

Seattle Center

2026 Proposed Budget Overview

Seattle City Council Select Budget Committee



City of Seattle

Seattle Center – At A Glance

Our Mission: *We create exceptional events, experiences, and environments that delight and inspire the human spirit to build stronger communities.*

- **74-acre campus, 40-acre green space** – we are both a regional destination for events and a green space for growing neighborhoods (Uptown, Belltown, South Lake Union, Queen Anne)
- **11.5M annual visitors** – largest attendance for any destination in WA
- **An economic engine for the arts** – \$1.86B in area business activity, 18,621 jobs and \$631M in labor income
- **Home to 35 independent organizations** – arts, culture sports and entertainment come together to form one community
- **Largely self-funded** – we generate revenue to cover 70% of our expenses
- **230+ full-time staff** and hundreds of part-time event staff in all aspects of campus and waterfront operations.

Seattle Center Priorities

Build On Recent Successes



Expand Into Partnerships

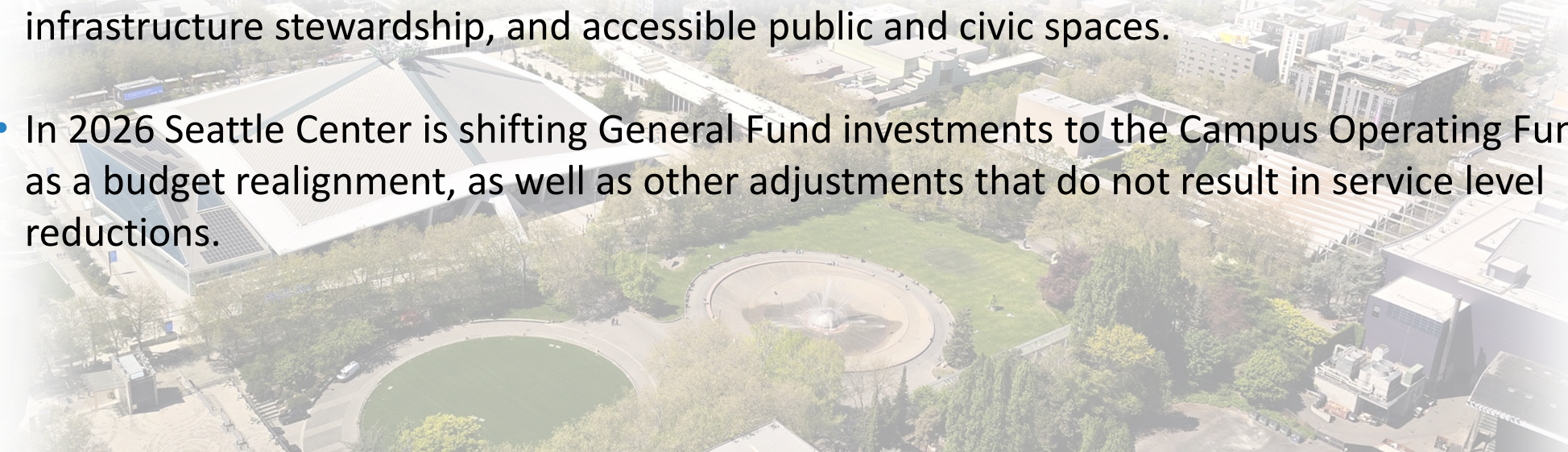


Shape Seattle Center's Future



Summary

- Seattle Center's 2026 budget directly supports the City's commitments to public safety, infrastructure stewardship, and accessible public and civic spaces.
- In 2026 Seattle Center is shifting General Fund investments to the Campus Operating Fund as a budget realignment, as well as other adjustments that do not result in service level reductions.



TOTAL BUDGET (\$000s)	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed
General Fund	\$17,263	\$18,253	\$17,583
Other Funds	\$38,413	\$39,972	\$41,470
FTE	257.93	257.93	259.93

Budget Realignment

General Fund Realignment

- \$500,000 of General Fund expenditures will shift to the Campus Operating Fund as a budget realignment. No service level reduction is expected.

