



CITY OF  
**MUKILTEO**

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*Finance Department*

**11930 Cyrus Way, Mukilteo WA 98275**

**Gap  
Closing  
Policy**

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**2019**

## **Section I City's Gap Closing Policy**

“Gap” refers to any one year when anticipated expenditures exceed anticipated revenues in any of the next three years.

### **A. Purpose**

The Gap Closing Policy is established to ensure that the City can sustain on-going operations. It will trigger measures to ensure that gaps in the General Fund are dealt with in a timely, prudent and cost effective manner. The Gap Closing Policy sets forth guidelines for City Council, Mayor and staff to use to identify and close spending gaps.

The intent of the Gap Closing Policy is to:

- Inform Mayor, City Council and Citizens of impending financial threats to City's ability to sustain on-going operations;
- Establish trigger points implementing Gap Closing Plan;
- Promote consistency and continuity in the decision making process;
- Demonstrate a commitment to long-range financial planning objectives, and
- Ensure that budgetary decisions are incorporated into long-range financial planning.

### **B. Implementation**

The City's Finance Director shall inform Council during the Quarterly Financial Update whether the General Fund is expected to experience a “Gap.” If a Gap is expected, the Finance Director must inform Council which level of severity is anticipated. There are three levels of severity:

- Watch – Gap exceeds 1%, but less than 3% of General Fund Expenditures
- Moderate – Gap exceeds 3%, but less than 5% of General Fund Expenditures
- Severe – Gap exceeds 5% of General Fund Expenditures

### **C. Gap Reporting**

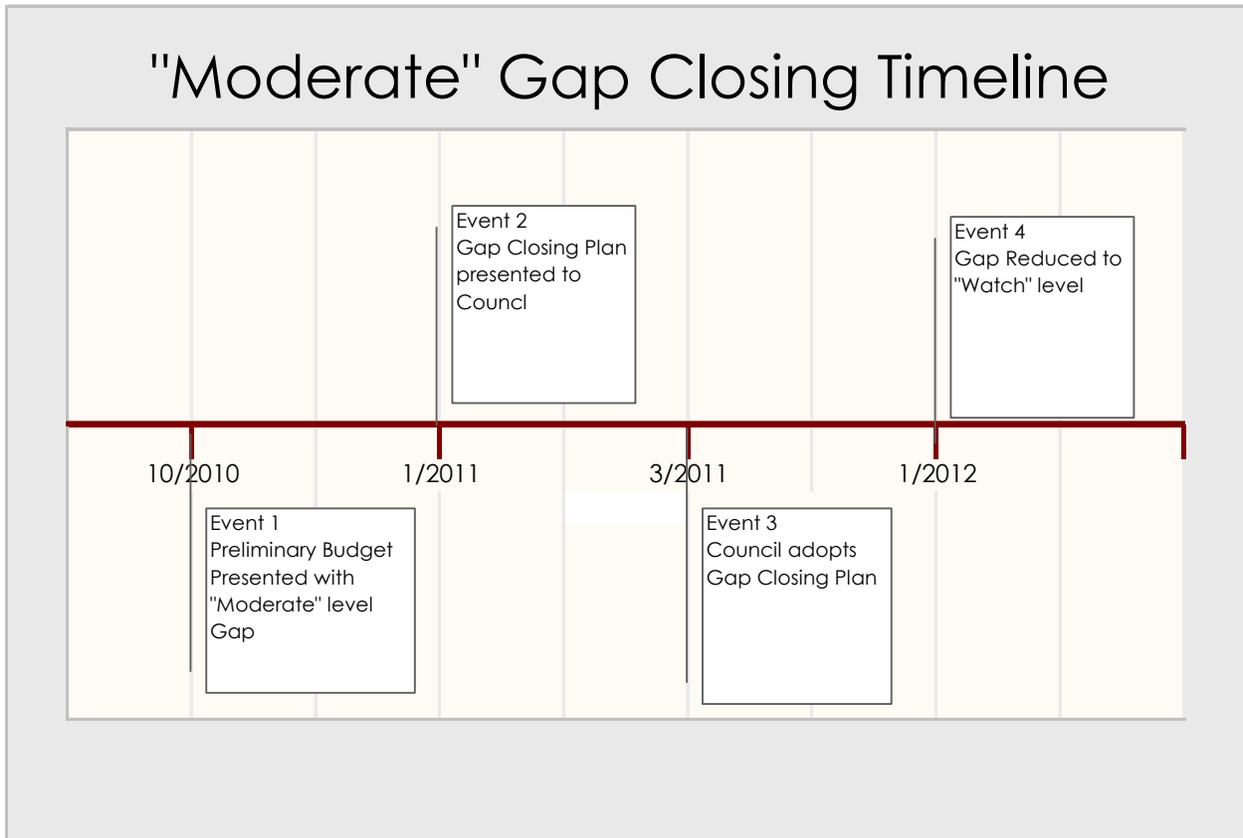
If a Gap has been reported, Mayor and City Council must receive a quarterly report on the status of the Gap. The report must identify the severity of the Gap and whether the Gap is growing, stable or declining.

