

Executive Overview



THE CITY OF West Des Moines®

www.wdm-ia.com

City Manager

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'AAA'
Credit Rating from
Standard & Poor's

February 5, 2022

Honorable Mayor and Council:

I respectfully present the proposed General Fund Budget for the City of West Des Moines for the upcoming fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022 (FY 2023). The adopted budget authorizes resources and sets the direction for our programs and services for the coming fiscal year. As the City's financial and spending plan, we believe the adoption of the budget is the single-most important action taken annually by the City's elected officials.

As you view the preliminary draft of this budget, recognize that staff makes every effort to enhance the format of the material so that the public has a better understanding of the various services we can deliver to citizens. If sections of the proposed budget are unclear, we should work to improving those. In addition, it is vital that you as the City's policymakers have the information needed to ensure that the budget reflects the public interest. The final budget should serve as an effective public policy document and financial planning tool.

Recent Accomplishments in Financial Management

As we move into the second half of FY 2022, I am pleased to note some recent accomplishments related to managing the City's financial resources.

- ♦ On December 8, 2021, Moody's Investor Services completed its annual review of the City's credit and affirmed its highest rating (Aaa). This followed the August 10, 2021, credit rating when S& P Global Ratings affirmed its highest rating (AAA) on the City's general obligation bonds. City remains one of approximately 100 in the United States which can boast of the highest rating from each agency.
- ♦ The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) awarded a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting to the City for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report covering the fiscal year ended June 30, 2020. This represents the 28th consecutive year the City has earned this award.
- ◆ The GFOA also awarded a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its Budget Summary document covering the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2021. This represents the 23rd consecutive year the City has earned this award.

Highlights of the FY 2023 Recommended Budget

- ♦ The FY 2023 budget recommended by staff will maintain the City's property tax levy of \$10.95 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. Recall that for Fiscal Year 2021 the rate was reduced from \$10.99 to \$10.95.
- ♦ The FY 2023 budget includes an estimated \$12.58 million of Local Option Sales and Services Tax (LOSST) Revenues The ballot language approved by Dallas County and Polk County voters calls for 50% of this revenue to be transferred to the General Fund and applied directly as relief against property taxes. For FY 2023, it is being proposed that 65.9% of LOSST receipts will be applied in this manner. Per the ballot language, remaining funds will be used for Public Safety, Public Infrastructure, and Quality-of-Life Amenities. Below is a comparison of the current and proposed property tax levies:

	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23
Total Tax Dollars Required	\$74,504,204	\$78,400,369
(Levy Per \$1,00)	\$12.92240	\$13.04585
Commercial & Industrial Replacement	(\$2,494,259)	(\$2,7237,599)
(Levy Per \$1,000)	(\$0.43418)	(\$.045247)
50% of Local Option Sales Tax	(\$5,779,518)	(\$6,289,374)
(Levy per \$1,000)	(\$1.02961)	(\$1.06973)
City Uses of Local Option Sales Tax	(\$3,247,931)	(\$3,372,725)
(Levy per \$1,000)	(\$0.57861)	(\$0.57365)
Net Tax Levy	\$62,982,496	\$66,010,671
(Levy per \$1,000)	\$10.95	\$10.95

- ◆ Included in the proposed FY 2023 budget are fifteen (15) additional employee positions, five (5) of which would be entirely paid by the General Fund:
 - The Police Department will be adding two (2) Police Officers to the patrol division to support the increased growth in the community, specifically the increase in land mass to patrol and increase in population that is driving the number of calls for service. These two positions will start mid-year (no earlier than January 1, 2023).
 - The Fire Department will be adding two (2) Firefighters to the suppression division to support the increased growth of the City, specifically to the south, as the City will need to open and staff stations in that are in the future. These two positions will start mid-year (no earlier than January 1, 2023).
 - O The Emergency Medical Services department will be adding four (4) positions in the EMS Alliance operations division, two (2) paramedics and two (2) paramedic lieutenants. These new positions will support the increased call volume, decrease the need for overtime for existing staff, and help avoid potential overtime burnout for existing staff. Approximately 50% of the cost of these new positions will be reimbursed by UnityPoint Health-Moines through the Iowa EMS Alliance service agreement.

