SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL
CENTRAL STAFF

Seattle Department of Transportation

2026 Proposed Budget
Policy Considerations

Select Budget Committee | October 15, 2025

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Budget Summary

	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	% Change	2026 Proposed	% Change
Operating Appropriations by BSL					
a. Bridges & Structures	$14.0M	$14.4M	2.8%	$17.0M	17.9%
b. Maintenance Operations	$58.8M	$60.3M	2.4%	$63.4M	5.2%
c. Mobility Operations	$116.7M	$130.7M	12.0%	$124.2M	(5.0%)
d. ROW Management	$53.9M	$55.7M	3.4%	$52.3M	(6.2%)
e. First Hill Streetcar Operations	$9.4M	$9.8M	3.5%	$9.8M	(0.1%)
f. South Lake Union Streetcar Operations	$4.4M	$4.5M	2.7%	$4.5M	(0.1%)
g. Waterfront and Civic Projects	$36.3M	$0.0M	(100.0%)	$9.6M	n/a
h. General Expense	$51.7M	$40.8M	(21.0%)	$45.1M	10.3%
i. Leadership and Administration	$0.0M	$0.0M	-	$0.0M	-
Operating Subtotal	$345.4M	$316.3M	(8.4%)	$325.9M	3.0%

Budget Summary

	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	% Change	2026 Proposed	% Change
Capital Appropriations by BSL					
j. Major Maintenance/ Replacement	$101.0M	$100.9M	(0.1%)	$104.2M	3.3%
k. Mobility-Capital	$208.7M	$211.3M	1.2%	$233.3M	10.4%
l. Major Projects	$1.6M	$0.1M	(92.4%)	$0.5M	339.2%
m. Capital General Expense	$7.0M	$6.5M	(6.3%)	$6.5M	0.0%
n. Central Waterfront	$11.2M	$0.6M	(94.6%)	$0.6M	0.0%
Capital Subtotal	**$329.5M**	**$319.4M**	**(3.0%)**	**$345.2M**	**8.1%**

Operating Subtotal	$345.4M	$316.3M	(8.4%)	$325.9M	3.0%
Capital Subtotal	**$329.5M**	**$319.4M**	**(3.0%)**	**$345.2M**	**8.1%**
Total Appropriations	$674.9M	$635.7M	(5.8%)	$671.1M	5.6%

Total FTE	1,188.5	1,231.5	3.6%	1.290.0	4.8%

Budget Summary

	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	% Change	2026 Proposed	% Change
Appropriations by Revenue Fund					
a. General Fund	$56.2M	$57.2M	1.8%	$59.5M	4.0%
b. Jumpstart Fund (Payroll Expense Tax)	$0.3M	$0.0M	(100.0%)	$3.3M	n/a
c. Transportation Fund	$282.2M	$246.1M	(12.8%)	$264.7M	7.6%
d. 2024 Transportation Levy Fund	$176.8M	$192.4M	8.8%	$190.6M	(0.9%)
e. Move Seattle Levy Fund *(expired)*	$20.5M	$5.6M	(72.7%)	$5.6M	0.0%
f. Transportation Benefit District Fund	$87.4M	$91.6M	4.8%	$99.6M	8.7%
g. Seattle Streetcar Operations Fund	$13.9M	$14.3M	3.2%	$14.3M	(0.1%)
h. Automated Traffic Safety Camera Fund	$10.3M	$10.1M	(2.6%)	$11.4M	13.0%
i. REET I/II Capital Fund	$16.6M	$18.4M	10.8%	$20.3M	10.7%
j. LTGO Bonds	$10.7M	$0.0M	(100.0%)	$0.0M	--
k. Unrestricted Cumulative Reserve Fund	$0.0M	$0.0M	--	$1.8M	n/a
Total by Revenue Fund	$674.9M	$635.7M	(5.8%)	$671.1M	5.6%

Policy Consideration

(Slide 1/1)

1. **Transportation Revenue Task Force and Budget Sustainability**
   - SDOT's 2026 Proposed Budget is balanced, however:
     - SDOT faces on-going inflationary cost pressure.
     - Slow recovery of transportation revenues to pre-pandemic levels.
     - The Transportation Fund projects a $49 million deficit in 2027.
   - Transportation Funding Task Force was established with the 2024 Transportation Levy.
     - Recruitment of task force members in early 2026.
     - Final recommendations anticipated by the end of 2027.

