

Urban Forestry Commission 2025-2026 Budget Overview

City Budget Office &
Office of Sustainability & Environment

October 9, 2024

Office of Sustainability & Environment



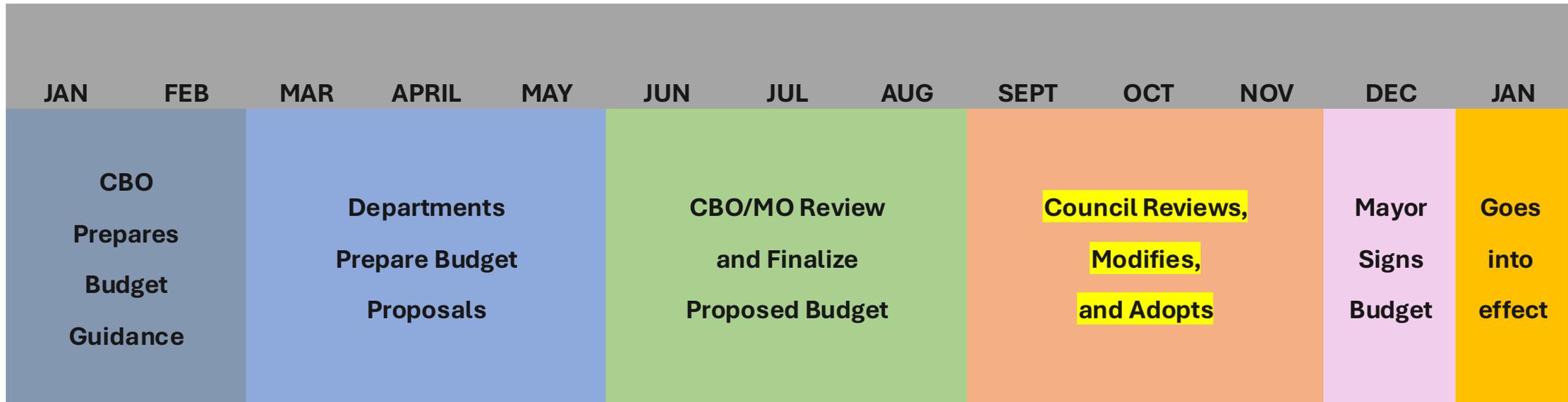
City of Seattle

Agenda

1. 2025-2026 Proposed Budget
 - I. Process
 - II. Overview
2. Urban Forestry Background
3. 2025-2026 Budget – Urban Forestry Items
4. Q&A and Takeaways



Annual Budget Process



- Currently in Council Phase. Council proposes:
 - Amendments – changes to budget
 - Statements of Legislative Intent – request reports from Executive
 - Provisos – restrictions on funding



Context of the Proposed Budget (Overall)

Economic Conditions

- National economy showing continued strength, with the Fed beginning to lower interest rates
- Local economy continues to grow, but at a slower rate than experienced in recent years
- Growth in the technology sector, and the resulting boom in residential and commercial construction, has slowed