- Westcom Dispatch will be adding a total of four (4) positions, one (1) Logistics Supervisor and three (3) Dispatchers. The Logistics Supervisor is needed to reduce the increased workload on the current Assistant Chief of Logistics. The position should increase efficiencies, help plan for future growth, and lessen the role of each participating city's respective IT departments to perform Westcom-related radio and mobile data computer support. The addition of the Dispatchers is in response to a dramatic increase in 911 call activity. One of the Dispatchers will start in July of 2022, while two will start no earlier than January 1, 2023. West Des Moines' share of expenses for these new positions will be approximately 40% with the other Westcom cities covering the remainder.
- Public Services will be adding two (2) positions, an Operations Specialist in the traffic division and a Utility Locator in the sanitary sewer division. The operations specialist will provide support for the increased growth in street signage and pavement markings and also help support tasks for unimproved roads. The utility locator is needed to respond to the increase in the number of the one-call locates. The locate requests have substantially increased with the construction of the city's fiber conduit network. Currently, the department currently takes higher-pay-grade traffic signal technicians away from their regular duties to perform the locates. The Utility Locator will be paid from the Sewer Enterprise Fund.
- Ocommunity and Economic Development will be adding one (1) new position, a Community Economic Development Coordinator. It is proposed that this position will be funded for FY23 from the newly established WDM Housing Fund, supplemented by TIF revenue. Staff believes this position will initially work primarily on the new housing program, and supplement
- o An additional fifteen (15) positions were requested by department directors but were of a lower priority and, due to budgetary constraints, could not be accommodated.
- A change in budgeting philosophy is reflected in the proposed budget. The table below shows that historically the personnel costs for the City's three Public Safety departments have consistently been over-budgeted.

		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Average
Police	Budget	7,934,167	7,958,620	8,609,206	9,248,836	10,199,336	
	Actual	7,263,269	7,340,043	8,242,651	9,046,214	9,708,137	
	Difference	670,898	618,578	366,555	202,622	491,199	
	% Spent	91.54%	92.23%	95.74%	97.81%	95.18%	94.50%
Fire	Budget	6,610,962	6,856,813	7,157,259	7,542,514	8,323,452	
	Actual	6,008,057	6,395,146	6,591,443	7,116,381	7,525,752	
	Difference	602,905	461,667	565,816	426,133	797,700	
	% Spent	90.88%	93.27%	92.09%	94.35%	90.42%	92.20%
EMS	Budget	3,937,953	4,150,395	4,532,691	4,949,253	5,752,074	
	Actual	3,860,065	4,191,632	4,418,793	4,288,525	5,277,283	
	Difference	77,888	(41,237)	113,898	660,728	474,791	
	% Spent	98.02%	100.99%	97.49%	86.65%	91.75%	94.98%

To provide a more realistic budget scenario than assuming all positions will be occupied all year long, the recommended budget assumes two vacancies will be maintained in the Police and EMS Departments, and one vacancy will be maintained in the Fire Department. This is a common budget practice for agencies experiencing similar turnover statistics.

- ♦ The historical growth in employees is comparable to the growth of the city over the long-term. Because city employees must serve residents, visitors, and businesses, as well as protect the properties within the city, it seems logical that employees would need to grow in similar proportion to both population and property valuation, not simply one or the other. Over the past 15 years, property within the city has grown by approximately 7% per year, the population has grown at approximately 2% per year, and the employee complement has grown at approximately 3% per year.
- ♦ The proposed employee compensation totals take into consideration financial terms of bargaining unit contracts for each of the approximately 290 union employees. Projected personnel expenditure levels rely on historical trends, current contract information, and projected terms for agreements yet to be finalized. The proposed budget will address the approximately 252 non-union employees using existing pay plans and benefit packages.

Bargaining unit employees are expected to receive cost-of-living adjustments ranging from 3.00% to 4.00% (plus steps within the pay range as appropriate), all budgeted in agreement with the terms of their respective contracts. All contracts but one (EMS union employees) are currently in contract negotiations. In addition to the cost-of-living increases, bargaining unit employees who are not at the maximum pay of their range may be eligible to receive "step" increases dependent upon performance and classification.

Non-union employees who have not yet reached the maximum pay level for their position may be eligible at July 1, 2022, to receive pay increases based solely upon job performance (no steps within pay ranges). The budget includes a 3.00% increase to cover the pool of non-union employees.

