

Fiscal Reserves

Ben Noble, Director

(206) 615-1962

Department Overview

The State of Washington permits the City to maintain two financial reserves to draw upon in the event of certain unanticipated expenditure or revenue pressures. Under the authority of RCW 35.32A.060, the City maintains the Emergency Subfund (ESF) of the General Fund. The ESF is the principal reserve for the City to draw upon when certain unanticipated expenses occur during the fiscal year. Eligible expenses include costs related to storms or other natural disasters. State law limits the amount of money the City can set aside in this reserve to 37.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value of property within the city.

Under the authority of RCW 35.21.070, the City maintains a second financial reserve called the Revenue Stabilization Account (RSA) of the Cumulative Reserve Subfund, also known as the Rainy Day Fund. The RSA provides resources for the City to draw upon to maintain City services in the event of a sudden, unanticipated shortfall in revenue due to economic downturns or other factors. City code limits the amount set aside in this reserve to five percent of General Subfund tax receipts. Ordinance 123743 requires the City to deposit an amount equivalent to 0.5% of General Subfund tax revenues into the RSA, with some limited exceptions. In addition, City policy requires the deposit of 50% of any unplanned year-end fund balance in the General Subfund into the RSA. The RSA has a fund balance cap equal to five percent of total annual General Fund tax revenue.

Budget Overview

The 2017 Adopted and 2018 Endorsed Budget continues to protect the City's fiscal reserves and embraces strong and prudent financial management practices. Maintaining healthy and appropriate reserve levels is critical in ensuring the City is financially well prepared to address unexpected revenue or expenditure pressures, especially as economic conditions have become more volatile.

Emergency Subfund

State law allows the City to maintain an emergency reserve at a maximum statutory-authorized level of 37.5 cents per \$1,000 of assessed property value in the city. The City's practice has been to fully fund the emergency reserve to this maximum limit. However, over that past several years assessed values have undergone significant growth and are expected to continue at a rate that far outpaces the projected City's revenue growth rate. While perhaps good news from an economic standpoint, these increasing assessed values do not translate into a proportional increase in City property tax revenues. To the contrary, state law limits the growth of property tax revenues to 1% plus the value of new construction. In this context, and recognizing that the State of Emergency declared in response to the homelessness crisis has created the need for additional resources to be directed toward related social services, this budget includes a proposal to modify the existing financial policies for the ESF. The proposal would require that the City maintain a minimum balance of \$60 million, essentially the current level, and further require that purchasing power of this balance be maintained by increasing this minimum required balance at the rate of inflation. This implies that the ESF would continue to grow, but at somewhat lower rate than under existing policies. This proposal strikes a balance between ensuring that resources will be available to address unanticipated expenditures and making resources available to address current needs. Consistent with this new proposal, the proposed budget will increase the ESF balance by approximately 5% (\$3 million) over the biennium, the cumulative rate of inflation forecast for the next 2 years. This will result in a balance of \$63.2 million by 2018.

Fiscal Reserves

Success of Rainy Day Funding Enhancements

The City adopted significant RSA funding enhancements in 2011 via Ordinance 123743. These changes enabled the City to rebuild the Rainy Day Fund reserves that had been spent down in 2009 and 2010 in the midst of the Great Recession. The new policies facilitated the rebuilding of this reserve fund from a low of \$10.5 million in 2010 to the proposed level of \$52.1 million by 2018. The \$52.1 million also represents an historical high for this fund. The 2017 and 2018 contributions are driven by General Fund revenue growth as the fund reached the policy cap in 2015.

Council Changes to the 2017-2018 Proposed Budget

The City Council made no changes to the 2017-2018 Proposed Budget

City Council Provisos

There are no Council Provisos.

Revenue Overview

2017 Estimated Revenues

Summit Code	Source	2015 Actual	2016 Adopted	2017 Adopted	2018 Endorsed
485110	Operating Tr In-Fr General Fund - RSA	3,810,000	2,223,941	2,777,744	1,868,939
485110	Oper Tr-In fr General Fund - EMF	5,646,198	5,148,309	1,697,861	1,521,358
	Total Oper Tr In Fr GF	9,456,198	7,372,250	4,475,605	3,390,297
	Total Revenues	9,456,198	7,372,250	4,475,605	3,390,297
379100	Use of (Contribution to) Fund Balance - RSA	-3,810,000	-2,223,941	-2,777,744	-1,868,939
379100	Use of (Contribution to) Fund Balance - EMF	-5,646,198	-5,148,309	-1,697,861	-1,521,358
	Total Use of Fund Balance	-9,456,198	-7,372,250	-4,475,605	-3,390,297
	Total Resources	0	0	0	0

Fiscal Reserves

Fiscal Reserves Fund Table

Cumulative Reserve Subfund, Revenue Stabilization Account (00166)

	2015 Actuals	2016 Adopted	2016 Revised	2017 Adopted	2018 Endorsed
Beginning Fund Balance	41,412,783	45,223,304	45,222,783	47,446,724	50,224,468
Accounting and Technical Adjustments	0	0	0	0	0
Plus: Actual and Estimated Revenues	3,810,000	2,223,941	2,223,941	2,777,744	1,868,939
Ending Fund Balance	45,222,783	47,447,245	47,446,724	50,224,468	52,093,407
Ending Unreserved Fund Balance	45,222,783	47,447,245	47,446,724	50,224,468	52,093,407

Emergency Subfund (00185)

	2015 Actuals	2016 Adopted	2016 Revised	2017 Adopted	2018 Endorsed
Beginning Fund Balance	48,546,526	54,192,724	54,192,724	60,000,000	61,697,861
Accounting and Technical Adjustments	0	0	0	0	0
Plus: Actual and Estimated Revenues	5,646,198	5,148,309	5,807,276	1,697,861	1,521,358
Ending Fund Balance	54,192,724	59,341,033	60,000,000	61,697,861	63,219,219
Ending Unreserved Fund Balance	54,192,724	59,341,033	60,000,000	61,697,861	63,219,219