

	CITY OF BELVEDERE – ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY MANUAL POLICY 2.3 PENSION/OPEB FUNDING		
	Adoption Date:	11/13/2018	Adopted by:
Revised Date:	4/12/2021	Revised by:	City Council Resolution No. 2021.10
Authority:	City Council		

2.3.1 PENSIONS

2.3.1.1 Purpose and Goals

The City of Belvedere is committed to fiscal sustainability. In keeping with this principle, it maintains minimal debt and generous reserves to cope with exogenous shocks. The City is also committed to honoring its pension obligations. One of the biggest threats to the City’s ongoing fiscal sustainability is its rising pension costs. The overarching goal of this Policy is to avoid the risk of crowding out vital public services in future years, and to provide balance sheet space to finance essential infrastructure projects in the years ahead, by funding its accrued pension obligations at a more prudential rate. This Policy also formalizes a past practice of using excess reserves to make discretionary payments to CalPERS whenever affordable.

Development of the City’s Pension Funding Policy was guided by the following five tenets:

- The cost of employee benefits should be paid by the generation of taxpayers who receives services.
- Actuarial assumptions should be prudential to ensure that promised benefits can be paid.
- Funding shortfalls should be closed expeditiously. The goal is full funding.
- Large swings in employer contribution rates are undesirable. Smoothing is desirable.
- Funding policies and underlying assumptions should be clearly delineated and regularly reviewed.

2.3.1.2 Policy

The City shall seek to achieve full funding, over twenty years, of its pension obligations. This means that the City shall seek to have assets to cover 100% of accrued pension liabilities valued at a prudential discount rate (CalPERS discount rate adjusted to reflect real anticipated performance) by 2031 and beyond. This calibrates with CalPERS own amortization rules, which allow losses (or gains) to be amortized over 20 years.

2.3.1.3 Establishing and Funding a Section 115 Trust

The City shall establish a Section 115 Trust (“Trust”) into which it will invest funds reserved for future pension-related expenses. The City has elected to participate in the California Employers’ Pension Prefunding Trust (CEPPT) Fund 115 Trust program. The City will provide an initial

investment using a dollar average formula into this Trust during a fifteen-month period beginning in Fiscal Year 20/21 and will make annual contributions to the Trust in amounts determined by the Finance Committee and approved by the City Council beginning in Fiscal Year 21/22. Funds set aside by the City for this purpose will be transmitted to the Trust no less than annually. The assets will be managed conservatively; the City has selected CEPPT investment Strategy 1 which reflects the City's general risk aversion and pension plan maturity.

2.3.1.4 Role of the Finance Committee

The City's Finance Committee will conduct a standing pension funding review at least every five years to reset the discount rate (adjusting for CalPERS' discount rate based on latest available evidence), set annual funding costs, and fix payments until the next review. The Finance Committee will also review the investment strategy utilized in the 115 Pension Trust and recommend changes if deemed appropriate. It may also recommend transferring money from the Trust to CalPERS or making a discretionary payment to the Trust or CalPERS from excess reserves if any exist at that time. The Finance Committee will send its recommendations to the City Council for its consideration.

2.3.1.5 Determination of Funding Amounts

In developing its recommendations to the City Council, the Finance Committee will review CalPERS' current discount rate (i.e. expected rate of return on its investments), CalPERS' actual investment performance during the review period, and other relevant factors. The Committee will set an adjusted discount rate (or putative rate) that it believes to be more realistic than the discount rate set by CalPERS, and will determine the amounts that should be set aside in the Trust to ensure full funding over the requisite period. These amounts will be determined by using the CalPERS Pension Outlook Tool or substantially similar methodology. Should CalPERS require additional payments from the City due to a reduction in CalPERS' discount rate, the City may elect to reduce its transfers to the 115 Trust by an equal amount.

2.3.1.6 Financial Reporting

The City recognizes the importance of ensuring that pension obligations included in the City's financial statements, particularly its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report, are consistent with CalPERS, and will continue to use CalPERS' discount rate for these purposes. This facilitates easy comparison with other agencies and avoids possible negative impacts on perceived credit quality. The City equally recognizes the importance of communicating its pension stewardship. It will therefore include an annual pension update, describing its pension funding policy, Trust assets and adjusted funded status in its annual budget report. Appropriate disclosures of the 115 Trust investments will be reported in the City's financial statements, consistent with GASB required standards.

2.3.1.7 Effect on Reserve Requirements

The City maintains a robust minimum reserve policy, with reserves required to equal no less than six months of general fund operating expenses, debt financing costs and fire contract costs net of

fire tax revenues. Transfers to the Trust and additional discretionary payments made to CalPERS will be excluded from the reserve requirement calculation (denominator) because they are discretionary in nature. This is consistent with the City's existing treatment of discretionary payments to CalPERS and internal money transfers.

2.3.1.8 Employee Contributions

In accordance with PEPRAs guidelines and compatible with other local agencies, the City will work over time to increase Classic employee contribution rates to 8.0% of salary for Miscellaneous employees and to 12.0% of salary for Safety workers.

2.3.2 OTHER POST EMPLOYMENT BENEFIT (OPEB)

The City offers OPEB health benefits to employees who meet CalPERS vesting requirements. The benefit provided to City retirees is the minimum amount allowable under the CalPERS health plan, with the exception of certain City Manager retirees, who receive a more generous benefit. This benefit is funded on a pay-go method, with no funds set aside in a trust for this purpose.”