

Council Candidate Orientation City Government 101

June 18, 2025

Council Candidate Webpage

www.Sammamish.us/CandidateResources

The screenshot displays the City of Sammamish website. At the top left is the logo for the City of Sammamish, Washington, featuring a stylized 'S' and trees. The main navigation bar includes 'Your Government', 'Our Community', 'Doing Business', 'News and Events', and 'I Want To...'. The 'Our Community' menu is open, listing various services: 'Candidate Resources', 'Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging', 'Emergency Management', 'Environment & Sustainability', 'Getting Around', 'Human Services', 'Recreation', 'Resident Resources', 'Parks and Trails', and 'Volunteer'. A search bar is located on the right side of the page. On the left, there are links for 'Home', 'Our Community', and 'Candidate Resources', with 'Candidate Questions & Answers' highlighted in a red circle. The main content area features the heading 'Candidate Resources' and a social sharing section with links for Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Email.

City of Sammamish Washington

Your Government **Our Community** Doing Business News and Events I Want To...

Candidate Resources
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging
Emergency Management
Environment & Sustainability
Getting Around
Human Services
Recreation
Resident Resources
Parks and Trails
Volunteer

Search

Home
Our Community
Big Ideas - Help Shape the Future of Sammamish!
Candidate Resources
Candidate Questions & Answers

Candidate Resources

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City Government Overview

Sammamish is a young city, incorporating only 26 years ago

- **Incorporation:** August 31, 1999
- **Full-Time Employees:** 146.5
(Budgeted 2025-2026 positions)
- **Population served:** 68,410
(2024 OFM estimate)
- **Form of Gov't:** Council-Manager



Who do we serve?



Highly Educated Residents

- **83%** age 25+ hold a bachelor's degree or higher (King County: 58%)



Family-Oriented City

- **53%** of households have children under 18 (King County: 26%)



Increasingly Diverse Population

- **36%** of residents were foreign born (King County: 26%)



Among Highest Median Household Income in Country

- **\$238,750** median household income (King County: \$120,824)



Parks & Facilities

- 15 Parks & Open Space Sites
- 676.2 acres of parkland
- 22+ miles of trails
- 23 facilities available for rent



Streets

- 210+ centerline miles
- 735+ cul-de-sacs
- 294 crosswalks
- 500+ streetlights
- 26 traffic signals



Stormwater

- 220+ miles of storm pipe
- 485 stormwater facilities
- 60 miles of ditches
- 13,275 storm drains
- 8 stormwater dams

Maintenance & Operations Center



Citywide Org Chart

Community Members

City Council

Advisory Boards & Commissions

City Manager



Community Develop.



Parks & Recreation



Public Works



Finance

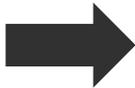


IT



Admin. Services

Contracted Services



Fire



Police



Municipal Court & Criminal Justice Svcs.

Contracted Services

City Attorney | Ogden Murphy Wallace

Police | King County Sheriff's Office

Fire | Eastside Fire & Rescue

Solid Waste | Republic Services

Criminal Justice Services

- Municipal court – King County
- Also contract for prosecutor, public defender, jail and related services



