



## City Neighborhood Council

700 Fifth Ave, Suite 1700, PO Box 94649, Seattle WA 98124-4649

June 30, 2014

Mayor Ed Murray  
PO Box 94749  
Seattle, WA 98124-4749

Seattle City Council  
PO Box 34025  
Seattle, WA 98124-4025

### **RE: City Neighborhood Council's 2015-2016 City Budget Recommendations**

Dear Mayor Murray and Seattle City Councilmembers:

The City Neighborhood Council (CNC) is comprised of volunteer representatives from Seattle's Thirteen Neighborhood District Councils. Historically, the CNC has provided recommendations and suggestions regarding the City Budget process based upon input from Neighborhood District Councils.

At the CNC's 2014 *'Follow the Money'*, Community Budget & Priorities Conference on May 4<sup>th</sup>, City Councilmember Nick Licata and Deputy Mayor Hyeok Kim helped kick off the event and several city Department Directors served on the CNC panel. Ben Noble, Director of the City Budget Office, walked us through an overview of the City Budget, sharing that: Increases in revenues are fairly even with inflation; City Departments are being asked to spend approximately 2% less in their budgets without making cuts and were directed to search for more efficiencies. Based upon community input from CNC members and recent CNC Budget Survey feedback, several themes and priorities emerged, listed below:

#### **CNC Themes and Priorities:**

- **Safety and Vitality.** Neighbors are very concerned that violence and criminal behavior is on the rise. Expand funding and oversight for programs such as (LEAD) Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion, (MDT) Multi-Disciplinary Teams, Hot Spots, Mental Health Treatment and Shelter Options. Increase resources for SPD Patrol Staffing; restore Crime Prevention Coordinators to pre-2010 cuts.
- **Neighborhood Service Centers/Neighborhood District Coordinators.** Restore cuts to pre-2010 levels in these inexpensive services that significantly increase civic engagement, community self-help and stewardship as well as to leverage community resources.
- **Develop / Adopt Strategic Bond and Levy Agenda For Next 10 Years.** Which includes:
  - A list of prospective, current and tentative plans to replace current levies
  - Publicizing the process for public engagement for development of bond/levy proposals
  - Contingency plans to address failure of financial ballot measures
- **Capital Improvement Program.** Develop additional methods to improve public input opportunities.

**Mayor Ed Murray, Seattle City Council – CNC City Budget Recommendations, Continued**

- **Project Association. Neighborhood Districts / City Election Districts.** Develop a method to track capital projects by Election Districts, while also expanding the tracking of projects within CNC Districts in the context of District needs, citing measures of those needs where possible. (Data comparison, CNC is not endorsing boundary realignments between Neighborhood Districts and City Election Districts.)
- **Transportation.** Retain transit funding and expand services with care to include the public in decision making. Prioritize improvement in the condition of streets for bikes, cars, trucks and buses, with an emphasis on safety and convenience for travel between neighborhoods using new greenways and cycle tracks, along with sidewalk and street-crossing improvements.
- **Public Engagement.** As part of this administration’s overall goal to improve connections with the public, direct City Departments to adopt processes that:
  - Encourage staff to be more responsive and receptive to community requests
  - Result in increased, improved, consistent and meaningful engagement
  - Increase oversight of internal methods to enhance communications with the public
- **Funding Mechanisms.** Consider new funding sources such as Developer Impact Fees.

In addition to the themes listed above, additional feedback from the CNC’s Community Budget & Priorities Survey is provided below, which we hope may also be useful during Budget deliberations:

**Top Three Priorities**

- Public Transportation 46%
- Neighborhood Planning & Development 35%
- Police & Human Services – Tied 32%

**Next Three Priorities**

- Parks Maintenance 26%
- Roads 25%
- Neighborhood Services 24%

**What makes your city/neighborhood livable?**

- Transportation & Parking
- Affordable housing and sunlight at your residence
- Walking to commercial districts and parks, including curb ramps in business districts
- Community Connections
- Public safety when walking

**Revenue Sources**

- Survey respondents wish to learn more about the MPD and Developer Impact Fees

Thank you for considering these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Laine Ross  
CNC Co-Chair  
cc: City Budget Office



Alexis Gallegos  
CNC Co-Chair

This letter was authorized at the June 30, 2014 CNC meeting.