- ♦ The City will receive approximately \$8.6 million dollars in Road Use Tax funding during FY 2023. This represents a slight increase from the previous year, in line with the Iowa Department of Transportation's forecast. This revenue allows for approximately \$6.7 million in Road Use Tax funds to be expended for street-related expenditures (CIP and operating), along street lighting and repayment of debt related to Iowa Highway 5 construction. While, staff's goal for the Road Use Tax Fund is to maintain a steady fund balance from year-to-year, the fund currently has a planned deficit balance due to large capital spending in previous years related to construction of the City's new Public Services Facility, completed in 2020.
- ♦ The proposed FY 2022 budget reflects a decrease in the contribution rate for the Municipal Fire and Police Retirement System of Iowa (MFPRSI). The City's contribution rate for those employees into FY 2023 will be 23.90% as compared to 26.18% for FY 2022.
- ♦ The proposed budget reflects no change in the contribution rate for Iowa Public Employees Retirement System (IPERS) regular class employees. The City's contribution rate for those IPERS-classified employees will remain at 9.44% for FY 2023.
- ♦ The proposed budget reflects the carryover of cash to ensure the FY 2023 budget maintains prudent general fund balances. This practice protects financial integrity. General Fund total revenues are projected to be \$86,270,165, with total expenditures of \$91,228,128.
- ♦ Even with this planned annual deficit, the projected Uncommitted General Fund composite balance on June 30, 2023, will be \$36,314,938 (44.70% of annual operating expenditures). This balance leaves ample funds for meeting unexpected revenue shortfalls or meeting demands on future fund resources. The projected reserve balance follows the policy adopted by the Council in 2021 which requires a balance over 30%, which is a benchmark for AAA bond rated cities.

Budgetary Considerations of COVID-19

Obviously, the effects of COVID-19 are widespread; they continue to ripple through the world's economy and the city of West Des Moines has been immune. Most notably West Des Moines includes a heavy concentration of regional retail, lodging, and entertainment venues, and those areas were, and in some cases, continue to be particularly hard-hit. While Hotel/Motel Tax Revenues were significantly reduced during 2020 and 2021, the City Council has nonetheless been responsive in taking steps to assist local residents and businesses – working class residents were afforded grants to assist in homelessness prevention, and businesses have seen the City delay job creation requirements within agreements as well as deferring economic development loan payments. Additional funds were granted to the local non-profit organization tasked with managing the Historic Valley Junction District during a time when their revenue-producing events were canceled or significantly reduced. Despite the concentrated areas of reduced revenue, areas such as building permits have exceeded expectations and lessened the overall budget effects greatly.

The effects of COVID remain in the forefront as citywide LOSST revenue projections have been lowered from \$14 million annually to less than \$12 million, and long-term effects could include a reduction in taxable valuation of office and retail properties. Commercial valuations during the most recent assessment two-year revaluation (January 1, 2021) only increased 2.1% citywide.

Outlook Beyond FY 2023

The City's budgeting philosophy continues to be very conservative, ensuring that funding is adequate to provide services to residents and protect our long-term viability. The starting point for all projections is having the resources to deliver desired levels of service to residents and to maintain quality infrastructure and amenities. The city is also dedicated to using responsible revenue assumptions and maintaining adequate reserves. In addition, the City Council has indicated that maintaining or reducing the city's property tax rate is a very high priority, at least equal in status to maintaining prudent fund balances and providing quality services.

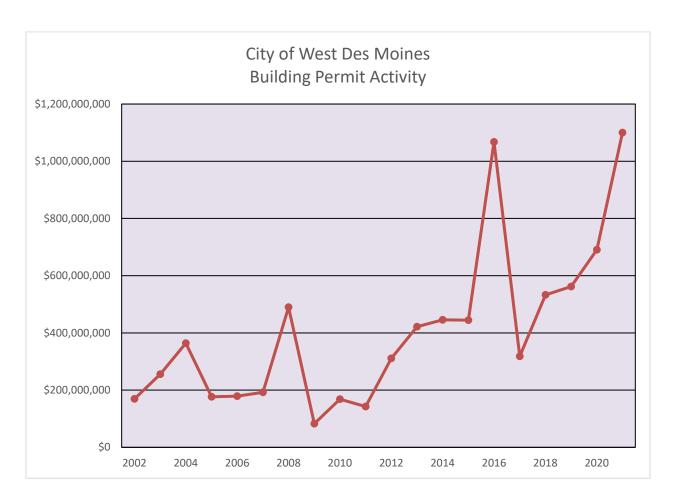
Other lingering concerns include (1) the phased elimination by the State of Iowa of the current commercial tax replacement funding over the next five years (annual losses eventually will be approximately \$3 million), (2) rising costs for a wide-reaching capital improvement program, albeit largely necessitated by development agreement obligations, and (3) rising employee retention costs as recruiting and retaining quality employees becomes more and more difficult.