Non-City Services

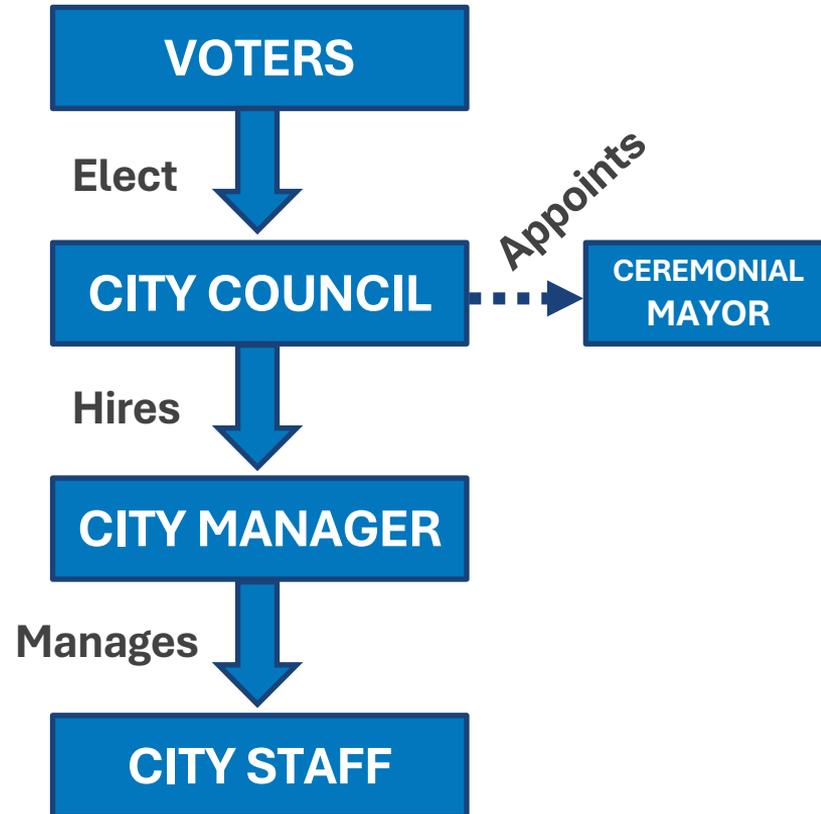
The following services are not provided by the City:

- **Libraries** | King County Library System
- **Schools**
 - Issaquah School District
 - Lake Washington School District
 - Snoqualmie Valley School District
- **Water & Sewer Utilities**
 - Sammamish Plateau Water
 - NE Sammamish Sewer & Water District
- **Electric & Gas Utilities** | Puget Sound Energy
- **Internet / Broadband** | Provider Varies



Sammamish operates under Council-Manager form of government

- Elected Council (legislative body)
 - Appointed Mayor is member of Council; Mayor designation is largely ceremonial
- Council hires a professional city manager to carry out day-to-day administrative operations
- Parallels to a private company with a Board of Directors and CEO



Under the Council-Manager system, the Mayor serves in a “ceremonial” role

- Appointed by Council to a two-year term
- Serves as chair of Council meetings
- Facilitates communication between members
- Key representative in intergovernmental relations
- Deputy Mayor performs duties in Mayor’s absence



Role of Council & Mayor

The role of all councilmembers, including the Mayor, is to *set policy for the city government*

- Establish goals and policies
- Serve as leaders of the government
- Listen to constituents
- Adopt balanced budget and tax rate
- Adopt ordinances and resolutions
- Supervise City Manager's performance
- *One Councilmember cannot direct staff work; requires majority of Council*



Role of City Manager

The role of City Manager is to carry out Council's direction

- Bound by the lawful action of the Council
- Provides recommendations to and informs the Council in an objective manner
- Serves as the Council's chief advisor
- Implements policy
- Handles administrative duties
- Hires, manages and oversees all staff
- Prepares budget for Council review

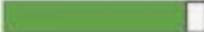
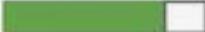
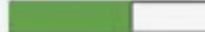
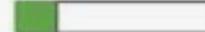


The role of staff is to carry out the City Manager's direction

- Deputy City Manager serves in the absence of the City Manager and provides support to all departments
- Directors are hired by the City Manager to oversee the work of specific departments
- Staff implement the policy directives of the City Council and perform the operational functions of the City
- 70% of staff is unionized

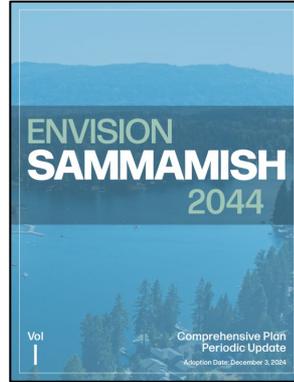




					
Council Role: Affirm Vision/Purpose	Establish Goals	Establish/Prioritize Action Items	Review/Adopt Budget Conduct Meetings	Authorize Contracts	Engage w/ Community And Staff
Staff Role: Support Vision/Purpose	Align Goals with Resources	Implement Priority Action Items	Prepare Plans and Oversee Functions	Plan & Complete Projects	Carry Out Day-to-Day Responsibilities

