuance, and determining the federal income tax status of the debt.

5.17 The City will retain an external financial advisor. The utilization of the financial advisor for each debt issuance will be at the discretion of the Finance Department on a case-by-case basis. For each City bond sale the financial advisor will provide the City with information on pricing and underwriting fees for comparable sales by other issuers.

5.18 Use of short-term borrowing, such as temporary notes, will be undertaken only if the transaction costs plus interest on a debt are less than the cost of internal financing, or available cash or reserves are insufficient to meet both project needs and current obligations.

5.19 Credit enhancement (letters of credit, bond insurance, etc.) may be used if the costs of such enhancements will reduce the net debt service payments on the bonds or provide other significant financial benefits to the City.

5.20 The use of lease/purchase agreements in the acquisition of vehicles, equipment and other capital assets shall be considered carefully relative to any other financing option or a "pay-as-you-go" basis. The lifetime cost of a lease typically will be higher than other financing options or cash purchases. Nevertheless, lease/purchase agreements may be used by the City as funding options for capital acquisitions if operational or cash-flow considerations preclude the use of other financing techniques.

5.21 The City, as a matter of policy, shall seek to issue its general or revenue bond obligations in a competitive sale unless it is determined by the Director of Finance that such a sale method will not produce the best results for the City. In such instances where the City, through a competitive bidding for its bonds, deems the bids received as unsatisfactory or does not receive bids, it may, at the election of the Director of Finance, enter into negotiation for sale of the bonds.

5.22 Periodic reviews of all outstanding debts will be undertaken to determine refunding opportunities. Refunding will be considered (within federal tax law constraints) if and when there is a net economic benefit of the refunding or the refunding is essential in order to modernize covenants essential to operations and management.

5.23 City staff and the financial advisor shall monitor the municipal bond market for opportunities to obtain interest savings by refunding outstanding debts. As a general rule, current refundings will be undertaken only if the present value savings of a particular refunding will exceed 2% of the refunded principal. As a general rule, advance refundings will be undertaken only if the present value savings of a particular refunding will exceed 2% of the refunded principal.

5.24 Refunding issues that produce a net present value savings of less than targeted amounts may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Refunding issues with negative savings will not be considered unless a compelling public policy or financial management objective is served by the refunding.

5.25 Federal arbitrage legislation is intended to discourage entities from issuing tax-exempt obligations unnecessarily. In compliance with the spirit of this legislation, the City will not issue obligations except for identifiable projects with very good prospects of timely initiation. Temporary notes and subsequent long-term bonds will be issued timely as project contracts are awarded so that debt issues will be spent quickly.

5.26 The City is committed to full and complete primary and secondary financial disclosure, and to cooperating fully with rating agencies, institutional and individual investors, City departments and agencies, other levels of government, and the general public to share clear, comprehensible, and accurate financial information. The City is committed to meeting secondary disclosure requirements on a timely and comprehensive basis.

Policy VI

Cash Management and Investments

Cash management is the practice of safeguarding and maximizing the income earned on liquid assets. Cash, liquidity, and investment management activities shall be conducted prudently. The City shall maintain adequate management procedures, controls, and policies for the City's liquid assets.

6.01 Effective cash management is recognized as essential to good fiscal management. An aggressive cash management and investment policy will be pursued to take advantage of investment interest as a viable and material revenue source for all operating and capital funds. The City's portfolio shall be designed and managed in a manner responsive to the public trust and consistent with state and local law.

6.02 Investments shall be made with the primary objectives of:

- Security of City funds and investments
- Preservation of capital and protection of principal
- Maintenance of sufficient liquidity to meet operating needs
- Diversification of investments to avoid unreasonable or avoidable risks
- Maximization of return on the portfolio.

6.03 Earnings from investments will be used in a manner which will best serve the interests of the City and comply with Kansas statutes.

