

Budget Reform: Process and Content

BEN NOBLE, CALVIN CHOW, & TOM MIKESELL, CITY COUNCIL CENTRAL STAFF

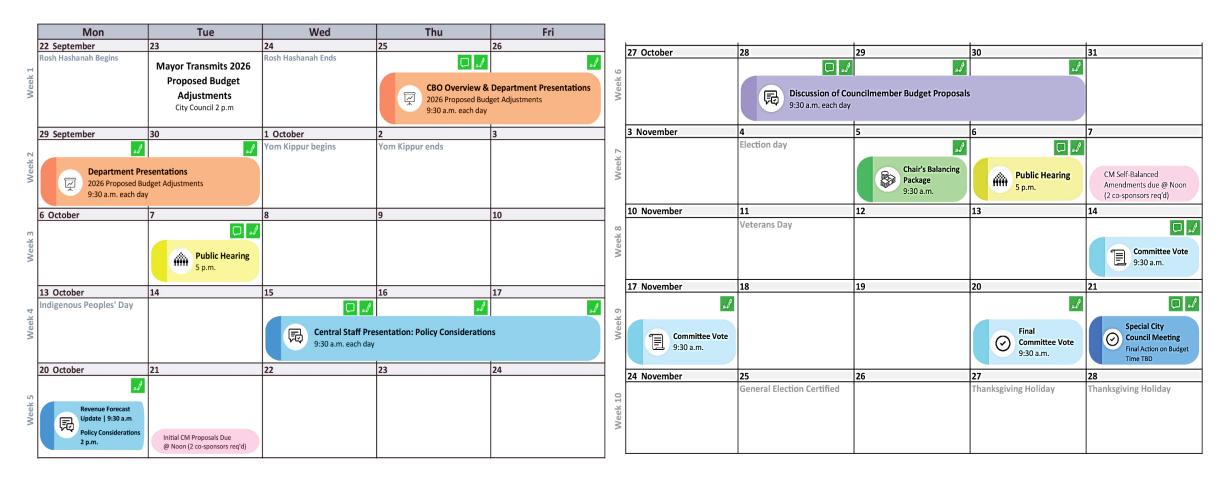
FINANCE, NATIVE COMMUNITIES & TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS
JUNE 4, 2025

2025 Budget Calendar

- Council's Budget Review Process begins Tuesday, September 23, with the transmittal of the Mayor's 2026 Proposed budget.
- Final City Council action is scheduled for Friday, November 21.
- Key changes from last year aimed at enhancing transparency and public engagement:
 - 1. The initial public hearing is shifted back a week+ to provide an earlier opportunity for Councilmembers to hear from their constituents.
 - 2. Additional phase added after Central Staff analytic summaries and before the Chair's balancing package is presented.
 - This phase will allow all Councilmembers and the public to hear about the full range of potential amendments under consideration. This will also provide additional context for Council's consideration of the balancing package and any subsequent amendments. These proposals will mark the first step of potential budget amendments and will thus require 2 cosponsors.

Seattle City Council Fall 2025 Select Budget Committee Calendar





Additional Budget Process Changes

- In the "Discussion of Councilmember Budget Proposals" (Proposals) phase, Councilmember proposed amendments will be published to their respective agenda 24 hours prior to the scheduled committee meeting.
- A document outlining basic information of proposed amendments will be posted publicly prior to committee meetings for the Proposals phase (Oct. 28, 29, 30), the Chair's Balancing Package (Nov. 5), and Committee Vote Phase (Nov. 14, 17, 20).
 - The document will be updated to reflect any changes in amendment sponsorships made in open session.
- As budget amendment proposals are brought to the committee for discussion,
 Councilmembers will be able to add their names as sponsors.
- Every effort will be made to publish the Chair's balancing package online 48 hours before the second public hearing.

Updated Five Six-Year Budget "Look Back"

- Last year Central Staff provided the "new" Council a detailed analytic assessment of how the City's budget had evolved over the previous five years and the key drivers of budget changes over that time.
- This was designed to provide background and context as Council took on managing the significant imbalance between ongoing General Fund expenditures and revenues.
- Ahead of this Fall's Council Budget Review process, Central Staff is working to update this analysis.
- Our approach is to take last year's overview as the "base" document, and to add relevant observations about additional changes made last year.

Continuing to Track Budget-Related SLIs

SLI#	Title
CBO-002S-A-1	Request that CBO collaborate with SDHR to report on developing or enhancing programs for City employees subject to layoff.
CBO-003S-A-2	Request that CBO report on past budget underspend and grants
CBO-004S-A-1	Request that CBO and SCERS analyze an early retirement incentive for City employees.
MO-002S-A-1	Request that the Executive provide an inventory of City-funded youth programs.
ITD-002S-A-1	Request that the Executive collaborate with the City Council to establish an advisory workgroup to explore alternative financing and operating models for the Seattle Channel to ensure its long-term sustainability
OH-004S-A-1	Request that OH explore use of bonds and master leasing for development of affordable housing.

Next Steps: Upcoming Budget-related Legislation & Activities

- Exceptions Ordinance and Bond Repayment Legislation
- Carry-forward Ordinance
- Mid-year Supplemental Ordinance
- Discussion of Revenue Options
- August Revenue Forecast