	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed	% Change (Endorsed to Proposed)
(\$000s)				
General Fund	\$500	\$500	(\$500)	



Significant Additions

Increase Budget for Pedestrian Safety Barriers

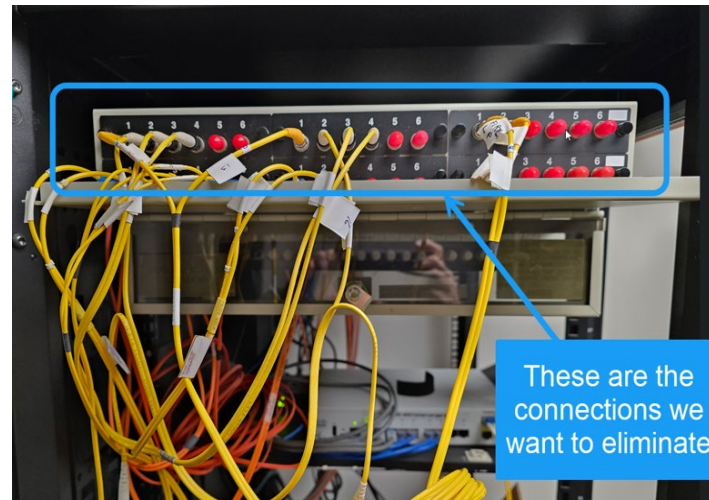
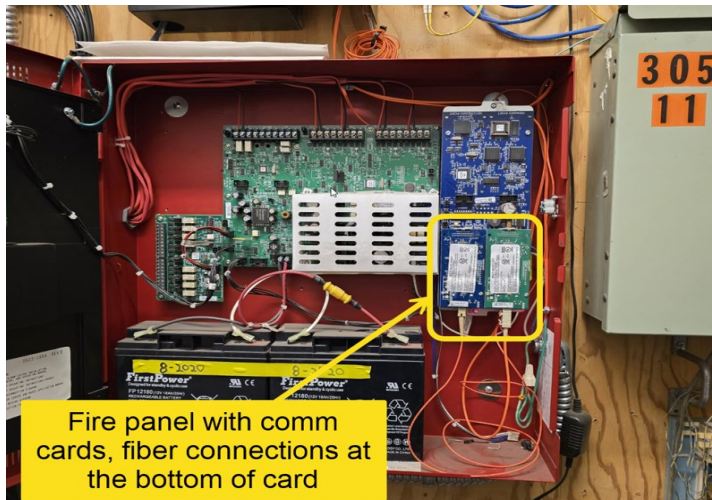
- One-time capital investment to replace aging safety barriers and install new barriers in critical areas on Seattle Center Campus to improve visitor safety, and at large events like Seattle's Fan Celebration for the 2026 World Cup.

		2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed	% Change (Endorsed to Proposed)
	(\$000s)				
REET		\$0	\$0	\$1,577	

Significant Additions

Replace Fiberoptics for Fire Alarm System

- One-time capital investment to replace the existing system with a simplified and isolated communication path, which will result in significantly increased system reliability and reduced maintenance costs.



	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed	% Change (Endorsed to Proposed)
(\$000s)				
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$310	