6.04 The investment policies adopted by the City shall apply uniformly to all employees, officials, departments, agencies, boards, Councils, representatives and authorized agents in the performance of their official duties and to the processing and management of all investment transactions on behalf of the City. These policies shall apply to all funds handled and managed by the City.

6.05 The primary objectives, in priority order, of investment activities shall be safety, liquidity, and yield:

1. Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Investments shall be undertaken in a manner seeking to ensure the preservation of capital in the overall portfolio. The objective will be to reduce credit risk and interest rate risk.

a. Interest Rate Risk

The City will minimize the risk that the market value of securities in the portfolio will decline due to the changes in general interest rates by:

- Structuring the investment portfolio so that securities mature to meet cash requirements for ongoing operations, thereby minimizing the need to sell securities on the open market prior to maturity

- Investing idle funds primarily in securities with maturities of one year or less or the Kansas Municipal Investment Pool (MIP)
- Limiting investments to a maximum stated maturity of two years

6.06 The investment portfolio shall remain sufficiently liquid to meet all operating requirements that may be reasonably anticipated. This will be accomplished by structuring the portfolio so that securities mature concurrently with cash needs to meet anticipated demands.

6.07 The investment portfolio shall be designed with the objective of attaining a market rate of return throughout budgetary and economic cycles, taking into account investment risk constraints and liquidity needs. Return on investment is a lower priority than the safety and liquidity objectives described above.

6.08 Officers and employees involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with the proper execution and management of the investment program, or that could impair their ability to make impartial decisions. Employees and investment officials shall disclose any material interests in financial institutions with which they conduct business. Employees and officers shall not undertake personal investment transactions with the same individual with whom business is conducted on behalf of the City.

6.09 Responsibility for the operation of the investment program is delegated to the investment officer, who shall establish written procedures and internal controls for the operation of the investment program consistent with this investment policy. No person may engage in an investment transaction except as provided under the terms of this policy and the procedures established by the Director of Finance. The Director of Finance shall be responsible for all transactions undertaken and shall establish a system of controls to regulate the activities of subordinate officials.

6.10 All investments of the City should be bid to insure competitive pricing. In addition, investments with the Kansas Municipal Investment Pool or money market mutual funds are not considered biddable securities.

6.11 A list will be maintained of financial institutions authorized to provide investment services. An annual review of the financial condition and registration of qualified financial institutions and broker/dealers will be conducted by the Director of Finance.

6.12 The Director of Finance is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal control structure designed to ensure that the investments of the City are protected from loss, theft or misuse. The internal control structure shall be designed to provide reasonable assurance that these objectives are met. The concept of reasonable assurance recognizes that (1) the cost of a control should not exceed the benefits likely to be derived and (2) the valuation of costs and benefits requires estimates and judgments by management.

6.13 The investment program shall be subject to an annual independent review by an external auditor to assure adequate internal controls. The internal controls shall address the following points:

- Control of collusion
- Separation of transaction authority from accounting and record keeping
- Custodial safekeeping
- Avoidance of physical delivery securities other than certificates of deposit
- Clear delegation of authority to subordinate staff members

6.14 All trades will be executed by delivery vs. payment (DVP) to ensure that securities are deposited in an eligible financial institution simultaneously with the release of funds. Securities will be held by a third-party custodian as evidenced by safekeeping receipts, held in the City's name.

6.15 The investments authorized for idle funds under this policy shall be in conformance with K.S.A. 12-1675, K.S.A. 12-1677b and any other applicable statutes and amendments thereto. The following list represents the range of investments which the City will consider and shall be authorized for the investment of funds.

- In temporary notes or no-fund warrants issued by such investing governmental unit.
- In time deposit, open accounts, certificates of deposit or time certificates of deposit with maturities of not more than two years.
- In repurchase agreements.
- In United States treasury bills or notes with maturities as the governing body shall determine, but not exceeding two years.
- In the municipal investment pool fund established in K.S.A. 12-1677a, and amendments thereto.

