



City of Inverness

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City Manager's Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Message

To the Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council:

The City of Inverness experienced many positive outcomes this past year including festivals, entertainment district activities and concerts as it continues to encourage community participation and economic growth. Looking forward to Fiscal Year 2024-2025, the City continued to benefit from the annual budget development process embracing the mantra of “Plan Fund Execute”. The Planning and Development of the annual City Budget is an undertaking that takes most of a year to complete and involves several council workshops, staff interactions, and meetings with consultants and contracted service providers. The goal is to ensure the needs of the community are met in a uniform, affordable manner and to include service delivery that meets local aspirations.

On April 2, 2024 the Budget Overview Workshop presented facts, market trends, a local analysis of economic and social conditions, and items that potentially would require policy changes to keep the community moving forward. The focus of the workshop was the current approach to fiscal policies regarding the City's restricted and unrestricted fund balances. We focused on the need to invest in our people and the captivation of cost efficiencies and operational efficacy from a more modern departmental structure of the City. With the rising complexity of the City's parks and recreational activities footprint, the need to better utilize existing facilities and a modernized departmental structure has been essential to the successes we are realizing today.

On May 7, 2024, a Workshop was held to discuss the Five-Year Capital Plan. A summary of completed projects, plus a discussion of pending projects that are scheduled for the five-year plan period, was made. This presentation featured continued focus on strategic infrastructure investment. This included the continuation of the ambitious annual road resurfacing program in concert with the development of capital projects that offered a return on investment by way of expanding/increasing the tax base (shared parking, regional stormwater, multi-modal connectivity). The City will continue to be an attractive location for retirees and families seeking an affordable high quality of life. The need to develop new housing starts to receive the interest will require the City to look at how it can incentivize and improve conditions for residential development in underdeveloped areas.

The City Council, at its July 2, 2024 meeting, set the tentative millage rate in the ensuing fiscal year at the current year's rate of 7.76 captivating a potential 9.1% increase in valuation over the previous year. A City-Wide Budget presentation will be made at a public workshop on July 16, 2024 at 5:30pm, to discuss budget figures that were structured to maintain a millage rate of 7.76 for final adoption. The meeting presented all findings and fully disclosed spending, service levels, projects, staffing and related cost, planning mechanisms, utility system operations and Inverness Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) activity. The Tax Increment Financing program (TIF revenues) that are derived through increased valuations via the Community Redevelopment District are complex but

beneficial. These funds are targeted to fund improvement projects and meet debt service commitments of Bonds for a thirty-year period that funded deficiencies on a large scale to improve blighted conditions.

In closing, the Recommended FY 2024-2025 Budget is balanced in accordance with State Statutes and attempts to address the goals and priorities that have been established by City Council for Inverness's future while being mindful of the current economic conditions. The City's financial position is strong and stable with this past year seeing positive effects of maintaining positive bond ratings as well as increases in net position absent the need for millage increases. Our guiding principle of Plan-Fund-Execute through this budget development process presents a balanced budget to reflect the current community economic conditions and continues to provide great service to our community. The proposed budget prioritizes our greatest assets, refocuses capital investment, maintains current levels of service, and continues to advance established priorities.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to the Department Directors, all City staff, the Mayor, and City Council for the hard work, leadership, and dedication on this important policy document. Our staff continues to display a culture that encourages cost savings to maximize resources to accomplish budget initiatives. Final adoption of the 2024-2025 budget, that spans October 1st, 2024 through September 30th, 2025, will be accomplished in two Public Hearings scheduled for 5:30 pm on September 3, 2024 and September 17, 2024.

We are furthering the mission of "Small Town Done Right" with a vision for future generations to come.

Many Thanks,



Eric C. Williams
City Manager