Human Services Department
2026 Proposed Budget
Policy Considerations

Select Budget Committee | October ##, 2025

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Budget Summary ($ in 000s)

	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	% Change	2026 Proposed	% Change
Operating Appropriations by BSL					
Addressing Homelessness	$138.9M	$141.7M	2.1%	$169.1M	19.3%
Leadership and Administration	$18.9M	$19.5M	3.4%	$18.8M	(3.7%)
Preparing Youth for Success	$17.2M	$17.7M	3.1%	$17.6M	(0.4%)
Promoting Healthy Aging	$79.1M	$80.7M	2.1%	$80.6M	(0.2%)
Promoting Public Health	$26.2M	$26.5M	1.0%	$33.6M	26.7%
Supporting Affordability and Livability	$40.8M	$36.8M	(9.8%)	$40.7M	10.7%
Supporting Safe Communities	$63.9M	$64.5M	1.0%	$71.9M	11.5%
Operating Subtotal	**$384.9M**	**$387.5M**	**0.7%**	**$432.4M**	**11.6%**

Budget Summary ($ in 000s)

	2025 Adopted	2026 Endorsed	% Change	2026 Proposed	% Change
Appropriation Totals (Operating)					
Total Appropriations	**$384.9**	**$387.5**	**1%**	**$432.4**	**12%**
Total FTE	**470**	**470**	**0%**	**481**	**2%**
Revenues					
General Fund	$262.5	$271.9	3.6%	$298.4	9.7%
Jumpstart Fund	$11.7	$4.2	-64.2%	$4.4	5.6%
Other Source(s)	$110.7	$111.4	0.7%	$129.6	16.3%
Total Revenues	**$384.9**	**$387.5**	**1%**	**$432.4**	**12%**

Policy Consideration

1. Sustainability for wage equity increase

    The 2026 Proposed budget provides ongoing funding for an additional 2% human service provider wage equity increase of $5.1 million. Council will need to make difficult decision in the 2027 budget if it wants to sustain this wage equity increase. Failure to sustain these new investments would mean that wages would decrease for human services workers.

Policy Consideration

2. Sustainability for 155 new shelter beds proposed in 2026 and ability to meet promise to delivery 150 more by end of 2027.

The 2026 Proposed Budget adds $7.8 million of ongoing fund to cover start-up costs and three months of operating support for 155 new shelter units. In 2027, at least $2.9 million in additional ongoing funds would be needed just to sustain those 155 beds. Another $10.7 million would be needed for start-up and partial year operating costs for the additional 150 new units. In 2028, the cost to operate 305 beds for a full year would be $26.37 million. **City Council will need to make difficult decisions if it wants to 1) maintain the 155 units that are slated to open in 2026 and 2) open the remaining 150 proposed units.**

Policy Consideration

3. Community Solutions Initiative Pilot

The 2026 Proposed Budget contains $4.05 million in one-time GF for a new Community Solutions Initiative pilot to reduce unsheltered homelessness in downtown; the pilot will likely include shelter, services, and short-term rental subsidies. Funding will be administered by HSD, not the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA). Overall, the pilot appears to be a poor fit for one-time funding, and moves the City away from coordinating all shelter services under KCRHA.

Options:

A. Proviso $4.05 million contingent upon receiving more details from HSD on this pilot, including program design, outcomes, geographic focus area, and the plan to ensure no disruption of services when one-time funding ends.

B. Proviso funds contingent upon them being administered by KCRHA

C. Reallocate the funds to another use that is better suited to one-time funding.

D. No change

Policy Consideration

4. **Sweetened Beverage Tax fund swap**

   The 2026 Proposed Budget contains an additional $7.2 million ongoing Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT) to supplant General Fund appropriations for food programs. This supplantation assumes the elimination of the Prenatal to 3 Grant Program, is opposed by the SBT Community Advisory Board (CAB), and calls into question the role of the CAB going forward.

   Options:

   A. Reallocate funds to support the Prenatal to 3 Grant Program and sustain the food programs in HSD using another source of funds.

   B. Adopt a Statement of Legislative Intent to work with the CAB and other stakeholders to reimagine the role of the CAB, potentially to focus on food programs.

   C. No change.

Questions?