Budget Situation

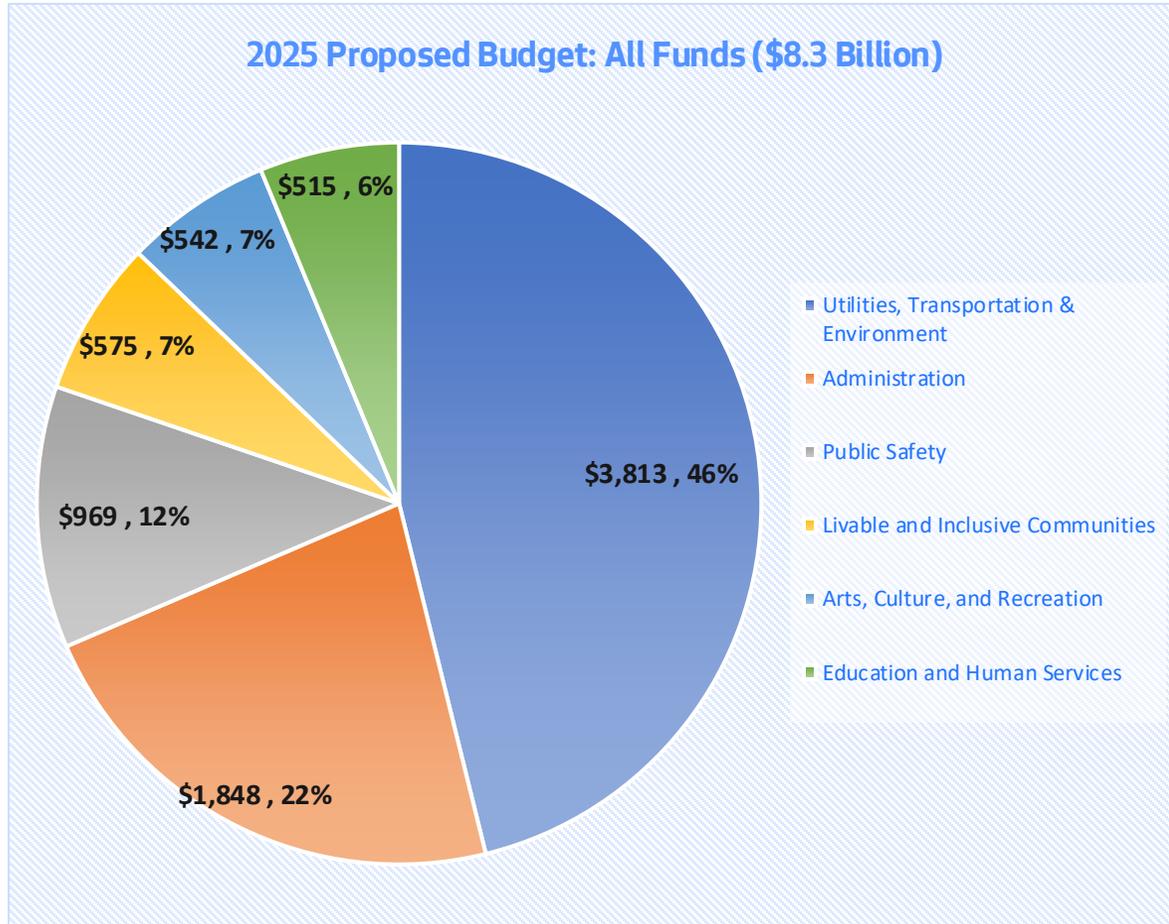
- \$250+M projected General Fund deficit
- Revenue forecast projects modest growth forecast in overall General Fund resources
- Payroll Expense Tax revenue has out-paced original forecasts, but volatility will be a challenge going forward
- One-time, COVID-related Federal assistance expires in December
- New “outside” funding sources for City priorities (e.g., Inflation Reduction Act, Climate Commitment Act – on November ballot I-2117)
- Transportation Levy renewal vote in November

Ongoing Policy Priorities

- Budget Sustainability
- Homelessness
- Downtown Recovery
- Housing Affordability
- Public Safety

