



February 6, 2009

TO: CITY COUNCIL

RE: 2009 BUDGET MEMORANDUM

According to Spokane Municipal Code, Chapter 07.11.070, the City Auditor, after consultation with the Audit Committee, is required to submit an annual audit plan to the City Council for review and comment. The primary focus of audit activities during 2008, were areas with the potential for cost savings. One of the projects selected for the 2008 plan was to provide assistance to Council as part of the *budget process*.

The *budget process* is frequently sighted as an efficiency issue from several different perspectives and requires a relatively quick turn around for Council Members to review. In addition, the sheer volume of information to be reviewed and the possibility that there may be multiple drafts adds to the work load. Assistance was requested by Council for research and analysis of both specific items and departments and as a whole to provide analysis to make policy decisions.

Part of this assistance included the development of a budget tool. This tool will assist Council in comparatively analyzing proposed budgets and provide comparisons of proposed and prior year actual and budget amounts. This in-depth information will assist Council in discussions around strategic initiatives.

Excerpts from the budget tool are presented with this memorandum to promote financial transparency and openness in government. It also demonstrates that we strive to ensure efficient and effective use of public resources. The 2009 budgets' financial data is presented for selected departments for both revenue and expense, as well as to information presented at the fund level for the agency as whole.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the City Auditor at 509.625.6492.

Sincerely,

Gwen Fuller-Vernier, CPA, MBA  
CITY AUDITOR