

# Office of Sustainability and Environment

Jessyn Farrell, Director

(206) 615-0817

[www.seattle.gov/environment](http://www.seattle.gov/environment)

## Department Overview

The Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE) develops and implements citywide environmental policies and programs that propel Seattle toward a sustainable, equitable, and climate pollution-free future. OSE collaborates with a wide range of stakeholders to develop policies and programs that advance healthy communities and facilitate a just transition from fossil fuels, while prioritizing people and communities most affected by economic, racial, and environmental injustices. OSE’s work focuses on the following areas:

**Climate and Environmental Justice:** OSE develops policies and conducts research on reducing and addressing the impacts of climate pollution. This includes goal assessment, action planning, community outreach, and performance measurement. OSE coordinates implementation of the Seattle Green New Deal, the One Seattle Climate Justice Agenda, and the Equity and Environment Initiative and plans and implements policies that transition buildings to 100% clean energy and advance zero carbon transportation.

**Healthy & Resilient Communities:** OSE works with key stakeholders to support sustainable communities. The office administers the Fresh Bucks and Healthy Food in Schools programs to provide equitable access to healthy, affordable, culturally relevant food. OSE also fosters leadership and interdepartmental coordination within the City of Seattle to help maintain, preserve, and restore Seattle’s urban forest.

**Citywide Coordination:** OSE coordinates interdepartmental efforts to advance a healthy, equitable, and sustainable environment. These efforts include the Duwamish Valley Program, as well as interdepartmental planning around the Green New Deal, urban forestry, and energy efficiency. OSE is responsible for coordinating four prominent Boards and Commissions: the Urban Forestry Commission, the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board, the Environmental Justice Committee, and the Green New Deal Oversight Board.

## Budget Snapshot

	2022 Actuals	2023 Adopted	2024 Endorsed	2024 Adopted
<b>Department Support</b>				
General Fund Support	7,141,051	7,875,929	7,947,058	7,260,132
Other Funding - Operating	6,820,200	21,246,704	23,256,172	23,325,356
<b>Total Operations</b>	<b>13,961,251</b>	<b>29,122,634</b>	<b>31,203,231</b>	<b>30,585,489</b>
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>13,961,251</b>	<b>29,122,634</b>	<b>31,203,231</b>	<b>30,585,489</b>
Full-Time Equivalent Total*	31.50	39.50	42.50	49.50

\* FTE totals are provided for informational purposes only. Changes in FTEs resulting from City Council or Human Resources Director actions outside of the budget process may not be detailed here

## Office of Sustainability and Environment

### Incremental Budget Changes

#### Office of Sustainability and Environment

	2024 Budget	FTE
<b>Total 2024 Endorsed Budget</b>	<b>31,203,231</b>	<b>39.50</b>
<b>Baseline</b>		
Technical Corrections to Assign Program Budgets	(1,981)	-
Baseline Adjustments	(595,357)	-
2024 Endorsed Position Adds	-	3.00
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	200,036	-
<b>Proposed Operating</b>		
General Fund Reduction for the Environmental Justice Fund	(250,000)	-
Position Add for Fresh Bucks Customer Service	-	1.00
Position Add for Clean Heat Program	-	1.00
Position Adds for Climate Justice	-	2.00
<b>Proposed Technical</b>		
August Revenue Forecast	-	-
<b>Council</b>		
US Forest Service Grant-Funded Positions Added in the 2023 Year-End Supplemental	-	3.00
Funding for Urban-Forestry Related Community Engagement	50,000	-
Additional Funding for Tree Canopy Equity and Resilience Plan	30,000	-
SCERS Contribution Rate Change	(50,440)	-
<b>Total Incremental Changes</b>	<b>\$(617,742)</b>	<b>10.00</b>
<b>Total 2024 Adopted Budget</b>	<b>\$30,585,489</b>	<b>49.50</b>

### Description of Incremental Budget Changes

#### Baseline

##### Technical Corrections to Assign Program Budgets

Expenditures \$(1,981)

This item makes technical corrections in order to align program budgets within OSE.