The Comprehensive Plan

PLAN FORMULATION



PLANNING TIMELINE



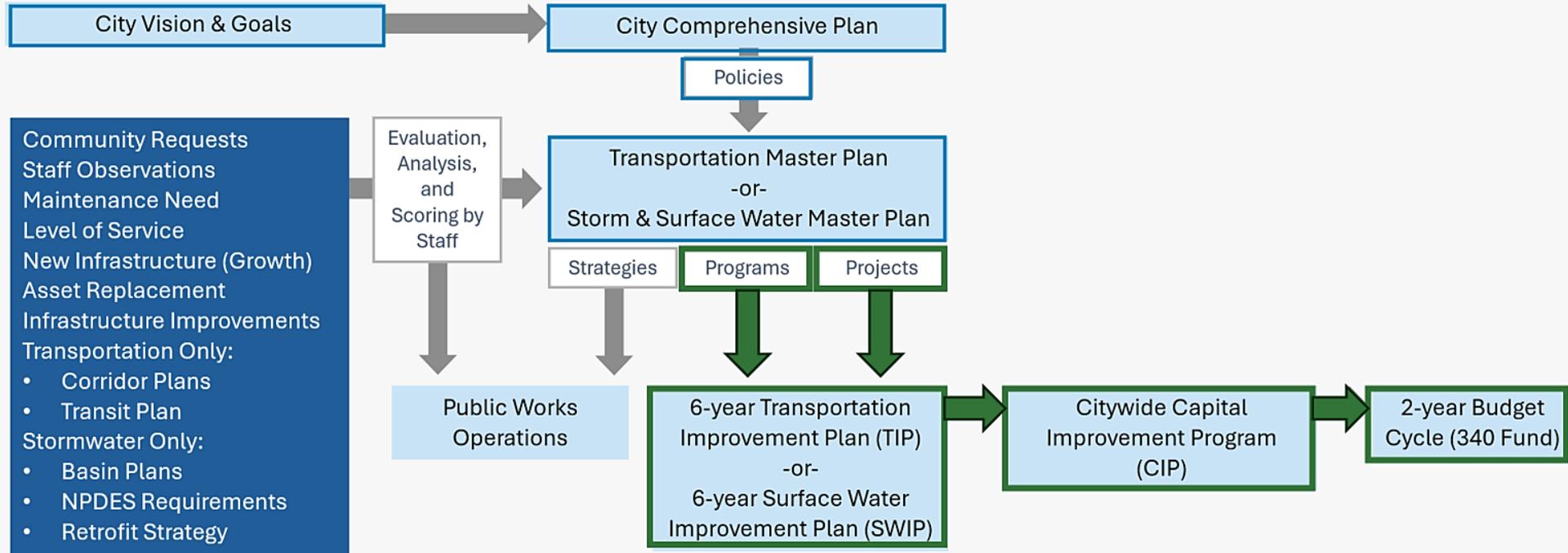
20 Year Comprehensive Plan

**Implementation through Sammamish
Municipal Code (Local Law)**

**6-Year
Capital Improvement Plans**

**2025-2026
Budget**

Budget and Capital Improvement Plan



Council Meetings

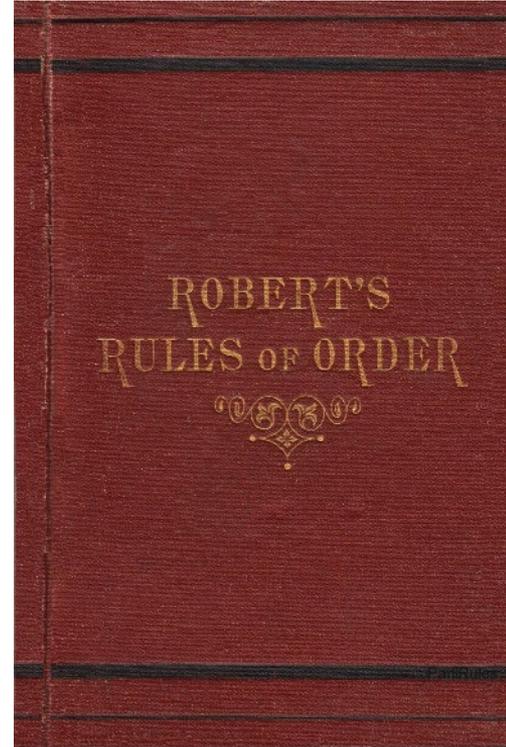
The Council-adopted Rules of Procedure provide the framework to conduct City Council business