Significant Additions

Waterfront One-Time Support

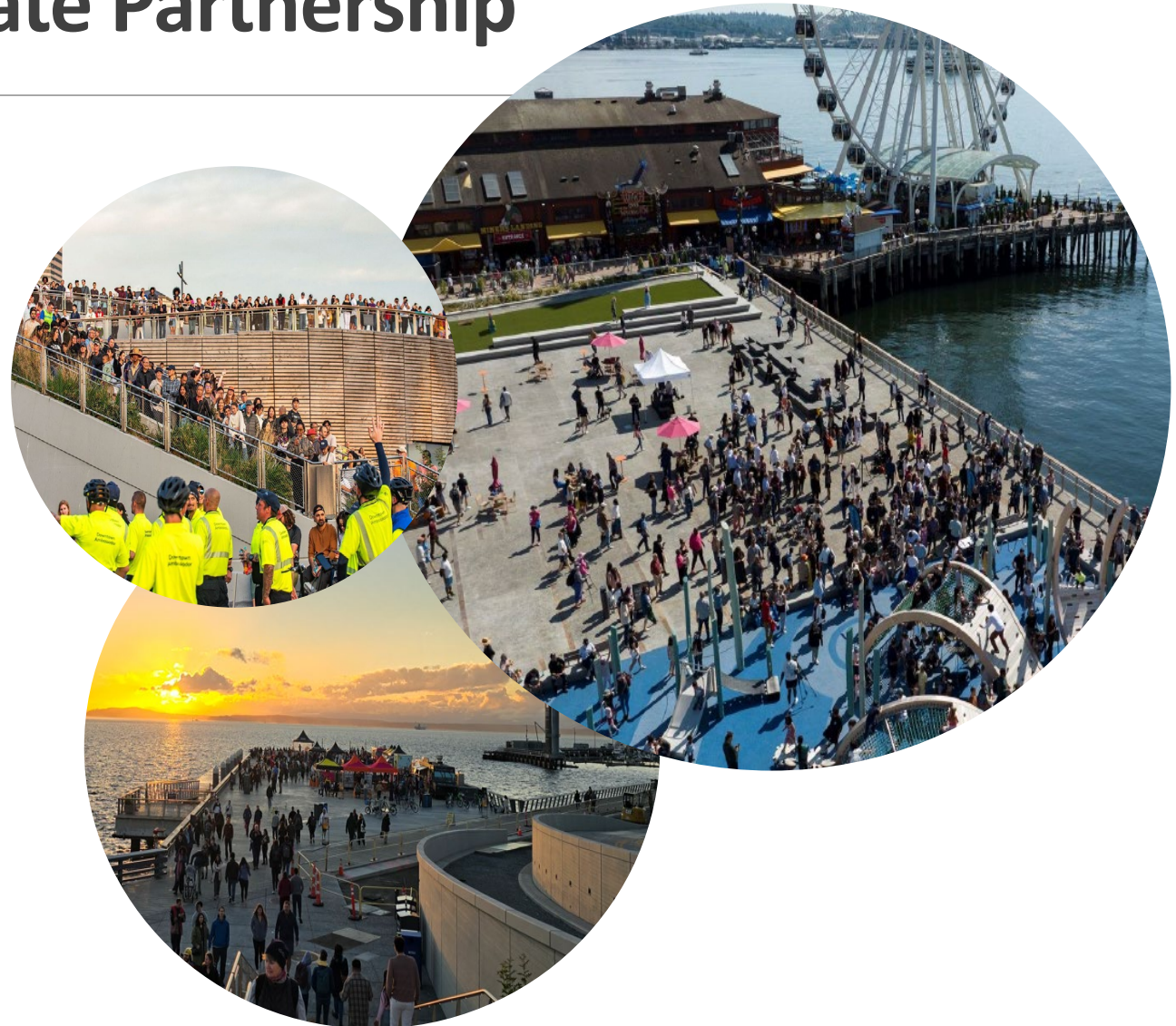
- One-time budget authority for Seattle Center’s operation and maintenance of Waterfront Park. Funding is from underspent budget from 2024 in the Metropolitan Park District Fund for Waterfront operations.



	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	2026 Proposed	% Change (Endorsed to Proposed)
(\$000s)				
Parks District Fund	\$0	\$0	\$1,650	

Waterfront – Public/Private Partnership

- 6-year agreement with Friends of Waterfront Park – through YE 2028
- Agreements aligns with Seattle Park District funding cycle and MOA between SPR/CEN
- Integrates Performance Standard
- Reviewed with Central Waterfront Oversight Committee



Waterfront Operations

Operations

- Park Inspections – 14 conducted in 2024
- Over 1,200 graffiti tags removed in 2024
- Over 300 work orders (on top of daily routine maintenance before park was fully open)
- ESU interactions in 2024: Public Interactions – 24,767 (93%), Other Interactions – 1,961 (7%)

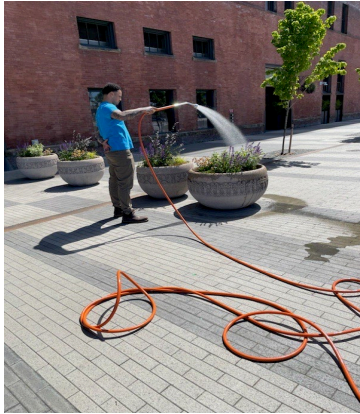


What's Next

- 2026: First full year of park being open. Anticipate full staffing at 38.0 FTE (Ops and ESU)
- 2.0 FTE Gardeners for SDOT landscaping (medians, west sidewalk, Elliott Way, Pioneer Square) contributes to seamless operations.
- Funding advances Waterfront Operations and Tribal Heritage Center.



Waterfront Operations Team





Questions?