Local Economy/Development Activity Highlights

The City continues to be one of the faster growing cities in the state of Iowa. The 2020 Census revealed a population of 68,723, which reflected growth of 8% since the last official Special Census in 2015. This City ranks as the 6th largest city in the State of Iowa by population. The growth continues a long-term pattern, as the population of the city grew by 117% from 1990 to 2020. It is estimated that the City should continue to grow by approximately 1,000 residents each year.

During calendar 2021, the City saw its level of building permit activity in history (in terms of valuation) with \$1.1 billion in permits. This is the fourth consecutive year that building permit valuations have topped \$500 million and the 10th consecutive year over \$300 million. The chart and graph below give this history in detail.

Calendar Year	Permit Valuation	Rank (Top Ten)	Permits Issued
2004	363,989,000	#10	1567
2005	176,762,000		1159
2006	179,052,000		1204
2007	193,234,000		1241
2008	490,234,000	#6	1241
2009	82,767,000		1060
2010	168,206,809		1140
2011	142,361,134		1025
2012	310,595,751		1092
2013	421,746,147	#9	1242
2014	445,433,824	#7	956
2015	444,323,688	#8	983
2016	1,067,535,149	#2	938
2017	318,067,828		1072
2018	532,808,081	#5	1153
2019	561,943,035	#4	1019
2020	690,530,283	#3	1397
2021	1,100,075,974	#1	1481



BUDGET IN BRIEF

Revenues and Taxable Growth

Every two years the various county assessors revalue property across the state. Property valuations were adjusted on January 1,2021. This date's valuation is used to calculate property tax revenues to be received in FY 2022-23, so the growth allowed taxable valuations to increase by 5.07%. This occurred despite a decrease in the residential rollback rate from 56.41% in FY 2021-22 to 54.13% in FY 2022-23. Because some of the growth was captured in TI to pay economic incentives or construct city-owned infrastructure (mainly streets and sewers) the non-TIF taxable growth is slightly lower at 4.74%.

Large infrastructure projects in the areas of Mills Civic Parkway and Jordan Creek Parkway, which began nearly 20 years ago, have now seen a significant percentage of developable areas around those corridors filled with retail centers, hotels, restaurants, offices, and multi-family residential projects.

Microsoft Corporation is rapidly advancing its presence in the City – as its third, fourth, and fifth data centers in the city are all under construction currently. Each data center under construction has its own development agreement with the City which includes a long-term minimum assessment agreement. Altogether, the five data centers will carry an assessed valuation of over \$1.1 billion when all are completed in 3-5 years.

Perhaps the most significant infrastructure project in the history of the City is the construction of a city-wide conduit network designed to house fiber connections on behalf of Internet Service Providers. This project has been included as part of the vision and master plan. Construction will be completed in 2023 at a total cost of approximately \$60 million.

The City has been aggressive in adding to its quality-of-life amenities by completing construction of the MidAmerican Energy Rec Plex. The Rec Plex is a city-owned, 300,000 square foot sports facility with two ice arenas, a full-sized indoor turf fieldhouse, a gymnasium with multiple basketball/volleyball courts, office and locker room spaces, an adaptive play area, an e-sports area, flexible meeting spaces, and a sports medicine / therapy clinic operated by Des Moines University -- all under one roof. The facility was funded by a combination of private contributions and city funds, and fully opened in early 2022.

For FY 2023, General Fund operating revenues of \$70,832,582 are projected to increase by 0.21% compared to FY 21-22. As mentioned above, an increase in property tax revenue is largely due to an increase in valuations despite the residential rollback decrease from 56.41% to 54.13%. Statewide trends among the larger cities shows mixed results but most of the major cities saw solid growth during the bi-annual reassessment year. A summary of the ten largest cities is depicted below:

Comparison of Taxable Valuation FY 2022-23 Top 10 Cities In Iowa

		Change In					
	Population	Total 2021		Taxable Valuation		Taxable Valuation	
City	2020 Census	Taxable Valuation		From Prior Year		Per Capita	
Des Moines	214,133	\$	10,119,090,866	\$	563,883,503	\$	47,256
Cedar Rapids	137,710	\$	7,828,550,503	\$	230,986,899	\$	56,848
Davenport	101,724	\$	5,214,235,032	\$	145,801,325	\$	51,259
Sioux City	85,797	\$	3,797,207,449	\$	235,685,549	\$	44,258
Iowa City	74,828	\$	4,375,956,427	\$	(18,023,296)	\$	58,480
West Des Moines	68,723	\$	6,739,975,956	\$	325,540,501	\$	98,075
Ankeny	67,877	\$	4,832,018,603	\$	371,250,843	\$	71,188
Waterloo	67,314	\$	2,745,340,284	\$	67,954,284	\$	40,784
Ames	66,427	\$	3,460,640,626	\$	118,422,848	\$	52,097
Council Bluffs	62,799	\$	3,334,710,815	\$	136,311,270	\$	53,101