- Helps ensure that meetings run smoothly and follows a generally accepted format
- Council periodically updates and revises their rules as needed
- Important document that is referenced continuously throughout the year
- Please take time to read these rules ([view here](#))



Most widely used manual of parliamentary procedure in the US

- Parliamentary procedure provides the process for proposing, amending, approving and defeating legislative motions (City Attorney acts as parliamentarian)
- Can make meetings more efficient and reduce chances of council actions being challenged for procedural deficiencies
- Training opportunities will be available to Council



Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA)

Requires that all meetings of a City's governing body be open to the public ([RCW 42.30](#))

- A "meeting" under the OPMA occurs when a quorum (4 or more members) of a city council gathers with the collective intent of transacting the City's business
- Meetings do not have to be in person to be subject to the OPMA. Meetings can occur by telephone, email, etc.
- OPMA applies to other City meetings, such as commissions, boards, etc.



Public Records Act (PRA)

Requires that all public records maintained by the City be made available to all members of the public ([RCW 42.56](#))

- A public record is any document in any format *related to City business*
- There are limited exemptions, but records cannot be withheld to prevent embarrassment to a City official or employee
- The City is compliant with the Washington State records retention schedule
- The PRA applies to City-owned and privately-owned communications devices



Types of Council Meetings

Council has a set meeting schedule with three types of meetings

- **Regular Meeting (1st & 3rd Tuesday):**
Regularly scheduled business meeting;
Council may take formal action
- **Study Session (2nd Tuesday):**
Regularly scheduled meeting to learn
about and discuss topics; Council
usually does not take formal action
- **Special Meeting (as needed):**
Any meeting date, time or place that's
not on the established schedule



The City Council can meet privately during a regular or special public meeting to discuss certain topics

- [RCW 42.30.110](#)(1) sets forth the limited topics that can be discussed, such as:
 - *Real estate acquisition or sale when public knowledge would affect its price*
 - *Qualifications of applicant for employment or review of employee's performance*
 - *Discussion with attorney of enforcement actions, litigation or potential litigation*
- Information discussed during the executive session **must be kept confidential & no action is taken.**



Councilmember Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a councilmember extend beyond attendance at Council meetings, including:

- Preparing for meetings (reading agenda packet, asking questions in advance)
- Engaging in regional boards & committees
- Attending community & regional events
- Constituent phone calls/emails
- Regular meetings with City Manager
- Coffee with Council



Questions?

Next: City Finances 101

Budget Basics

- Biennial (two year) budget
- Budget is the plan, but also the law
- Must meet State requirements, including adopting a balanced budget
- Sammamish Standard: GFOA award, full transparency as full budget and capital improvement plan documents are posted on City Website
- City's budget expresses its priorities and values

Inputs to the Budget Process

- Community Input
- Stakeholder engagement
- Council retreat
- Council review of vision and priorities
- Target level of service
- Capital needs
- Revenue
- Legally required costs



Mid-Biennial Budget Adjustment

**The 2025-2026 budget has been adopted by Council;
a mid-biennial adjustment is planned for this fall**

Jan. – July.	Aug. – Sept.	Oct. – Nov.
Review Budget Performance, identify needed amendments	CM Review & Modification	Public Hearings & Adoption

Budget adjustments:

