

City of Villa Rica Fund Equity Policy

In a government there are two major classes of funds, Governmental and Proprietary. The Proprietary funds operate very similar to private-sector businesses. How much an individual customer pays typically will vary depending upon the quantity of goods or services. For the Proprietary Funds the focus is the inflows and outflows of economic resources (changes in net assets). Changes in net asset are recognized as soon as the cause of the change occurs, regardless of the timing of the related cash flows. Another way of looking at this is revenues are recognized as soon as they are earned, and expenses are recognized as soon as a liability is incurred. Equity of the Proprietary Funds is reflected with the terminology “Net Assets.”

NET ASSETS

The term Net Assets is the terminology used for the equity of the Proprietary Fund and will also be in the Government-wide financial statements. Net Assets are also broken into three classes; invested in capital net of related debt, restricted, and unrestricted.

INVESTED IN CAPITAL NET OF RELATED DEBT

Invested in capital net of related debt is equal to the capital assets minus any outstanding balance of any bonds, mortgages, notes or other borrowings that are attributable to the acquisition, construction, or improvement of capital assets of the government.

RESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Restricted net assets include net assets that are not subject solely to the government’s own discretion. This category would include resources subject to externally imposed restrictions (creditors, grantors, contributors, laws/regulation of other governments, constitutional provisions.) Restricted net assets cannot report a negative balance. If the liabilities exceed those assets, the excess is to be reported as reduction of unrestricted net assets.

UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS

Any remaining balance of net assets is reported as unrestricted net assets.

Most functions of a typical government however are supported by taxes rather than by user charges. These tax-supported or governmental functions operate quite differently from the business model just described. Normally, there is no direct relationship between how much an individual taxpayer pays and the quantity of goods and services that same taxpayer receives. For example, the City does not charge every time the fire truck is sent to a call, likewise we do not charge the victim for the Police to make an arrest. Because

of these differences the governmental funds measurement focus is based on inflows and outflows of the current financial resources (changes in net expendable assets). Further, changes in net expendable assets must have a near-term impact. Thus inflows are recognized only if they are available to liquidate liabilities of the current period within sixty days of yearend. Similarly, future outflows typically are recognized only if they are a drain on current financial resources. Equity of the Governmental Funds is reflected with the terminology of “Fund Balance”.

FUND BALANCE

The Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement Number 54 (GASB 54) requires five components of fund balance; non-expendable, restricted, committed, assigned, and unassigned.

NON-SPENDABLE FUND BALANCE

Non-spendable fund balance includes the value of the City’s assets that will never be converted to cash. These include but are not limited to prepaid items and inventories. This will also include assets that will not convert to cash soon enough to affect the current period such as long-term receivables and the non-cash assets held for resale such as land.

RESTRICTED FUND BALANCE

Restricted fund balance includes the value of resources that are limited in how they may be used by external enforceable legal restrictions. This may be the result of other governments through laws and regulations, grantors or contributions through agreements, creditors through debt covenants or other contracts, and enabling legislation that limits how revenue can be used.

COMMITTED FUND BALANCE

Committed fund balance includes the value of resources that are limited by the Mayor and Council. Further the limitation that has been placed on the resources can only be removed by similar action that committed these resources in the fund balance.

ASSIGNED FUND BALANCE

Assigned fund balance includes resources that the government has intentions for use but are not externally restricted or committed through formal action by the Mayor and Council. The Mayor and Council authorize the Finance Director to assign these resource values. Examples would be authorizing the purchase orders for goods or services which are under the dollar threshold for Mayor and Council’s approval.

UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE

Unassigned fund balance includes the remaining resources that have not been classified in the above categories. Only the General Fund may have a positive fund balance in this category. All other governmental funds will only have this classification if the remaining resources are negative to balance the fund,

STABILIZATION FUNDS

Adequate fund balance in the governmental funds and net assets in the proprietary funds are a necessary component of the City's overall financial management strategy and a key factor in the external agencies' measurement of the City's financial strength.

Maintenance of fund balance and net assets assures adequate resources for cash flow and to mitigate short-term effects of revenue shortages.

The City shall maintain stabilization funds required by ordinance and/or bond covenants. The stabilization fund in the General Fund shall be 40% of budgeted expenditures, in the Enterprise Funds shall be 25% of budgeted expenditures. The use of the stabilization fund will only be used to:

- strengthen the City's position in response to self-insurance,
- provide funds in the event unplanned expenditures the City could face as a result of natural disaster or terrorist attack.

All expenditures drawn from stabilization funds shall require prior Council approval.

When a new Enterprise Fund is established the target reserve will be built by committing a minimum of 3.33% of budgeted expenditures until the 25% threshold is established. If stabilization funds fall below required levels as set by this policy, the Mayor and Council must approve and adopt a plan to restore this balance to the target level within 36 months. If restoration of the reserve cannot be accomplished within such period without severe hardship to the City, then the Mayor and Council will establish a different time period

Funds not otherwise non-spendable, restricted, committed, and assigned represent balances available for appropriation at the discretion of the Mayor and Council. However, the Mayor and Council will make every effort to use the unassigned funds for the following purposes:

- to provide pay-as-you go financing for capital projects,
- to provide for revenue shortfalls resulting from unexpected economic changes or recessionary periods

Funds in excess of the policy plus non-spendable, restricted, committed and assigned may be authorized by the Mayor and Council for expenditure within the City's annual budget.

FLOW ASSUMPTION

When both restricted and unrestricted amounts of fund balance are available for use for expenditures incurred, it is the City's policy to use restricted amounts first and then unrestricted amounts as they are needed. For unrestricted amounts of fund balance, it is the City's policy to use fund balance in the following order:

- Committed
- Assigned
- Unassigned