

## SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE

<b>Department:</b>	<b>Dept. Contact:</b>	<b>CBO Contact:</b>
Seattle Fire Department	Karen Grove	Ramandeep Kaur

### 1. BILL SUMMARY

**Legislation Title:** AN ORDINANCE relating to the Seattle Fire Department’s services and fees; adding and revising various Seattle Fire Department permit, inspection, and plan review fees and related provisions; amending Sections 22.602.010, 22.602.045, 22.602.050, 22.602.070, 22.602.080, and 22.602.090 of the Seattle Municipal Code; and amending Section 112 of the 2021 Seattle Fire Code as adopted by Section 22.600.020 of the Seattle Municipal Code and as regulated and allowed by the State Building Code Act, Chapter 19.27 of the Revised Code of Washington.

#### **Summary and Background of the Legislation:**

The Fire Prevention Division has historically operated by collecting fees that offset some of the costs of providing fire prevention services to direct service users. Both direct and indirect costs of providing services are included when making cost recovery calculations.

This legislation would adjust fee levels, modify fee titles, and add new fees that are charged by the Seattle Fire Department’s (SFD’s) Fire Prevention Division, also known as the Fire Marshal’s Office. The Fire Prevention Division administers the Fire Department fire prevention program. The program’s purpose is to help ensure the safety of Seattle residents, workers and visitors and protect them and their property from the hazards of fires, explosions, and dangerous conditions including releases of hazardous materials. The proposed changes to the fee ordinance are intended to re-align fee levels with current service costs.

Most fees are proposed to be increased by 16 percent, with the intent to improve cost recovery levels related to increases in wages and benefits and other program costs. This includes fees for special events, assembly occupancies, special hazards, certifications, high-rise inspections, compliance re-inspections, filing of testing documentation for fire and life safety systems, and review of code alternates and other exemptions and waivers. Fees for plan review and construction inspections are proposed to be raised by 31 percent to better align cost recovery in these lines of business. Overall this legislation increases revenues for fire prevention services by \$1.8 million annually.

### 2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

**Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project?**  Yes  No

### 3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

**Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City?**  Yes  No

<b>Expenditure Change (\$); General Fund</b>	<b>2025 est.</b>	<b>2026 est.</b>	<b>2027 est.</b>	<b>2028 est.</b>	<b>2029 est.</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Expenditure Change (\$); Other Funds</b>	<b>2025 est.</b>	<b>2026 est.</b>	<b>2027 est.</b>	<b>2028 est.</b>	<b>2029 est.</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Revenue Change (\$); General Fund</b>	<b>2025 est.</b>	<b>2026 est.</b>	<b>2027 est.</b>	<b>2028 est.</b>	<b>2029 est.</b>
	<b>\$1,807,436</b>	<b>\$1,796,804</b>	<b>\$1,796,804</b>	<b>\$1,796,804</b>	<b>\$1,796,804</b>
<b>Revenue Change (\$); Other Funds</b>	<b>2025 est.</b>	<b>2026 est.</b>	<b>2027 est.</b>	<b>2028 est.</b>	<b>2029 est.</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

<b>Number of Positions</b>	<b>2025 est.</b>	<b>2026 est.</b>	<b>2027 est.</b>	<b>2028 est.</b>	<b>2029 est.</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total FTE Change</b>	<b>2025 est.</b>	<b>2026 est.</b>	<b>2027 est.</b>	<b>2028 est.</b>	<b>2029 est.</b>
	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**3.a. Appropriations**

This legislation adds, changes, or deletes appropriations.

**3.b. Revenues/Reimbursements**

This legislation adds, changes, or deletes revenues or reimbursements.

**Anticipated Revenue/Reimbursement Resulting from This Legislation:**

**Anticipated Revenue/Reimbursement Resulting from this Legislation:**

<b>Fund Name and Number</b>	<b>Dept</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>2025 Revenue</b>	<b>2026 Estimated Revenue</b>
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Certification	\$43,040	\$43,040
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Special Events	\$119,520	\$119,520
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Citations	\$12,000	\$12,000
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Schedule A/Place of Assembly	\$45,280	\$45,280
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Hazardous Materials	\$380,000	\$380,000
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Construction Inspections	\$624,246	\$618,066
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Fire Prevention Reinspections/Knox Box	\$16,800	\$16,800
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Plan Reviews	\$449,612	\$445,160
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	High-Rise Inspections	\$44,138	\$44,138
General Fund, No. 00100	SFD	Systems Testing Oversight	\$72,800	\$72,800
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$1,807,436</b>	<b>\$1,796,804</b>

**Revenue/Reimbursement Notes:**

The total impact of proposed fee changes included in this legislation is an increase of roughly \$1.8 million in 2025 as well as in 2026. The increase is a result of realigning fees with program costs due to increases in wages and benefits as well as other costs.

Many Fire Department permit and inspection fees were last modified on January 1, 2023, including fees for hazardous materials permitting, plan review, and construction inspections.

The table below presents comparative fee information for Seattle and other cities in the region and Western United States.

