



# City of Sultan

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To: Members of the City Council  
Staff and Employees of the City of Sultan  
Citizens of the City of Sultan

November 29, 2005

From: Ben Tolson, Mayor

Re: Hiring And Spending Freeze and Organizational Review

Three circumstances prompt the issuance of this message: (1) the ongoing process to adopt a budget for fiscal year 2006; (2) the results of the State Auditor's most recent audit of the financial affairs of the City of Sultan, and (3) the results of general review of City operations and administration performed by the Prothman Group.

The City of Sultan, like many small cities, continues to experience difficult financial times. General fund revenues are most greatly and negatively impacted. It will take teamwork and the making of difficult choices to allow Sultan to weather its current financial difficulties.

It is clear that our annual spending has consistently exceeded our revenues for a number of years which, as you can imagine, has compounded into a serious financial challenge for this year and for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, I am taking immediate steps to start turning the tide on our budget problems and address the financial stability of the City.

As an immediate step to insure that the City's financial difficulties become no worse, I have ordered a hiring freeze. Until lifted, any position in any department not currently staffed will not be filled. Until lifted, any position in any department that becomes vacant will not be filled. Departments with current vacancies include: Administration, Public Works and the Police Department. One additional vacancy is anticipated in the Police department.

An across the board hiring freeze is only a first step in solving the City's financial difficulties. Department Heads must also clear all expenses over \$50 with myself or the City Administrator prior to expenditure. Department Heads are further directed to cut expenses where ever possible. Our goal is an across the board reduction of 15%. If you have any questions about this please see me.

Different departments provide differing services, and these services would be viewed as having differing priority. Therefore, the next step is to work as a team to support the collective steps that will and are being taken. We must work together if we are going to have an effective and efficient reorganization of the City's administration.

Over the next several weeks, within my authority as Mayor, I will be taking, or proposing steps to reorganize the administration of the City toward the goal of reducing the costs of administering the City while preserving the effective delivery of essential public services. These actions taken or proposed will affect all departments of the City.

The City's current financial situation makes for hard choices that will affect real people. I ask the members of the City Council, all employees and staff, and the citizens of Sultan to work as a team and to support the hard choices that will be made over the next several weeks.

Ben Tolson  
Mayor of Sultan

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cc: All City Council Members