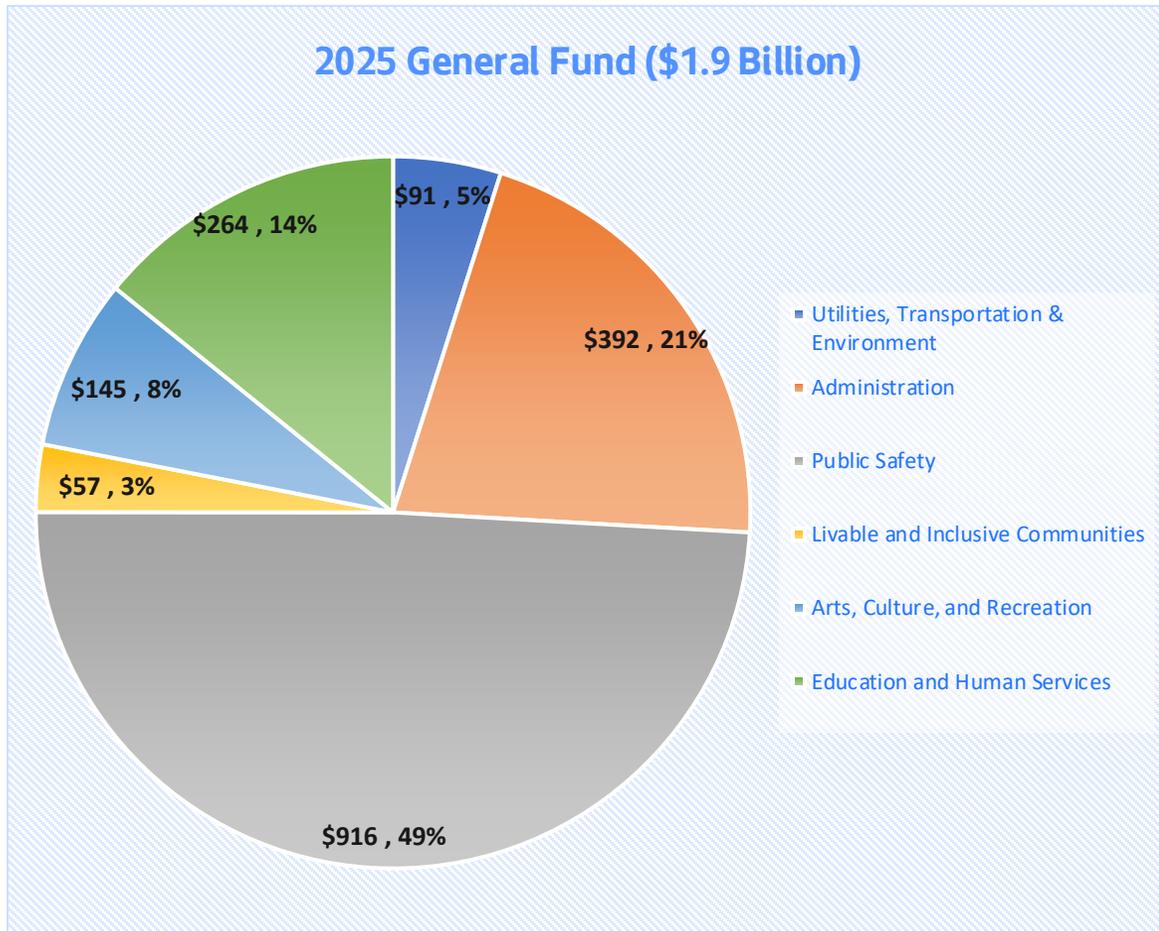


Total City Budget: \$8.3 Billion



- Utilities (SPU, City Light) and Transportation (SDOT) form nearly half the overall budget.
- Non-General Fund sources include:
 - Utility Funds
 - Transportation Fund
 - Payroll Expense Tax (Jumpstart)
 - Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund
 - Housing Fund
 - Levy Funds

General Fund Budget: \$1.9 Billion



The City's most flexible revenue source to spend

- 79% of GF revenue comes from:
 - Property Taxes
 - Sales Tax
 - Business & Occupation (B&O) Tax
 - Utility Taxes
 - Payroll Tax – a portion transfers to GF (2021-2024)
- The rest comes from miscellaneous fees, traffic fines, etc. collected by the City

Urban Forestry Background



City-Wide Urban Forestry Strategies (UFMP)

1. **Environmental Justice:** Consider the needs of environmental justice priority communities in all urban forestry actions.
2. **Urban forest resilience:** Identify and implement management actions that increase the urban forest's resilience to potential impacts, including climate change.
3. **Data-based management:** Understand the condition and complexity of the urban forest resource, how it was different in the past and how it may change in the future.
4. **Cross-department coordination:** Coordinate communication, cooperation, and decisions within the City and with other agencies.
5. **Community-City partnership:** Inspire, inform, and work with the community to help care for Seattle's urban forest.
6. **Management of City trees:** Preserve, restore, and enhance the urban forest on City property and rights-of-way.
7. **Incentives and regulations:** Provide support to the community via incentives and regulations for keeping, removing, replacing, and planting trees.