Contextual budget issue.

Policy Consideration

2. Streetcar Operations Subsidy

- $13.6 million to support streetcar operations (Seattle Transit Measure) in 2026.
- First Hill ridership approaching 2019 pre-pandemic levels.
- South Lake Union ridership remains depressed.

Year	First Hill Ridership	First Hill Operating Subsidy	South Lake Union Ridership	South Lake Union Operating Subsidy
2019 actual	1,360,035	$7.0M	503,374	$2.2M
2020 actual	660,029	$3.9M	89,414	$1.7M
2021 actual	698,975	$3.6M	107,145	$1.7M
2022 actual	937,394	$3.5M	180,211	$1.7M
2023 actual	1,175,767	$3.6M	236,121	$1.9M
2024 actual	1,269,768	$8.4M	222,592	$1.8M
2025 **projected**	1,307,861	$10.7M	229,270	$2.9M
2026 **projected**	1,347,097	$11.8M	236,148	$3.5M

Contextual budget issue.

Policy Consideration

(Slide 1/1)

3. Seattle Transit Measure Renewal

- Voter-approved 0.15% sales tax will expire in April 2027.
  - Supports transit service, transit infrastructure, and low-income access.
  - Generates $56.4 million in 2026.
- Renewal requires authorizing legislation by August 2026 to be on November 2026 ballot.
- City may ask voters for up 0.3% sales tax and/or up to $50 vehicle license fee for transportation purposes (including transit).

Contextual budget issue. Council may wish to provide early direction on renewal proposal.

Policy Consideration

(Slide 1/1)

4. Automated Camera Enforcement

- School Zone camera expansion included in 2025 Adopted and 2026 Proposed Budget.
    - 37 new cameras at 18 locations.
    - Full deployment anticipated in 2026.
- General Speed Zone camera expansion proposed in 2026 Proposed Budget.
    - 20 new cameras at up to 10 locations.
    - Full deployment anticipated in 2026.
- 1.0 FTE proposed to manage all SDOT camera programs.

Contextual budget issue.

Policy Consideration

(Slide 1/1)

5. Transit Ambassadors and Transit Security

- 2025 Adopted Budget included a proviso on $1 million for Transit Ambassadors and King County Behavioral Health Team.
  - Ambassadors deployed in University District and on Rainier Ave in 2025.
  - No funding used for Behavioral Health Team in 2025.
  - 2026 Proposed Budget does not include dedicated funding for these purposes.
- 2025 Adopted Budget included a proviso on $1 million for Transit Security.
  - Transit security deployed on 3rd Ave and Jackson Street routes in 2025.
  - 2026 Proposed Budget includes $1 million (Transportation Levy)

Contextual budget issue.

Policy Consideration

(Slide 1/1)

6. District Project Fund

- Funds neighborhood traffic safety and district priorities at direction of Council.
- Established in 2025 Adopted Budget
  - $7 million in 2025.
  - $7 million in 2026.
  - Unsecured funding for 2027+.
- Council approved process and procedures for program in September 2025.

Contextual budget issue.

Policy Consideration

7. Citywide engagement on Sound Transit 3

- Expanded Office of the Waterfront, Civic Projects, and Sound Transit.
  - Sound Transit 3 includes light rail expansion to West Seattle and Ballard.
  - OWCP&ST coordinates work of SDOT, SCL, SPU, DPR, SDCI, FAS, and DON.
- Sound Transit is facing financial constraints and is evaluating:
  - Capital cost savings (including scope reduction and project phasing).
  - Operational cost savings.
  - Financial capacity.

Contextual budget issue.

Questions?