It is worth noting in the above table that West Des Moines' is clearly the highest-ranking in terms of "Taxable Valuation Per Capita" among Iowa's 10 largest cities. Having this status is a significant financial advantage, but it also requires a sizable investment in public safety to protect the relatively more valuable property in the city.

When comparing communities in the Des Moines Metro area, the growth trend is even stronger. The Des Moines Metro area continued to see strong development and growth in recent years, consistently ranking among the top developing metros in the region and country. Within the Des

Moines metro, older, the more established communities saw more limited growth while the outer ring of cities continued to grow the tax base at a rapid pace. This is depicted in the following table:

Comparison of Taxable Valuation FY 2022-23 Des Moines Metro Communities

			Change In					
	Population	Total 2021		Taxable Valuation		Taxable Valuation		
City	2020 Census	Ta	Taxable Valuation		From Prior Year		Per Capita	
Des Moines	214,133	\$	10,119,090,866	\$	563,883,503	\$	47,256	
West Des Moines	68,723	\$	6,739,975,956	\$	325,540,501	\$	98,075	
Ankeny	67,877	\$	4,832,018,603	\$	371,250,843	\$	71,188	
Urbandale	45,580	\$	3,851,737,160	\$	174,148,373	\$	84,505	
Johnston	24,064	\$	1,898,964,160	\$	69,592,620	\$	78,913	
Waukee	23,940	\$	1,707,471,414	\$	140,733,263	\$	71,323	
Altoona	19,565	\$	1,496,487,433	\$	65,776,486	\$	76,488	
Clive	18,601	\$	1,774,874,306	\$	83,008,089	\$	95,418	
Grimes	15,392	\$	1,292,237,234	\$	147,438,247	\$	83,955	
Norwalk	12,799	\$	745,349,213	\$	66,610,388	\$	58,235	
Pleasant Hill	10,147	\$	778,023,460	\$	64,853,477	\$	76,675	

West Des Moines' taxable valuation per capita of over \$98,000 remains the highest of Iowa's ten largest cities and among cities in the Des Moines metro area.

It is important to note that just under \$854 million in taxable valuation remains included in the City's Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Districts. This is up significantly from the \$794 million and \$711 million over the previous two years. This equates to approximately \$7.27 million in tax dollars being excluded from the City's potential general fund resources. A large percentage of TIF funds are dedicated to public infrastructure projects such as public safety facilities, bridges, roads and utility systems, with the balance being used for economic incentive payments to various businesses around the City.

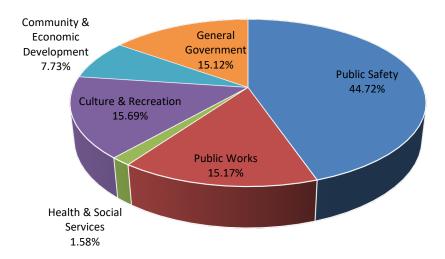
Local Option Sales Tax

With Local Option Sales and Services Tax (LOSST) now being collected in all areas of West Des Moines, except Madison County, the City expects to collect approximately \$12.5 million annually in these revenues. As noted earlier, half of this revenue is used to reduce property taxes and half is to be used on public safety, library improvements, infrastructure, and other quality-of-life initiatives including the planned "Five Waters" parks projects.

Expenditures

The City's FY 2023 General Fund budgeted operating expenditures total \$81,240,643, which represents an increase of \$3,968,794 (5.14%) from FY 2022. The largest percent of expenditures continues to be in the Public Safety program area, which encompassed 44.72% of the General Fund for the fiscal year.

General Fund Operating Expenses \$81,240,643



Police and Fire employee pension costs are accounted for outside the General Fund and utilize their own portion of the overall property tax levy for funding. Due to the decrease in the pension rates, increases wages, staff and the City's desire to keep funding for these contributions level, the tax levy rate for the Police and Fire Pension system reflected a \$0.02616 decrease. In response, other tax levies were increased.