Integrated Management: Seattle's Urban Forest Touches Many City Services in Multiple Departments



Core Urban Forestry Activities

Direct Management

- Pruning, care and maintenance of existing trees
- Forested Parks restoration
- Tree planting and establishment

Depts: Parks, SDOT, SCL, SPU, OSE

Policy & Planning

- Development and implementation of policy & regulations
- Policy, planning, and analysis at department & landscape scales (Canopy assessment, UFMP, GSP planning)

Depts: SDCI, OSE, Parks, OPCD, SPU, SDOT

Community Outreach

- Direct education to residents on planting and stewardship
- Outreach and awareness about City plans and policies

Depts: SPU, Parks, SDOT, OSE, SCL



Core Urban Forestry Activities



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← Street and park tree management

Natural area management →



← Street tree planting

Delridge Native forest garden →

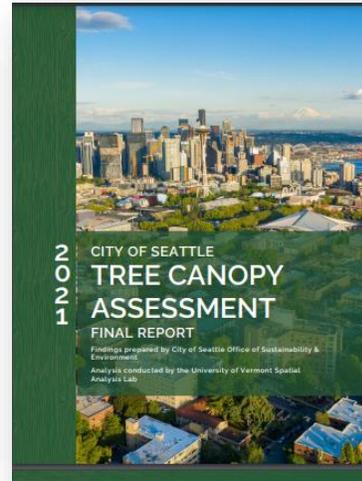


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Trees for Seattle | Street Trees

- Urban Forestry
- Explore Seattle's Trees
- Street Tree Management
- Urban Tree Canopy
- Environmental Justice
- Urban Forest Resilience
- Stewardship
- Tree Benefit

Trees of Seattle

OUR 2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



31,707 Volunteer Hours
Caring for Seattle's urban forest



City of Seattle actions in support of our urban forest

Tree Care and Management
1,708 Trees planted by City departments
7,787 Trees maintained to keep them healthy
25,386 Trees inventoried to better manage our urban forest
356...

Engaging community

Trees for Seattle provided planting outreach to **1,500** residents in low canopy neighborhoods (South Park, Georgetown, Lake City, New Holly).
GSP supported **177** paid and stipended positions providing on the ground restoration and community-building experience.

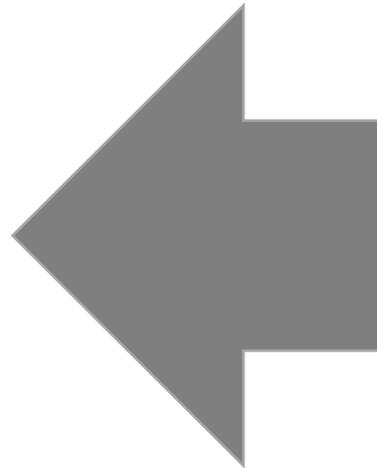


Core Urban Forestry Activities

Community Outreach

- Direct education to residents on planting and stewardship
- Outreach and awareness about City plans and policies

Depts: SPU, Parks, SDOT, OSE, SCL



- **Trees for Neighborhoods:** 1000 trees for residents and planting supplies
- **Green Seattle Partnership:** 100 paid career exposure opportunities and 30,000 volunteer hours
- **Communications:** Public-facing blogs, newsletters, and education and outreach events



