



# Seattle City Council

June 3, 2015

Honorable Ed Murray  
City of Seattle  
600 4th Avenue, Floor 7  
Seattle, WA 98104

Subject: Council 2016 Budget Priorities

Dear Mayor Murray:

As we move toward this year's fall budget process, we are fortunate that the economic recovery continues. However, the anticipated overall growth in General Subfund (GSF) revenues will not match the growth in expenditures, resulting in an expected \$16.6 million shortfall in 2017. We may be able to achieve a balanced budget in 2016 by trimming expenditures, and by using any remaining GSF fund balance. Based on this assumption, and in anticipation of new Executive initiatives, the GSF shortfall could be exacerbated, precluding the inclusion of Council priorities. Therefore, we request that your office keep us informed as to any Executive initiatives that may significantly impact the 2016 budget, as soon as possible.

Due diligence requires that the Council articulate its priorities for 2016 as early as possible in order to protect the health and safety of all Seattle residents, while also providing assistance to the most needy among us. In this post-recession time, we believe we must strategically invest in approaches that will improve the livability in our neighborhoods and increase economic opportunity for all, as well as improve our efforts to promote equity and the environment and our race and social justice work. Specifically, investment initiatives should rely heavily on providing these activities, while at the same time, keeping our commitment to voters to not decrease Parks funding per the passage of last year's Metropolitan Park District measure.

To successfully balance these financial demands, improvements or alternative approaches to service delivery must be emphasized. We therefore support proposals that enhance efficiencies and identify new possible revenue enhancements.

We also support a budget that emphasizes the use of data analysis and invests in evidence-based best practices to maximize positive outcomes for our City and its residents. Data analysis should identify needs at the subpopulation levels to ensure services are effectively distributed.

The Council, with the assistance of our Central Staff Director, Kirstan Arestad, look forward to partnering with you and your staff in the coming months to craft a 2016 budget that embody these budget priorities, and those of individual Councilmembers.



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Tim Burgess, Council President



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Nick Licata, Budget Committee Chair



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Sally Bagshaw, Councilmember



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Jean Godden, Councilmember



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Bruce A. Harrell, Councilmember



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Mike O'Brien, Councilmember



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John Okamoto, Councilmember



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Tom Rasmussen, Councilmember



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Kshama Sawant, Councilmember

cc: Kirstan Arestad, Council Central Staff Director  
Ben Noble, Seattle City Budget Office Director