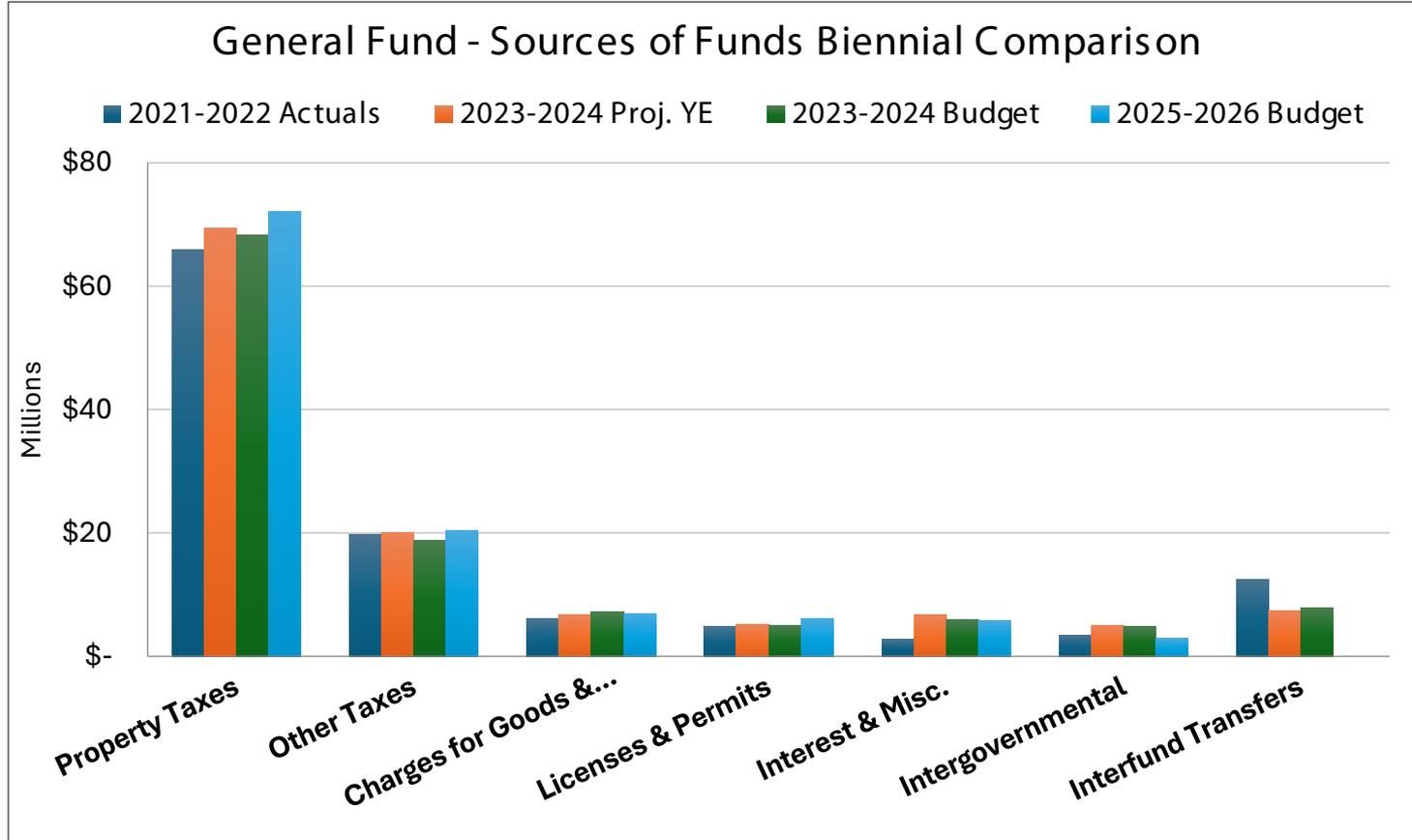
- Housekeeping (true up beginning fund balances, etc.)
- Document change in plans
- Form of communication, increase transparency