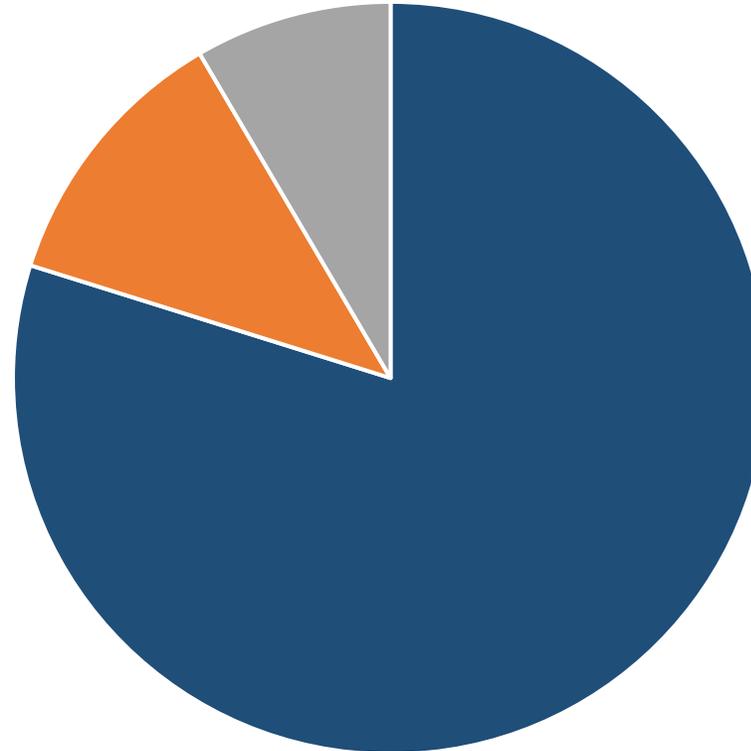
Urban Forestry-related Funding



Primary Urban Forestry Funding Categories

Community Outreach
\$2.1M
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct education to residents on planting and stewardship• Outreach and awareness about City plans and policies
Depts: SPU, Parks, SDOT, OSE, SCL

Policy & Planning
\$2.9M
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development and implementation of policy & regulations• Policy, planning, and analysis at department & landscape scales (Canopy assessment, UFMP, GSP planning)
Depts: SDCI, OSE, Parks, OPCD, SPU, SDOT



Direct Management
\$20.3M
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pruning, care and maintenance of existing trees• Forested parks and habitat restoration• New trees, planting and establishment
Depts: Parks, SDOT, SCL, SPU

Budget by Category, 2024 Endorsed Budget
Data from SLI OSE-301-A-002-2023



2025-26 Proposed Budget Highlights

- New: One Seattle Tree Nursery (SPU)
- New: Climate and urban forestry data and reporting (OSE)
- No direct reductions to urban forestry activities



Incremental Budget Changes

Policy & Planning				
Dept	Budget Change	2025 Amt	Fund	Impact
OSE	Add Climate Data Impact Analysis and	\$100,000	Jumpstart	In 2025-2026, this funding will address urban forestry data and reporting priorities.
Community Outreach				
Dept	Budget Change	2025 Amt	Fund	Impacts
SPU	Funding for a One Seattle Tree Nursery	\$388,000	GF	Establish and maintain a publicly owned tree nursery with an initial capacity of 500 trees. Adds 1.0 FTE.
		\$292,020	SPU Funds	



Other Incremental Budget Changes

No Direct Impacts to Urban Forestry

Department	Budget Change	Amount / FTE	Impact
Parks	Reduce Park Land Acquisition Funding	(\$440,000)	30% reduction to SPR's New Park Acquisition Program, shifting these resources to the operating budget to support core department services previously funded by the General Fund. Retains \$1 million annual investment for acquisition.
SCL	Enhance Response to Environmental Change	\$1,479,769	This add increases funding for vegetation management and addressing wildfire risk. (Part of a larger add including cybersecurity funding and positions.)



Q&A and Takeaways