If the budget is approved as recommended, the City's total number of full time equivalent (FTE) employees will be 541. The impact of accelerating personnel costs must be closely evaluated and monitored as there are several new position requests that were not included in this budget due to financial constraints. Self-insured healthcare costs are projected to increase by 10%, which is conservative based on historical values for the past few years, but also cognizant of significant claims increases within the past 10-year window.

The FY 2023 budget reflects a proposed use of operating cash reserves for several "one-time" capital needs and several smaller building, equipment, and planning projects.

Hotel/Motel Revenues

A 7% Hotel/Motel Tax, first authorized by West Des Moines voters in 1984, is expected to generate \$4,000,000 in the upcoming year. This is a significant increase from the "COVID" levels – currently projecting 90% of what was received in "pre-COVID" Fiscal 2019. By agreement, money is allocated from these revenues to outside organizations: 2/7th of the funds are directed to the Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), 2/7th is directed to Bravo Greater Des Moines, 2/7th (subject to City Council approval) will be used for parks, recreation, and/or tourist activities, and the remaining 1/7th will be available for distribution to other City Council-designated entities or for other internal uses. Also, a percentage of City Council-designated discretionary revenues in excess of total fund revenues of \$2,550,000 continue to channel \$120,000 per year towards the City's public arts program.

Regional Cooperation

The City continues to support programs that improve the quality of life for all residents of the metro area. Besides direct financial support, the City of West Des Moines contributes to the Des Moines metro area in many ways, including but not limited to:

- ♦ Wastewater Reclamation Authority a consolidated organization, facility, and systems to handle wastewater throughout the region
- ♦ WestCom Public Safety Center a 911 call center and public safety dispatching services for the cities of West Des Moines, Clive, Urbandale, Waukee, Norwalk, and Windsor Heights
- ♦ Metro Home Improvement Program —. A multi-jurisdictional housing rehabilitation entity, to preserve affordable housing stock in West Des Moines, Ankeny, Altoona, Clive, Grimes, Johnston, Pleasant Hill, Polk City, Urbandale, and Windsor Heights
- ♦ Iowa EMS Alliance private-public partnership with Unity Point Health where the City provides administration and operation of emergency medical service and ambulance transportation
- ♦ The WDM Police Department remains involved with many metro-wide activities ranging from traffic task forces to narcotic trafficking
- ♦ The City is active in two regional watershed-related organizations (1) the Walnut Creek Watershed Management Authority which is tasked with controlling this tributary across multiple jurisdictions, and (2) ICON (Iowa Confluence Water Trails) which is a collaborative regional effort to improve and maintain clean recreational waterways

Conclusion

The FY 2023 budget recommended by the City Manager and staff accomplishes the primary objectives of maintaining services, committing capital funds to maintaining infrastructure, amenities, and city facilities as well as development, while maintaining (or in this case, reducing) property tax rates.

In addition, City departments have identified supplemental services and projects which are included in the proposed budget document for review by the Mayor and City Council. The fourteen (14) proposed new staff positions were carefully scrutinized, vetted, and prioritized from a pool of approximately 29 departmental requests, with only the most essential positions being recommended. The Management Team will continue to assess the staffing in these departments and offer the City Council alternatives to achieve effective staffing levels across the organization.

To assure that the City's human and physical infrastructure keeps pace with the City's growth, some additional user-fee revenue enhancements, strategic expenditure reductions, and potential restructuring will likely continue. Current service demands and limited revenue growth will necessitate a thorough and on-going review of all aspects of our financial plan.

I should express thanks to members of the City staff for their diligent efforts to develop and operate within budgets that provide continual high-quality service to our residents.

I would also like to give two specific notes of thanks. First, to the Finance Department staff for their performance in gathering, analyzing, and presenting information clearly and accurately, and second, to the City's departmental leadership for providing critical feedback, input, financial

projections, and lists of priorities, all needed to formulate the budget. The budget preparation team composed of Deputy City Manager Jamie Letzring, Finance Director Tim Stiles, Senior Budget Analyst Chris Hamlett, Assistant to the City Manager Laura Reveles, and me, worked collaboratively with Department Directors and many other staff members to develop the proposed budget. This would not have been completed without the effort of all those involved.

I would also like to thank the elected officials for your continued support in planning and directing the financial operations of the City in a responsible and progressive manner. The West Des Moines community has benefited greatly from your leadership and commitment.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Hadden

Tom Hadden

City Manager