

News Release

Ketchum City Council to Consider \$14 Million Budget Wednesday *Reduction of 1.7 Percent Over Previous Year*

KETCHUM, Idaho — The Ketchum City Council will begin discussions on a \$14 million budget Wednesday for FY 2014-15, a 1.7 percent reduction over the current fiscal year.

The major reason for the decrease is a drop in the anticipated local option sales tax funds received in the current fiscal year.

The budget is designed to maintain existing services, as well as accomplish eight objectives adopted by City Council earlier this year for FY 2015, which begins Oct. 1.

- Adopt a balanced general fund budget.
- Initiate planning for construction of a civic center to incorporate a city hall, fire station and police station.
- Evaluate and consider utilization of a multi-departmental code enforcement staff.
- Work on adopting and implementing environmental initiatives such as water conservation, energy conservation and natural resources.
- Increase coordination and effective use of resources of city-funded, economic non-government organizations.
- Update the zoning code and make it consistent with the comprehensive plan adopted early this year.
- Consider fire services coordination and/or consolidation with Sun Valley.
- Maximize the utilization of available social media through the city's communications program.

Funds to continue planning for a new civic center are expected to come from the Ketchum Urban Renewal Agency, which will begin budget discussions later this month. The current city hall is in a former auto dealership built in 1974, and the building is too small for today's staff and deteriorating with age.

A multi-departmental code enforcement officer may be hired in January to ensure compliance with collection of the local-option tax. The officer also may focus on planning code enforcement at a later date. The city anticipates that the position will pay for itself through increased collection of taxes and building permit fees.

The budget proposes a salary increase averaging 3.8 percent for firefighters and 2 percent for other city employees. The budget anticipates an increase of 15 percent, or approximately \$177,119, for employee health insurance, although the actual cost may be more.

The city will consider continuing the employment of two to three firefighters, whose salaries have been paid under a federal grant for the past two years.

“All of these programs are integral and important to the City of Ketchum’s success,” interim City Manager Ray Silva said in his budget message to the mayor and City Council. “However, until general fund and LOT revenues increase significantly, the city is unable to afford to pay for some or all.”

Wednesday’s meeting is the first public discussion on the budget. The budget is scheduled for adoption on Aug. 26.



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About the City of Ketchum

The City of Ketchum is located in the Wood River Valley in south central Idaho. Founded in 1880 during the mining boom, Ketchum is now regarded as one of the most popular destinations for winter and summer visitors due to its world-class skiing, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, restaurants, art galleries and shopping. The City of Ketchum hosts the famous annual Wagon Days Parade, held on Labor Day weekend, and numerous other year-round attractions. Ketchum is home to more than 10,000 full- and part-time residents. For more information about the City of Ketchum, visit www.ketchumidaho.org.

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