



City of Ketchum

News Release
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Ketchum Budget of \$22.9 Million Goes to City Council Monday

Quality of Life Is “Key Economic Driver” Today

KETCHUM, Idaho — Ketchum’s proposed \$22.9 million budget for FY 2016-2017 focuses on maintaining and improving the quality of life, which Mayor Nina Jonas calls “a key driver” in the economic success of communities today.

The budget will go to City Council at its meeting at 5:30 p.m. Monday. Under state law, a final budget must be adopted by Sept. 30.

The upcoming budget calls for almost \$3 million for capital projects such as improvements to tennis courts, sidewalks, traffic control devices, and undergrounding utilities.

The Ketchum Urban Renewal Agency is encouraged to share costs for the Atkinson Park tennis court replacement, Northwood Natural Area improvements, additional funding for Warm Springs sidewalks and the Ketchum Innovation Center.

Approximately \$500,000 is allocated towards investment in new essential services facilities for police, city/emergency network communications and fire.

Approximately \$1.7 million of the funding for capital projects is one-time money resulting from savings in FY 2015-2016.

“During the recession and weakened economy, Ketchum focused on maintaining services,” City Administrator Suzanne Frick said. “Investment in infrastructure and capital projects was curtailed. This exacerbated deteriorating or substandard infrastructure throughout Ketchum. The city now has the ability to invest in key infrastructure projects such as tennis court replacements, sidewalks, lighting, roof repairs and traffic safety equipment.”

“Ketchum has the hashtag motto, ‘SmallTownBigLife,’” Jonas wrote in her budget message. “Quality of life is a key driver in the economic success of communities today. The city of Ketchum’s commitment to quality of life remains strong and requires the need for substantial public investment.”

“The city needs businesses that offer year-round jobs with professional salaries,” she added. “My vision is to bring 100 new \$100,000 jobs to our city. Ketchum is off and running towards that goal with companies like Vyykn, Solu and Vie Active. The quality of life is the first and foremost consideration in location for businesses that offer these jobs.”

The budget calls for continued funding of the Ketchum Arts Commission and Ketchum Energy Advisory Committee and their projects, as well as the Ketchum Innovation Center business incubator that houses companies such as Solu. It also includes funding for Visit Sun Valley, Blaine County Housing Authority and Mountain Rides.

Visit Sun Valley's "positive promotion of our area supports our existing businesses, whose success is vital to our city. It is the smaller businesses that helped Ketchum survive the past recession and they will be here in any future downturns," she noted.

Funding for Mountain Rides has been increased from \$561,000 to \$590,000 for enhanced services. Mountain Rides plans to expand the blue route by adding service times, improve service times to the red route, add 3 new valley routes and work towards airport service in peak winter season. Mountain Rides has been "quick to respond to requests for more convenient service," Jonas added.

The proposed budget eliminates funding for Sun Valley Economic Development. "The city must be equitable in its funding. Many organizations are having a tremendous, positive impact on our economy. It makes no sense to fund one over another, especially one that counters the city's efforts with negative information, lobbies against us, and represents a single viewpoint that is damaging the reputation of the city and region and discouraging outside investment," Jonas said.

"Ketchum's strongest economic development card is attracting people. This year's budget calls for a significant investment in the community to promote tourism, attract new business and enhance the quality of life to all who live, work and play in Ketchum," she concluded in her budget message.

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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, mountain biking, fishing, hiking, 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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