

# 2017 Budget Message

To the Residents, Businesses and City Council of DuPont:

I offer for your consideration and approval my 2017 budget proposal for the City of DuPont. This budget represents approximately \$8.125M in General Fund expenditures with a total budget of \$15.5M. This is a fiscally sound and balanced proposal that represents modest growth in expenditures and a large investment in reserves, strengthening our long-term fiscal security. The proposed budget insures:

- All current levels of services and operations can be maintained or improved
- Reserve funds are increased
- Needed equipment maintenance, replacements and upgrades take place on schedule
- Public Safety is prioritized
- No new taxes proposed

The proposed budget is guided by and consistent with the Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives, and Core Values of the City of DuPont.

**VISION:** To be the best city in Washington with a proper balance of public safety, quality of life, economic vitality, and environmental and historic preservation.

**MISSION:** To provide affordable, high quality municipal services with responsive and accessible local governance, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the community of DuPont.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. **Public Safety:** Provide responsive, comprehensive, effective Public Safety Services.
2. **Economic Development:** Thoughtfully grow DuPont's economic vitality.
3. **Historic Preservation:** Develop DuPont's historic resources.
4. **Environmental Restoration:** Preserve and restore DuPont's environmental resources.
5. **Quality of Life:** Develop and enhance quality of life by improving recreation, programs, facilities and opportunities.
6. **Infrastructure/Public Transportation:** Develop and maintain high quality public infrastructure and provide for Public Transportation.
7. **Governance:** Provide professional, responsive public leadership and services.

## CORE VALUES:

1. **Respect:** Respect is given and expected. We respectfully engage our customers by listening and supporting their needs, anticipating and delivering high quality services, and ensuring their satisfaction.
2. **Integrity:** We conduct ourselves at all times in a manner that is ethical, legal and professional, with the highest degree of honesty, respect and fairness.
3. **Innovation:** Open to change and inventive solutions, we develop creative solutions and share leading practices that enhance the value of services provided to our customers.
4. **Accountability:** We promote openness and transparency in our operations ensuring that we are accountable for our actions at all times.
5. **Stewardship:** We serve as trusted stewards of the public's financial, environmental, historical, social and physical resources seeking to responsibly utilize, conserve and sustain for current and future generations.

## **Budget Development Philosophy**

As the City Staff began the budget development process my first question was: Can we sustain our current levels of operations, programs, personnel, reserve fund contributions and debt service with our known increased costs? I was pleased to learn that, yes; we could do all of the above. My second question was: What increased levels of revenues can we expect and what cost reductions can we recognize? We have a modest growth in projected revenues of around 1.4% along with several cost savings initiatives that will allow us to invest back into the City.

2017 Budget Initiatives: Based on my guidance to increase capacity and better serve the community, the following initiatives are included in the proposed 2017 Budget:

1. **Additional Firefighter/EMT:** This year's proposed budget includes funds to hire an 11<sup>th</sup> Firefighter/EMT. This hire reduces reliance on overtime and provides for more consistent coverage from the DFD.
2. **Administrative support for Fire/Police Departments:** To free up police and firefighter professionals, the 2017 budget includes an administrative position that will be shared between the two departments.
3. **New ambulance:** The current ambulance is due for replacement. Having invested in savings, our ER&R funds provide for the replacement cost without having to use General Fund dollars. The new ambulance will be suitable to serve as an ALS capable ambulance if the City opts for developing ALS service. If not, the new ambulance will fully support the ongoing BLS capacity.

4. **New Police Vehicles:** As part of our life cycle replacement program, we will retire 2 of the old police cruisers and replace them with 2 of the newer SUV cruisers. This action will complete the replacement of our police vehicle fleet.
5. **New Public Works Vehicles:** As part of our vehicle replacement program, we will retire a leaf mulcher and two vehicles of an aging fleet and replace them with two new trucks and the mulcher.
6. **Community Center Feasibility Study:** Real Estate Excise Tax (REET) proceeds exceeded projections in 2016 by over \$100,000 which has been set aside and made available for a feasibility study if the community survey and council decide to pursue this project.
7. **Recreation Program Funding:** Revenues generated by recreation programs will be reinvested into recreation programs and support; therefore, I am proposing to utilize less than \$15,000 to provide administrative help for the recreation department.

## **The Past and Future**

Over the past 5 years the City of DuPont, absorbed and recovered from the impacts of the Great Recession. Previous Mayors and City Councils made hard decisions that reduced services, staffing and deferred maintenance. The result of these decisions was a City financially secure, prepared to recover quickly, restore services and return to a sustainable footing. The results of these actions were a two-time increase in the City's Bond Rating. The increase was an almost unprecedented financial improvement over a short period of time. The City refinanced outstanding debt and significantly reduced costs. Now as we look to the future, DuPont is poised to enter a period of economic growth. The City has the most undeveloped commercial property in Pierce County and we are a highly desirable location for many different types of businesses. Over the next several years we can expect to see new business activities coming to DuPont. The council and I will look to our Vision, Mission, Goals and Objectives, and Core Values to guide us as we balance increased development with the qualities we value in our community.

There are two important initiatives that will be the subject of public debate in the coming months:

1. **Advanced Life Support (ALS):** DuPont is one of only a handful of Pierce County towns or cities that are officially designated as an underserved community for emergency medical services. We currently have a Basic Life Support capability that is highly responsive but limited in scope. Our ALS comes from commercial vendors that do not operate in DuPont, causing significantly increased response times and an almost 45% non-response to our about 300<sup>(1)</sup> annual ALS calls. I have commissioned an ALS Task Force comprised of DFD leadership, DuPont residents with special expertise, and non-DuPont experts in the field of emergency medical services to assess options and provide a recommendation for a viable course of action. This will be presented to the

(1) This number has been edited since the original document was issued on September 27, 2016.

public and I will receive your thoughts at a number of community meetings. The recommendation, with your input, will be presented to the City Council. The Council will decide if we should proceed with any actions to establish ALS capacity in DuPont and potentially bring a ballot measure to the citizens in 2017.

2. Community Center: A recurring theme throughout our City is the lack of a facility for recreation and other gatherings. I have begun a process that will survey the community to determine interest and commitment to building a community center. Depending on the results of the survey, I will ask the Council to support a professional feasibility study that assesses our needs, wants and capability to build and maintain a community center. I will also seek partners to contribute to this effort. If the results are positive, I will ask the Council to bring this project to the public in the form of a ballot measure if it is necessary.

### **Acknowledgements**

This is my first proposed budget as your Mayor and I am proud to present a balanced budget that invests in our future by starting with saving money in our reserve funds while adding needed services and equipment for DuPont.

Special thanks to our City staff: you are consummate professionals that care about DuPont. Your creativity in reducing costs while expanding services is appreciated and a big reason the City continues to thrive.

DuPont is vibrant, exciting and beautiful because you, our residents, care. From our volunteers on various agencies or boards, to the people who help with our outstanding events or our service organizations, it is your effort and investment in DuPont that makes us the crown jewel of the South Sound. Great things are happening and your willingness to help means we can do much more than other cities.

### **Next Steps**

The City Council takes over the budget process from here. They will review and consider changes to this proposed budget at numerous public meetings and workshops. Please participate as Council begins their work on a final budget for 2017 by end of year.

My door is always open, and Council would appreciate hearing from you, so please let us know if you have any ideas or suggestions.

Respectfully,



Mayor Michael P. Courts