### **D. Gap Closing Strategy**

The severity of the Gap will dictate how to address the Gap.

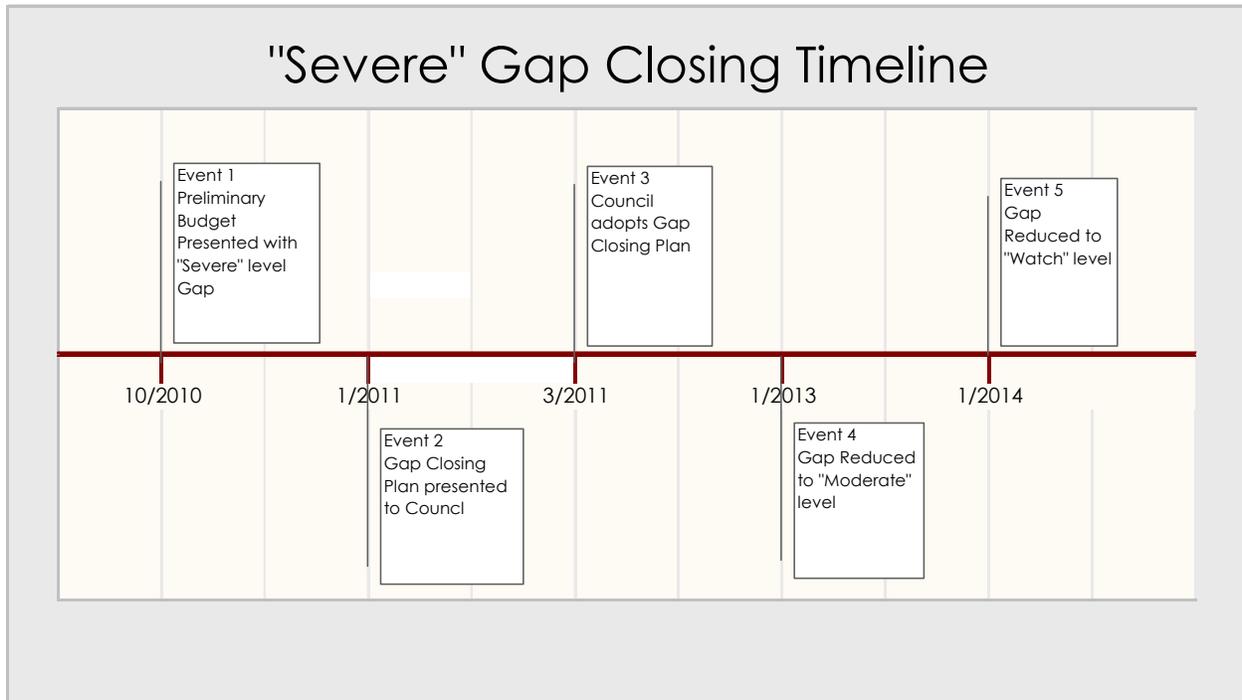
- Watch – If the Gap stays less than 3%, nothing more than an acknowledgement that a Gap exists has to be included in the Quarterly Financial Update.
- Moderate – The Mayor or Mayor's designee has to present a Gap Closing Plan to Council within three months of Finance Director's initial Gap report indicating that a “Moderate” Gap is anticipated within one of the next three years. The plan must include details explaining how the City will move the Gap from a “Moderate” level into a “Watch” level within the next twelve months. Council must adopt a Gap Closing Plan within two months after receipt of the Plan.

The timeline for closing the “Moderate” level gap could look like the following chart.



- Severe – The Mayor or Mayor’s designee has to present a Gap Closing Plan to Council within three months of Finance Director’s initial Gap report indicating a “Severe” Gap is anticipated within one of the next three years. The plan must include details explaining how the City will move the Gap from a “Severe” level into a “Moderate” level within the next twenty-four months. Council must adopt a Gap Closing Plan within two months after receipt of the Plan.

The timeline for closing the “Severe” level gap could look like the following chart.



#### **E. Mayor's Recommended Gap Closing Plan**

Gap Closing Plan must include:

- Gap level being addressed and year(s) Gap is anticipated to occur
- Timeline the Plan covers
- Primary causes for Gap
- Assumptions used for revenues, expenditures and operating reserve balances
- Mayor's recommendation identifying all potential new sources of revenue and discuss the related impact of each on citizens and/or users
- A list of expenditure reductions by type with discussion on impacts to the related Level of Service and how the reduction affects the Council's Budget Priorities
- How the use of reserves can help close the Gap and if reserves are a part of the solution, the Plan must provide a repayment schedule to restore all reserves used.