



SPOKANE CITY COUNCIL
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, WA 99201-3335
(509) 625-6255

March 4, 2009

TO: CITIZENS OF THE CITY OF SPOKANE

RE: 2009 BUDGET MEMORANDUM

Focusing on accountability, Council Members for the City for Spokane are using a new tool to support open and performance-driven government by looking at the jurisdiction as a whole and aiming for what is relevant in these difficult economic times. We are analyzing the broader issues of government performance.

The City Auditor's overarching role of looking at how government operates is the primary focus of audit activities. This year's focus has been on projects with the potential for cost savings. One of the projects selected was to provide assistance to Council as part of the *budget process*.

The *budget process* is frequently cited as an efficiency issue from several different perspectives and requires a relatively quick response for Council Members. 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. Such a 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 Budget's financial data presents both the revenue and expense for selected Departments. In addition, information is presented at the fund level for the agency as whole.

Citizens of Spokane are engaged in City affairs and the City Council believes that improving accountability and transparency while engaging citizens leads to better government. We look forward to working with citizens in an ongoing dialogue as we strive to increase and improve performance and results.

Sincerely,

Joe Shogan, Council President
Al French, Council Member
Bob Apple, Council Member
Richard Rush, Council Member

Michael Allen, Council Member
Steve Corker, Council Member
Nancy McLaughlin, Council Member