##### Baseline Adjustments

Expenditures \$(595,357)

## Office of Sustainability and Environment

This item adjust baseline appropriations to remove budget authority related to the Oil Home Heating Tax which was repealed by Council in 2023.

### 2024 Endorsed Position Adds

Position Allocation 3.00

This item formally adds position authority for three positions added to OSE in the 2024 Endorsed Budget. Green New Deal PET funding is currently in the OSE base budget to support these positions. These positions will work on green buildings policy and implement changes associated with the planned Building Emissions Performance Standards program under development. These positions will add engineering expertise and staff a help desk to support building owners navigate the new Emissions Performance Standards for Seattle buildings.

### Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$200,036

Citywide technical adjustments made in the baseline phase reflect changes to internal services costs, including rates from the Department of Finance & Administrative Services, Seattle Information Technology Department, Seattle Department of Human Resources, and for healthcare, retirement, and industrial insurance charges for the department. These adjustments reflect initial assumptions about these costs and inflators early in the budget process.

### Proposed Operating

#### General Fund Reduction for the Environmental Justice Fund

Expenditures \$(250,000)

This item reduces General Fund appropriations for OSE by \$250,000 in the Environmental Justice Fund. The Environmental Justice Fund currently receives \$1,750,000 in Green New Deal Payroll Expense Tax funding for grants, staffing, and administration. Expansions in recent budget years have grown the program from an initial budget of \$250,000. OSE will maintain existing program capacity using Green New Deal Payroll Expense Tax funding.

#### Position Add for Fresh Bucks Customer Service

Position Allocation 1.00

This item adds position authority to OSE for an Administrative Specialist II to help address customer service needs for the Fresh Bucks program. The program has grown to cover over 12,000 households, many of whom do not use English as their primary language, and has transitioned to use of an electronic benefit. These changes require specialized customer support which is beyond the capacity of the City's Customer Service Bureau. This position will be funded using existing General Fund dollars within the OSE base.

#### Position Add for Clean Heat Program

Position Allocation 1.00

The City's 2024 Adopted Budget appropriates approximately \$330 million in JumpStart Payroll Expense Tax (payroll tax) proceeds, of which \$20 million is allocated to investments in the Green New Deal. This item adds position authority to OSE for a Planning & Development Specialist, Senior, which will sunset in July 2026. This position will support implementation of the Clean Heat Program, integrate City-funded rebates with new federal funding opportunities, and will lead development of a streamlined pilot program. As certain federal funding sources and many oil-to-electric home heating conversions will have been completed by 2026, this body of work is anticipated to be time-limited. No new funding is required for this position.

# Office of Sustainability and Environment

## Position Adds for Climate Justice

Expenditures	-
Position Allocation	2.00

The City's 2024 Adopted Budget appropriates approximately \$330 million in JumpStart Payroll Expense Tax (payroll tax) proceeds, of which \$20 million is allocated to investments in the Green New Deal. This item adds position authority for 2.0 Planning and Development Specialists and re-programs \$21,000 in existing payroll tax funding to allow OSE to hire an Administrative Staff Assistant into an ongoing pocket. This allows the Climate Justice Program to increase administrative and staff capacity for climate justice programming, which has grown from \$250,000 to over \$2 million since 2020. The two new Planning and Development Specialists I positions will support grantees, develop and track contracts, and provide technical support and assistance for grant reporting and program evaluation. These staffing adds require no new funding and will utilize existing payroll tax funding.

## Proposed Technical

### August Revenue Forecast

Revenues	\$(31,000)
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This item adjusts OSE's departmental revenue appropriations for 2024 based on the August 2024 revenue forecast.