Municipal Finance Fundamentals

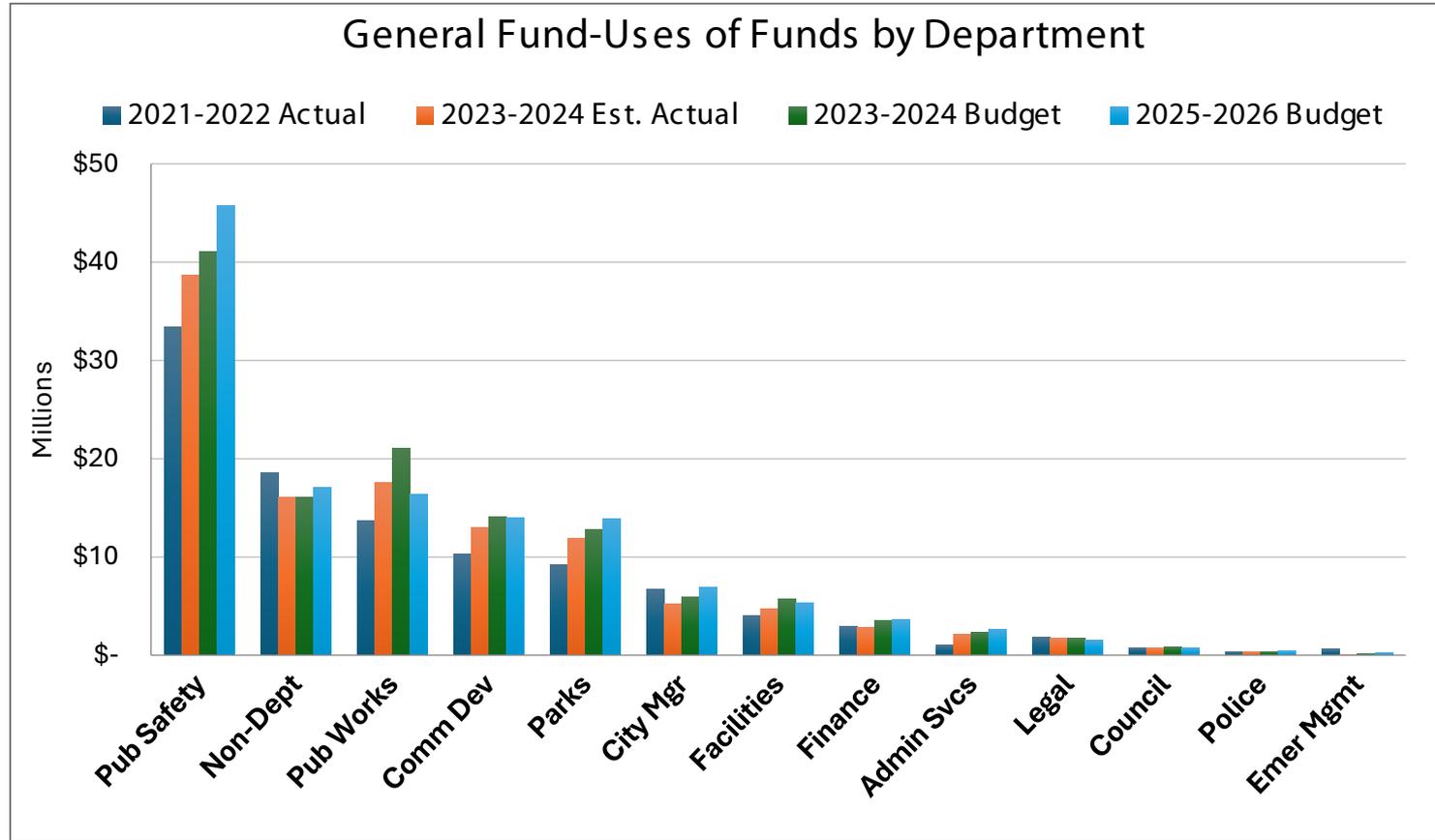
City accounting must comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principals (GAAP)

Fund Category	Current Fund Structure
General Operations	General Fund Street Fund
Capital	General City Facility Capital Parks Capital Transportation Capital
Proprietary Funds	Surface Water Utility Operating Surface Water Capital
Internal Service Funds	Equipment, IT, Risk Management. These have operating and capital components and are internal transfer funded (no unique tax source)

