Town of Windsor
CALIFORNIA

TOWN OF WINDSOR

Town Council Policy

SUBJECT/TITLE:	POLICY NO:	APPROVED BY:	APPROVAL DATE:
Fiscal Accountability and Stewardship Policy		RESO NO:	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Fiscal Accountability and Stewardship Policy is to formalize the Town of Windsor's commitment to transparency, responsible financial management, and clear public reporting. This policy reflects the expectations expressed by residents during the Town's 2025–2026 community outreach process and establishes a durable framework for fiscal stewardship that applies to all Town funds and financial practices, regardless of whether a Transactions and Use Tax measure is pursued or approved.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Town funds, financial reporting, and fiscal management practices. If a local Transactions and Use Tax is enacted, this policy will guide the management, tracking, reporting, and oversight of any resulting revenues.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Transparency
The Town will provide clear, accessible information about revenues, expenditures, financial trends, and long-term obligations.

Accountability
The Town will maintain visible, credible oversight mechanisms to ensure public funds are managed responsibly.

Responsible Financial Management
The Town will continue its long-standing practice of prudent budgeting, cost containment, long term planning, and responsible stewardship of public resources.

Community Centered Priorities
The Town recognizes that community priorities include roads and infrastructure, public safety, and the programs and public spaces that contribute to Windsor's quality of life.

PROVISIONS

1. Transparent Public Budgeting

The Town will continue to develop its biennial budget through an open and transparent public process. This includes public study sessions, open Council deliberations, and the publication of detailed financial documents that outline revenues, expenditures, long term obligations, and service impacts. Budget materials, financial forecasts, and supporting analyses will remain publicly available in advance of Council consideration. Regular financial updates, mid cycle reviews, and the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report will continue to provide residents with a complete and independently audited picture of the Town's financial condition.

2. Independent Financial Audits

The Town's financial statements will continue to be audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm in accordance with:

- Generally Accepted Auditing Standards (GAAS)
- Government Auditing Standards
- Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)

Audits will evaluate internal controls, test financial transactions, and assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

If a Transactions and Use Tax is enacted, revenues will be recorded within the General Fund and included in the annual audit as part of the Town's major fund reporting.

3. Tracking and Reporting of Revenues

If a Transactions and Use Tax is enacted, revenues will be:

- Recorded within the General Fund in accordance with GAAP
- Separately identified in the Town's accounting system
- Reported annually through the audit, accountability report, and Council workshop

This approach ensures transparency while maintaining compliance with GAAP and Government Auditing Standards.

4. Annual Public Accountability Report

Staff will prepare an annual public report summarizing:

- Revenues received
- Expenditures made
- Completed projects
- Measurable outcomes and performance indicators
- Beginning and ending balances

The report will be presented to the Town Council and made available to the public.

5. Annual Council Workshop

The Town will hold an annual public workshop or study session to present updates on revenues, spending, project progress, financial trends, and community identified priorities.

6. Public Communication and Accessibility

The Town will maintain clear, accessible public reporting practices, including:

- Posting financial documents, audits, and accountability reports on the Town's website
- Providing plain language summaries of major financial actions
- Using charts, tables, and visual summaries to enhance public understanding

7. Internal Controls and Compliance

The Town will maintain a system of internal controls designed to safeguard public assets, ensure accurate financial reporting, and support compliance with applicable laws, regulations, ordinances, and Council-adopted policies. The Town's independent auditors will evaluate and report on internal controls as required under Government Auditing Standards. Compliance findings will be included in the annual audit.

8. Long Term Fiscal Sustainability

The Town will maintain a long-term financial strategy that:

- Supports essential public services
- Invests in infrastructure maintenance and replacement
- Prevents the accumulation of new deferred maintenance
- Addresses structural operating challenges
- Supports multi-year financial planning

This approach ensures that Windsor can preserve the quality of life residents expect today while protecting the public assets future generations will rely upon.

9. Relationship to Future Revenue Measures

While this policy was informed by community dialogue regarding a potential Transactions and Use Tax, it stands independently and remains in effect regardless of whether a tax measure is pursued or approved.

Any future Citizens Oversight Commission associated with a Transactions and Use Tax would be established separately by the Town Council and is not governed by this policy.

10. Policy Updates

The Town Council may amend this policy as needed to reflect evolving best practices, legal requirements, or community expectations.

END

REVISION HISTORY: