

Positive Changes & Improvements



Getting to know our New City Manager, José Madrigal:

Council welcomed José Madrigal to the City organization in mid-September. He presented us with a plan for his first 100 days which includes an extensive review of the City organization and structure in order to develop and implement changes that focus on high performance and customer service, use data driven-decision making and incorporate continuous improvement as core values.



Finding a highly qualified, experienced and educated City Manager such as José gives the City of Durango and our community the opportunity to expand & enhance the characteristics of our town that create the exceptional quality of life that we all share, and to foster a vital, vibrant economy.



2021 Budget Information:

In preparation for the 2021 budget, I let José & the other City Councilors know that I would be advocating for fiscally conservative policies and specifically the principles below:

- Rebuild reserves to be able to fund operations in an emergency and to fund facility & capital needs.
 - Improve the budget process by separating operations & capital projects into two categories and incorporating best practices to recognize maintenance & replacement needs.
 - Appropriately staff & fund the Police Department utilizing best practices to improve safety and respond to our community's needs.
 - Determine effective policies to promote and create a robust program that focuses on workforce/attainable housing, enhances economic development and supports a more affordable community.
 - Prioritize maintaining what we have along with funding safety-related projects verses building new amenities.
- José presented the **draft** 2021 Budget to Council on November 5th which incorporates the following changes:
 - The budget prioritizes operating a conservative budget by basing spending on a five-year-average of *actual* expenditures (rather than comparing to previous *budget* numbers) and aims to reach an additional reduction due to the projected revenue shortfalls from the pandemic.
 - Government Finance Association Best Practices have been adopted in this budget and are reflected in the elimination of carry forward capital projects and the isolation of dedicated sales tax & General Fund revenue & projects with the objective of increasing transparency and promoting greater understanding of the budget.
 - The commitment to fiscal transparency & openness will be reflected in the implementation of OpenGov software in 2021.



We have come a long way, but still have much improvement to achieve in the coming months! If you have any questions or comments about the draft budget or proposed capital projects, please contact me.

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Significant staffing changes:

- José has hired two new people to fill critical department head positions - the Finance Director position (empty since the resignation of the previous FD) and the Human Resources Director position. They are both highly qualified and bring exceptional professionalism to the organization.
 - Cynthia Sneed – Finance Director: She has previously served in both the public & private finance sectors and holds a BS in accountancy as well as a Masters in Education. Ms. Sneed has 20 years of professional financial experience and is a Certified Public Accountant and Certified Municipal Finance Officer.
 - Erin Hyder – Human Resources: She has her Bachelor of Arts in Accounting from Fort Lewis College, her Professional in Human Resources Certification, and she has 16 years of experience in Human Resources functions with 15 years being at an executive human resources level.



The addition of these two key staff members will enhance and encourage a high performing, continuously improving organization that focuses on benefiting the community.



Being involved in your community makes a difference! There are three Durango City Council seats to be filled in April 2021.

- Please consider running for office or encouraging others.
 - If good, qualified people do not run for office, they cannot be elected!
 - This election is non-partisan, only requiring that you be a registered voter in Durango.
- Important dates & deadlines for the election cycle:
 - January 14, 2021 – Candidate packets are available for pickup
 - January 19, 2021 – Petitions can begin to be circulated for signatures to qualify to be on the ballot.
 - February 8, 2021 – Deadline to return petitions
 - April 6, 2021 – Election Day
- As always, I am available if you have questions about running for or being a City Councilor.
- My previous newsletter outlined some of the challenges and steps one should take when considering running for City Council. You can read it on my website: www.kimforcouncil.org



Previous newsletters can be seen on my website: www.kimforcouncil.org. As always, if you wish to share my newsletters with others, please do. And if they would like to be added to my list, they can request that by emailing me. If you would prefer not to be included on my newsletter list, please let me know, and I will remove your email.

(all information contained in this newsletter represents my opinion and does not reflect the views of Council unless otherwise stated.)

Be Safe – Stay Healthy!