Revenue Sources – General Fund

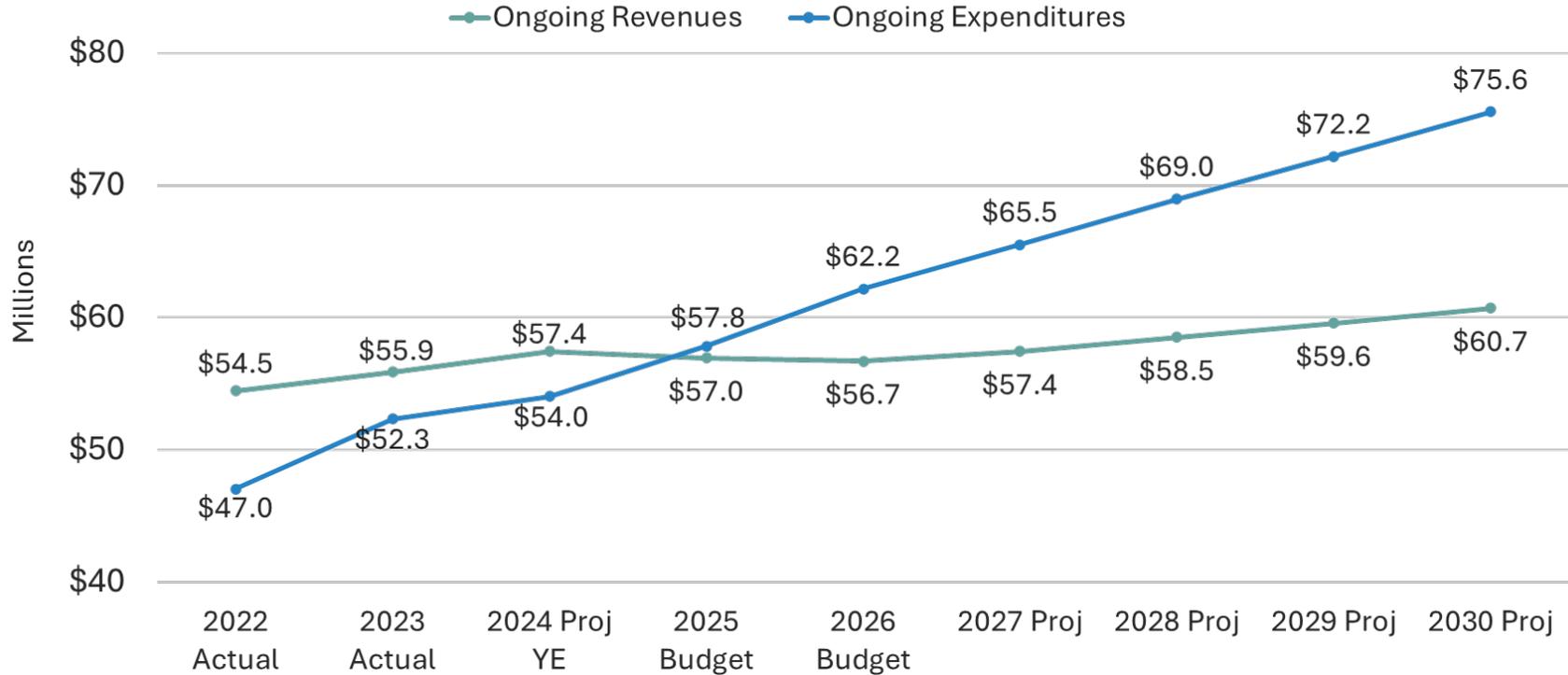


Expenditures - General Fund



General Fund Forecast (without utility tax)

Ongoing Revenues vs Ongoing Expenditures
as currently budgeted/projected



Why is the General Fund structurally imbalanced?

