Seattle City Council 2025 Budget Process

Policy Considerations

Select Budget Committee | October 15, 2025

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Fall 2025 Budget Calendar

Week 1 - 5

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week 1	22 September Rosh Hashanah Begins	23 Mayor Transmits 2026 Proposed Budget Adjustments City Council 2 p.m	24 Rosh Hashanah Ends	25 CBO Overview & Department Presentations 2026 Proposed Budget Adjustments 9:30 a.m. each day	26
Week 2	29 September Department Presentations 2026 Proposed Budget Adjustments 9:30 a.m. each day	30	1 October Yom Kippur begins	2 Yom Kippur ends	3
Week 3	6 October	7 Public Hearing 1 p.m. Remote 5 p.m. In-person	8	9	10
Week 4	13 October Indigenous Peoples' Day	14	15 Central Staff Presentation: Policy Considerations 9:30 a.m. each day	16	17
Week 5	20 October Revenue Forecast Update and Policy Considerations 2 p.m.	21 Initial CM Proposals Due @ Noon (2 co-sponsors req'd)	22	23	24

Week 6 - 9

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Week 6	27 October	28 Discussion of Councilmember Budget Proposals 9:30 a.m. each day	29	30	31
Week 7	3 November	4 Election day	5 Chair's Balancing Package 9:30 a.m.	6 Public Hearing 1 p.m. Remote 5 p.m. In-person	7 CM Self-Balanced Amendments Due @ Noon
Week 8	10 November	11 Veterans Day	12	13	14 Committee Vote 9:30 a.m.
Week 9	17 November Committee Vote 9:30 a.m.	18	19	20 Final Committee Vote 9:30 a.m.	21 Special City Council Meeting Final Action on Budget Time TBD
Week 10	24 November	25 General Election Certified	26	27 Thanksgiving Holiday	28 Thanksgiving Holiday

Step 2
Week 3-4

Central Staff Policy Considerations & Revenue Forecast Update

Central Staff Overview and Policy Considerations (Day 1 – Day 3)

- General overview of 2026 Proposed Budget and GF/PET balancing strategy
- Presentation of Central Staff analysis for select departments
- Papers for departments not presented will be attached to Day 3 agenda
- Opportunity for committee discussion, and to provide direction to staff on issues and amendments they are considering

Economic Revenue Forecast Update (Day 4)

- Presentation of updated Economic and Revenue Forecast (approved by the Forecast Council)
- Discussion of revenue update on budget balancing parameters

Step 2
Week 3-4

Policy Considerations & Revenue Forecast Update Schedule

	Wednesday, October 15	Thursday, October 16	Friday, October 17	Monday, October 20
Session I	Introduction & Overview	Office of Housing	Seattle Police Department	**Revenue Forecast Council Meets** *(Select Budget Committee will convene at 2 p.m.)*
	CS Proposed Budget Overview	Department of Education & Early Learning	Community Assisted Response & Engagement	
	GF Balancing Analysis / PET		Seattle Fire Department	
Session II	Seattle Dept. of Transportation	Office of Planning & Community Development	Human Services Department	Revenue Forecast Update Discussion
	Seattle Parks & Recreation	Seattle Department of Construction & Inspections		

Step 3
Week 5-6

Presentation of Councilmember Budget Proposals

Deadline for Initial CM Proposals: Tuesday, October 21 at Noon
Requires two co-sponsors for submittal.

Central Staff will prepare Council Budget Actions (CBAs) and Statement of Legislative Intent (SLIs) for committee discussion.

- Each submitted CM proposal will be discussed in committee
- CS will provide a summary description of the proposal
- CMs will provide the rationale for their proposals
- Additional CMs may wish to signal co-sponsorship (in open session) during committee

Budget Chair will consider the discussed CM proposals for inclusion in his ***Chair's Balancing Package***

Context of the Proposed Budget

Economic Conditions

- Economic uncertainty abounds. Since the August forecast, the labor market has shown significant signs of cooling, both nationally and locally.
- Shutdown of the Federal government has compounded this uncertainty for the near-term because key economic data are not currently being published.
- Revenue Forecast Update to be provided next Monday (October 20th)

Budget Situation

- ~$140M General Fund deficit projected for 2027.
- In the face of this projected deficit, Mayor has proposed a budget that would significantly expand General Fund spending and expand the City workforce in 2026.
- Unclear whether the initiatives proposed for 2026 can be sustained beyond next year. One-time funding is being used to initiate what are intended to be ongoing programs and commitments.
- While new revenue sources are proposed, including both the B&O ballot measure and the 0.1% sales tax for public safety, the projected General Fund deficit for 2027 and beyond has increased, not decreased.

On-going Policy Challenges (Unchanged from Last Year)

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