**Table: Fire Prevention Fees in Various Cities**

Permit Title	Seattle (2025 Proposed)	Phoenix, AZ (Current)	San Diego (Current)	Tacoma (Current)	Redmond (Current)	Bellevue (Current)	Everett (Current)
<b>Assembly w/ occ. load of 300</b>	\$715	\$150 per hr + \$150 per hr for use of open flame/candles	\$306 - \$613 based on sq footage	\$315	\$474 + \$176 for use of open flame/candles plus 4% technology surcharge	\$149	\$100 + \$25 for use of open flame/candles
<b>Tent or canopy</b>	\$362	\$150 per hr, 2 hrs min for 1st tent + \$150 per hr each addtl tent	\$292 - \$438	\$315	\$381 - 1 tent \$482 - 2 to 5 tents \$583 - 6+ tents +4% tech surcharge	\$149	\$150
<b>LPG storage/use</b>	Install \$554 Oper'l \$554	\$150 per hr, 2 hrs min	-Oper'l permit \$141	Installation permit \$354	\$176 - \$474 +4% tech surcharge	\$149	\$100
<b>Indoor pyrotechnics</b>	\$957	\$150 per hr, 4 hrs min	\$292	\$344	\$596 +4% tech surcharge	\$272 + \$190 per hr	\$100
<b>Non-compliance reinspection</b>	\$433	\$150 per hr, 1 hr min	\$300	\$236	\$228 - \$343 +4% tech surcharge	\$190 per hr	\$200
<b>High-rise inspections</b>	\$271 base + \$271/hr	\$150 per hr, 1 hr min	-Inspection: \$30 per 1,000 sf -Reinsp: \$300	\$51 - \$908 based on occ type and bldg sq footage	N/A	\$540 * bldg sq footage factor of 1-6	\$50 - \$400 based on bldg sq footage
<b>Fire Protection System Test Reporting</b>	\$35 per report +\$10 late fee	\$30 per report	\$17 per report	\$25 per report	\$10 per report plus \$10 late fee +4% tech surcharge	\$25 per report +\$10 late fee	\$15 per report
<b>Food Truck/Food Vending</b>	\$490	\$150 per hr, 1 hr min	N/A	-License and inspection \$225	\$275 +4% tech surcharge	\$149	\$100
<b>Dry Cleaning</b>	\$361	\$150 per hr, 1 hr min	N/A	\$315	\$275 - \$347 +4% tech surcharge	\$149	\$100
<b>Repair Garges – Auto Maintenance</b>	\$494	\$150 per hr, 1 hr min		\$315	\$474 +4% tech surcharge	\$149	\$100

### 3.c. Positions

- This legislation adds, changes, or deletes positions.

### 3.d. Other Impacts

**Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle, including direct or indirect, one-time or ongoing costs, that are not included in Sections 3.a through 3.c? If so, please describe these financial impacts.**

No.

**If the legislation has costs, but they can be absorbed within existing operations, please describe how those costs can be absorbed. The description should clearly describe if the absorbed costs are achievable because the department had excess resources within their existing budget or if by absorbing these costs the department is deprioritizing other work that would have used these resources.**

No costs to The City of Seattle. The proposed fee changes relate to cost recovery for current service levels and the small number of programmatic changes to inspection services will be absorbed by current staff.

**Please describe any financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation.**

If the City does not increase fees when union contracts increase employee wages and benefits for cost of living and other reasons, then the overall result is that revenue from fees will cover a lower portion of the overall cost of these fee-supported services. When fees do not keep pace with costs, businesses and applicants requiring SFD services end up paying a lower share of the services, leaving the remainder to be funded by other City taxpayer sources in the General Fund.

## 4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- a. Please describe how this legislation may affect any departments besides the originating department.**

The City of Seattle's Accela system bills customers for the major SFD construction inspection fees, so changes to fee amounts will require system updates in Accela. This software programming update work is done by Seattle IT and Seattle Department of Construction and Inspection's (SDCI's) employees together with SFD. These three departments have discussed the anticipated changes and no challenges have been identified should the fee modifications be approved. Some City departments require permits for hazardous materials, so they will experience fee increases along with all customers.

- b. Does this legislation affect a piece of property? If yes, please attach a map and explain any impacts on the property. Please attach any Environmental Impact Statements, Determinations of Non-Significance, or other reports generated for this property.**

No.

**c. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative.**

- i. How does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you arrive at this conclusion? In your response please consider impacts within City government (employees, internal programs) as well as in the broader community.**

Programs to ensure fire code compliance help promote fire and life safety for all who live, visit, and work in Seattle. Although data are not complete, it is likely that there are as many or more safety violations in buildings where vulnerable populations live and work, so better enforcement may yield bigger fire and life safety gains in these communities. One example is the work SFD is undertaking to restore dangerous buildings in communities to a safe condition, through education and enforcement. These buildings are found more commonly in vulnerable communities and lower income communities. The Seattle Fire Department also has a community risk assessment tool that presents fire incident data on maps showing demographic and social community characteristics, to help us develop programs that focus our limited resources in communities with the greatest fire-risks or needs.

- ii. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses in the development and/or assessment of the legislation.**

There are no programmatic changes proposed in this legislation. This legislation sustains SFD service levels to help support fire code and public safety for all residents.

- iii. What is the Language Access Plan for any communications to the public?**

SFD provides notice of fee and program changes by mail to previous and current permit holders and this communication will include translated inserts in approximately ten languages frequently spoken in Seattle. The website will also be updated to include information about upcoming fee changes, and will include information in English and about ten other languages.

**d. Climate Change Implications**

- i. Emissions: How is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way? Please attach any studies or other materials that were used to inform this response.**

No impact. This legislation does not change City services in a way that would impact existing carbon emissions in Seattle. This legislation sustains SFD's ability to support building requirements that support climate adaptation projects and new energy codes.

- ii. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.**

No impact. This legislation sustains SFD's ability to support building requirements that support climate adaptation projects and new energy codes.

- e. **If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)? What mechanisms will be used to measure progress towards meeting those goals?**

None. This legislation adjusts cost recovery levels related to City employee wage and benefit contracts, and continues existing public safety services provided by SFD.

## 5. CHECKLIST

- Is a public hearing required?
- Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required?
- If this legislation changes spending and/or revenues for a fund, have you reviewed the relevant fund policies and determined that this legislation complies?
- Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP project that involves a shared financial commitment with a non-City partner agency or organization?

## 6. ATTACHMENTS

Summary Attachments: None.