



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL  
**CENTRAL STAFF**

# **Resolution 32174: Establishing Funding Priorities for a Possible New Public Safety Funding Source**

---

BEN NOBLE, CENTRAL STAFF DIRECTOR  
GOVERNANCE, ACCOUNTABILITY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE  
JULY 10, 2025

# Outline

---

- Background
- Summary of Proposed Resolution
- Next Steps and Questions

**Introductory note: Any spending on the priorities set out in Resolution 32174 is CONDITIONAL on Council approving the new 0.1% public safety sales tax that the Executive may propose.**

# Background (1/3)

---

## **Authority for Potential Revenue Proposal**

- During the 2025 Legislative Session, the State passed HB 2015 sponsored by Rep. Enteman, which grants Cities and Counties the authority to impose a 0.1% sales tax for “criminal justice purposes”.
- This tax can be imposed by a vote of each authorized jurisdiction’s legislative body. So, the new tax could be implemented via a City Council vote.
- Separately, the City has the authority to ask the voters for approval for another 0.1% sales tax for public safety.

## **Revenue Projection**

- The current City sales tax generates approximately \$315 million per year. (The City also receives a share of County-collected sales tax.)
- The City’s Forecast Office estimates that the additional 0.1% sales tax would generate ~\$37-\$40M.
- There is increased uncertainty in this estimate because the legislature also passed a bill this past session that somewhat expands what types of transactions are subject to sales tax.

# Background (2/3)

---

## **Authorized Uses of Potential New Revenue**

"Criminal justice purposes" as defined in HB 2015 means activities that substantially assist the criminal justice system, which may include circumstances where ancillary benefit to the civil justice and 29 behavioral health systems occurs, and which includes:

1. Domestic violence services;
2. Staffing adequate public defenders;
3. Diversion program;
4. Reentry work for inmates;
5. Local government programs that have a reasonable relationship to reducing the numbers of people interacting with the criminal justice system including, but not limited to, reducing homelessness or improving behavioral health;
6. Community placements for juvenile offenders; and
7. Community outreach and assistance programs, alternative response programs, and mental health crisis response.

And note that the authority granted to the City includes no prohibition on “supplantation”.

# Background (3/3)

---

## Timing

- The State's Department of Revenue (DOR) collects sales tax statewide and remits the payments to the appropriate local governments.
- DOR only updates these rates once per quarter, with at least 60 days notice. Thus, if the City was interested in maximizing the potential revenue with a January 1, 2026, implementation, the authorizing legislation would need to be approved in October.

# Summary of Resolution

---

*The resolution makes two basic policy statements:*

1. In anticipation of a potential Executive proposal, the Council should at least consider imposing the 0.1% sales tax for criminal justice purposes as part of the City's overall financial strategy for 2026 and beyond; and
2. If the City implements the tax, up to 25% of the resulting revenue should be “invested in addiction treatment recovery services and the facilities needed to provide such services”. The resolution further states that these new services should be targeted toward those experiencing chronic homelessness or being diverted from the criminal legal system.

# Summary of Resolution - Continued

---

The resolution also highlights, by example, the specific types of services that might be funded with new resources. These include:

1. On-demand residential or intensive substance abuse treatment;
2. Enhanced access to recovery housing;
3. Increase capacity for low-barrier shelter for those living with substance use disorder;
4. Increase the number of Designated Crisis Responders;
5. Expand the provision of long-lasting buprenorphine injections and other innovative treatment methods;
6. Enhanced job training and placement opportunities for those in recovery;
7. Stabilize funding for diversion services such LEAD; and
8. Capital investments needed to provide these services, including improvements to existing facilities.

# Questions?