## Council

### US Forest Service Grant-Funded Positions Added in the 2023 Year-End Supplemental

Position Allocation	3.00
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This item adds position authority for three full-time employees to OSE to support administration of a five-year \$12 million grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (U.S. Forest Service) for programs and policies addressing urban forestry. This includes community engagement and planning, tree planting and stewardship, natural area restoration, and youth leadership and job training. The positions are funded by this grant and included in the 2023 Year End Supplemental ordinance; this technical amendment is necessary to make the positions ongoing in OSE's budget through 2028. The three positions are: 1.0 FTE Grant Initiative Manager (Strategic Advisor 2), 1.0 FTE Community Engagement Coordinator (Planning & Development Specialist, Sr), and 1.0 FTE Finance & Data Management Lead (Finance Analyst, Sr), all of which will sunset in December 2028.

### Funding for Urban-Forestry Related Community Engagement

Expenditures	\$50,000
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This item adds \$50,000 in General Fund to OSE in order to develop, in collaboration with the City's Urban Forestry Management Team, a citywide urban forestry outreach and communication strategy for increasing community care for trees. This shall include, but shall not be limited to, providing information related to regulations, volunteer opportunities, tree care, and incentives. Efforts should prioritize considerations relevant to environmental justice and Native American communities. This is one of the priority items included in Seattle's 2020 Urban Forest Management Plan's Action Agenda.

### Additional Funding for Tree Canopy Equity and Resilience Plan

Expenditures	\$30,000
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This item adds \$30,000 in one-time Jumpstart Payroll Expense Tax proceeds (payroll tax) to OSE to support additional outreach and engagement for the forthcoming Tree Canopy Equity and Resilience Plan. This will bring the total amount of JumpStart Green New Deal funding for developing the plan to \$180,000, including \$150,000 JumpStart Fund (one-time) appropriated for this purpose in OSE's 2023 Adopted Budget.

## Office of Sustainability and Environment

To create the forthcoming Tree Canopy Equity and Resilience Plan, OSE intends to engage with City departments and community-based organizations to identify strategies and locations for planting, growing, and maintaining trees on private and public land and in the right-of-way, with a focus on low-canopy neighborhoods in environmental justice priority areas. The plan will build on the findings of the 2021 Tree Canopy Cover Assessment and help the City qualify for future public and private funding opportunities that support the resilience of the tree canopy. The additional appropriation added through this Council Action is intended to provide resources for extensive community engagement in developing the plan, with a particular focus on residents in environmental justice priority areas.

### SCERS Contribution Rate Change

Expenditures \$(50,440)

The City's employee retirement system, the Seattle City Employees Retirement System (SCERS), of which most non-uniformed City employees are members, is a defined benefit pension program funded by a combination of salary-based employer (i.e., the City) and employee contributions, and investment earnings.

The employer portion of the SCERS contribution is funded through the annual budget process as a percentage of salaries based on several factors including reports from the contracted actuary and the City's long-range financial forecasts. The Mayor's 2024 Proposed Mid-Biennial Budget included an employer contribution rate of 16.22%, which was determined prior to the actuary's recommendation but provided for long-term "smoothing" given the City's long-term financial challenges.

This item reduces the employer contribution rate from the proposed rate of 16.22% to the SCERS minimum actuarial required rate of 15.17%, which was determined to provide sufficient funding to the retirement system to achieve 100% funded status by 2042.

# Office of Sustainability and Environment

## 2023-24 Mid-Biennium Adopted Budget Updates - Expenses

Budget Summary Level	Fund	Budget Process Phase Endorsed	Adopted Changes	Grand Total
Office of Sustainability and Environment	00100 - General Fund	7,947,058	-686,926	7,260,132
	00155 - Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund	6,110,676	40,544	6,151,220
	14000 - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund	0	0	0
	14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	17,145,496	28,640	17,174,136
<b>Office of Sustainability and Environment Total</b>		<b>31,203,231</b>	<b>-617,742</b>	<b>30,585,489</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>31,203,231</b>	<b>-617,742</b>	<b>30,585,489</b>