- Revenues are not growing as fast as expenditures
- Restrictions on existing revenue sources
- Most government agencies are struggling with this same issue
- This is not new, the City realized the structural imbalance years ago and took action

Developed plan to ensure fiscal sustainability into the future

1

City Responsibility: Find reductions in expenditures
Strategy: Total of \$1 million over 3-years starting in 2025
\$8.9 million in General Fund budget reductions



2

Council Responsibility: Implement councilmanic taxes
Strategy: Utility Tax in 2026
Estimated Annual Impact: \$11 million



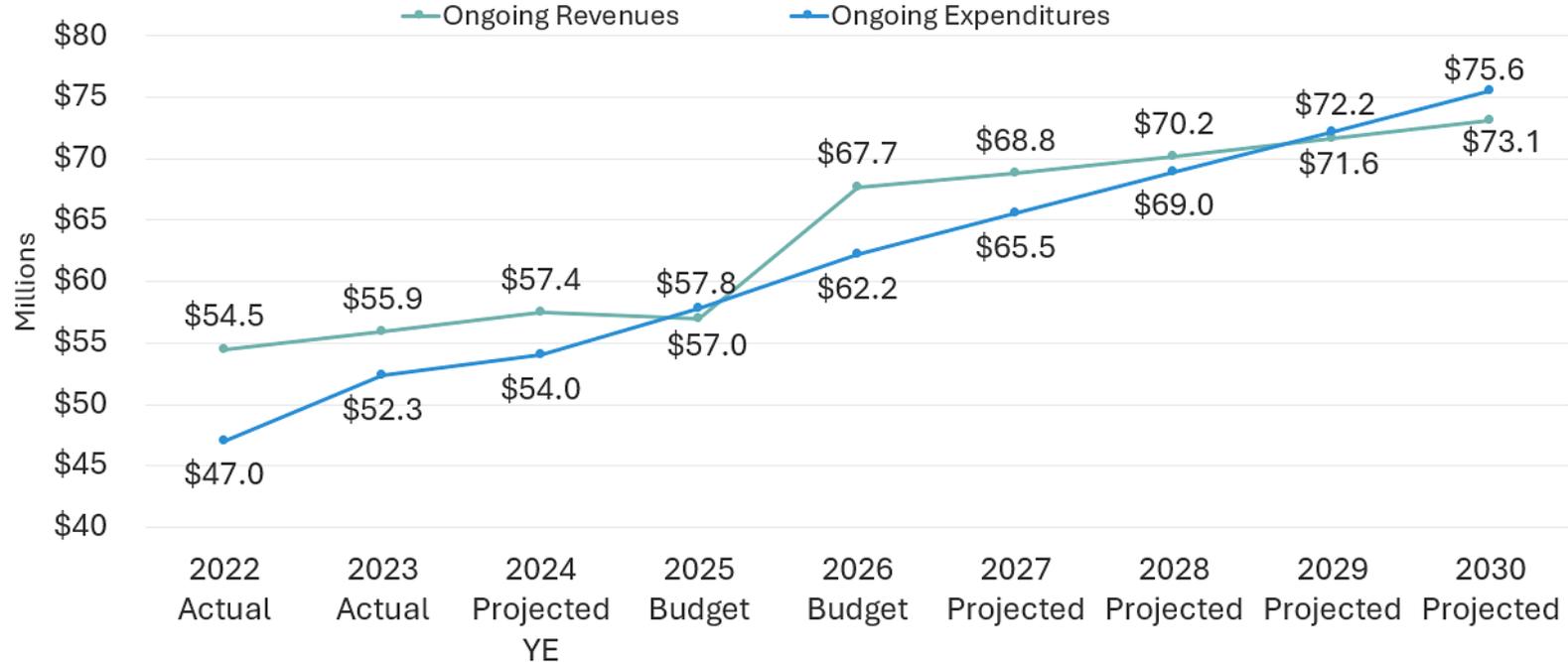
3

Voter Responsibility: Pass voter-approved measures
Strategy: Metropolitan Park District in 2031
Estimated Annual Impact: \$5 million

Financial Sustainability Taskforce

Developed plan to ensure fiscal sustainability into the future

Ongoing Revenues vs Ongoing Expenditures
with 6% utility tax starting in 2026 (3% growth)



- Regular reporting including quarterly reporting on revenue and expenditures
- Historical information and trend data
- <https://www.sammamish.us/government/finance/>

Questions?

Sammamish.us/CandidateResources