6.16 The investments authorized for the proceeds of bonds (other than industrial revenue bonds for which the City is merely a conduit issuer) or temporary notes under this policy shall be in conformance with K.S.A. 10-131 and amendments thereto.

6.17 To qualify as a depository under K.S.A. 9-1401 et seq., a bank, trust company, savings and loan association, or savings bank must collateralize City deposits in accordance with K.S.A. 9-1402.

6.18 The City shall attempt to match its investments with anticipated cash flow requirements. The City will invest in accordance with Kansas statutes.

6.19 The investment portfolio will be managed in accordance with the parameters specified within this policy. The portfolio should obtain a market average rate of return during a market/economic environment of stable interest rates. The investment portfolio objective is for the short-term portfolio to exceed the 91-day U.S. Treasury Bill and the long-term portfolio to exceed the 1-year U.S. Treasury Bill average rate of return, the benchmark for risk-free investment transactions.

Policy VII **Business Fund Management**

The City shall continue to maintain all business funds on a self-sustaining basis, with no support from property tax or general fund sales tax revenues.

7.01 Business Fund rates and fees will be reviewed annually considering net revenue requirements, realistic sales forecasts, contractual obligations including bond covenants, and utility conservation goals. Revenue requirements may include funds programmed for rate stabilization, utility capital projects, and reimbursement of indirect costs to the General Fund.

7.02 Business Funds rates and fees shall be adjusted when necessary to meet revenue requirements, bond covenants, or to support the adopted budget.

7.03 The City shall continue to fund Capital Reserve accounts for each of its Business Funds.

7.04 Operating cash reserves shall be maintained at an amount equal to or greater than 10% of operating revenues to provide the City with sufficient working capital and to offer a comfortable margin of safety to address emergencies and unexpected declines in revenue.

Policy VIII

Accounting, Auditing and Financial Reporting

Accounting and financial reporting provide the informational infrastructure for the City.

8.01 The City will comply with Kansas Municipal Audit and Accounting Guide (KMAAG) as applicable in its accounting processes and reporting.

8.02 Monthly financial data will be made available to all department heads, allowing them to summarize financial activity and compare actual revenues and expenditures with budgeted amounts.

8.03 A comprehensive financial audit, including an audit of federal grants according to the U.S. Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133, will be performed annually by an independent public accounting firm. The independent public accounting firm will express an opinion on the City's Financial Statements. The firm will be selected by the City through a Request for Proposals process for audit services every three (3) years or as needed.

8.04 The City will prepare its comprehensive annual financial report in accordance with KMAAG.

8.05 A system of internal accounting controls will be maintained to adequately safeguard assets and provide reasonable assurance of proper recording of financial transactions of the City.

Policy IX

Procurement

Procurement utilizes monetary assets of the City to purchase products and services. All acquisitions must be performed in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

9.01 Expenditures will be controlled by an annual budget at the departmental level.

9.02 All purchases shall be made in accordance with the City's purchasing policies and procedures as well as applicable state and federal laws. The City will endeavor to obtain supplies, equipment and services as economically as possible.

9.03 The City will maintain a purchasing system which provides needed materials in a timely manner to avoid interruptions in the delivery of service

Policy X

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.

10.01 All grant agreements will be reviewed by the appropriate City staff, including Finance, City Attorney's Office, and sponsoring department, to ensure compliance with state, federal, and City regulations.

10.02 When possible, the City will budget expenditures for grant-funded programs only after the grant award notice or letter of commitment has been received, and only for the amount of the grant award. City overhead or indirect costs for grant-funded programs will be included in all grant proposals, where permitted.

10.03 The City will aggressively oppose state or federal actions that mandate expenditures which the City Council considers unnecessary. The City will pursue intergovernmental funding to support the incremental cost of those mandates.

10.04 The City will work with other governments to identify the jurisdiction most capable and appropriate to provide specific public services.