

Capital Improvement Program Purpose

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is a six-year financial planning tool that identifies future capital investments and potential strategies for funding those investments. The CIP also satisfies various requirements of cities planning under Washington State's Growth Management Act.

Introduction

The City of Seattle owns and operates a variety of physical assets, ranging from community parks, roadways, bridges, office buildings, libraries, open space, fire stations, maintenance yards, facilities at Seattle Center, and more. The City must properly maintain these assets in order to ensure they are safe, lasting, and provide a welcoming and usable space to serve their intended purposes. The City's utility infrastructure is also included in the CIP, including electric, solid waste, water, drainage and wastewater utility assets. The City's capital infrastructure supports City operations, direct public services and programs, and in some cases, provides direct public benefits themselves.

Every year during the annual budget process, the City adopts a six-year CIP, which outlines anticipated investments over that timeframe. The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP totals \$8.1 billion over six years, with approximately \$1.26 billion of that amount designated for the 2025 budget year.

The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP is a compilation of all CIP adjustments made through the Year End Supplemental period for the 2024 Revised budget. This includes all legislative action that occurred in the following periods:

- 2024 Mid-year Supplemental budget adjustments,
- 2024 Year-end Supplemental budget adjustments,
- Stand-alone legislation and administrative adjustments made prior to the year-end Supplemental.

All allocation totals listed in this document are the sum of the project adjustments made in the periods listed above.

Capital Planning Policies

The City has historically based capital planning efforts on a set of criteria that help set priorities among potential capital programs. [Resolution 31203](#), adopted in June 2010, set out the following policies to guide the City's capital spending:

- preserve and maintain existing capital assets;
- support the goals of the City's plans;
- support economic development;
- consider external funding possibilities;
- consider revenue-generating possibilities;
- seek regional funding for regional projects;
- pursue cost-saving commitments; and,
- pursue conservation and sustainability investments.

Additional specific considerations include:

- compliance with regulatory requirements;
- coordination between departments and with other jurisdictions; and
- public safety and health.

Project Cost Estimate Review and Validation Process

The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP continues to incorporate the process that was developed in 2019 through the work of the capital department Directors group. This process reflects an improved approach to budgeting for large, discrete CIP projects in early stages of development and provides Council and the public with a better understanding of the risk and uncertainty associated with each of the projects.

The key elements of the process are:

- Discrete projects with an initial rough order of magnitude total project cost estimate over \$10 million will show a range of possible costs rather than an exact dollar estimate.
- Departments will appropriate and budget the estimated cost to reach 100% design, as shown on the CIP Project Page. They will also plan for, and communicate, the remaining construction costs by using a midrange “Financial Planning Estimate” for six-year financial planning purposes.
- At the 30% design milestone, the project will be baselined, and a total project cost and project schedule will be established. During the next budget cycle (or any subsequent Council action) the department will budget the full total project cost on the CIP Project Page.
- If the baseline total project cost estimate is under \$50 million the project will proceed through capital project delivery process according to historic practice.
- If the 30% baseline total project cost is over \$50 million, the department will initiate a third-party review of the baseline total project cost estimate. The department will bring the results of the third-party cost estimate review to the Project Delivery Executive Committee and/or the Directors’ Capital Committee to determine the next steps.

The Cost Estimate Review and Validation process will be modified according to the findings of the initial pilot projects being used to improve the concept.

Capital Improvement Program Funding

Like all large municipalities, Seattle relies on a variety of sources to pay for capital projects. These include locally generated revenues (taxes, fees, voter-approved levies, utility rates, and user fees), intergovernmental revenues (including state and federal grants), private funding (franchise utilities, philanthropy) and debt issuance. These traditional sources continue to provide the majority of funding for capital facility investments. The City’s level of capital investment is based on the mix and amount of financial resources available to the City.

Debt Financing

The City uses multiple forms of debt to finance large capital projects such as Limited Tax General Obligation Bonds (LTGO) also known as councilmanic bonds, Unlimited Tax General Obligation Bonds (UTGO) or voter-approved bonds, and revenue bonds. Unlike pay-as-you-go sources of funding, the issuance of debt requires revenues in future years to repay the principal and interest expenses. Councilmanic debt is a common financing tool used by the City, but those obligations must be repaid from the same set of limited resources including Real Estate Excise Tax (REET), commercial parking tax (CPT) and General Fund revenues. See the “City Bond Issuance and Debt Service” in the Introduction section of the 2025-2026 Adopted Budget for more information on debt financing.

The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP includes approximately \$65.3 million in 2025 LTGO bond issuances and related costs for CIP projects. The 2025 bonds will finance significant technology, city facility, and fire station projects.

Public Utility Funding

Both Seattle City Light and Seattle Public Utilities fund utility projects with revenues from utility rates. Each utility has adopted financial policies that determine what share of their capital investments are funded through cash, and what share from debt. These policies are designed to balance the portion of current investments that are paid by today's ratepayers, versus future ratepayers who will also benefit from long-term capital investments.

Federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) provides \$550 billion nationally in new spending on energy and power infrastructure, access to broadband internet, water infrastructure, and other program areas. The majority of this new funding is divided into Formula Grant Programs and Discretionary (Competitive) grants. This federal funding may be disbursed to cities either directly or through state or infrastructure authorities such as transit authorities. Federal agencies responsible for appropriations are continuing to develop program and funding guidelines and implementation of these programs will be staggered over several years. The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), passed in August 2022, includes \$369 billion in new spending to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, invest in clean energy technologies, and extend subsidies for the Affordable Care Act. The IRA is composed primarily of tax credits to private companies and individuals but includes some funding for granting programs as well.

The Mayor has established a process for review and tracking of grant applications for federal funding. This process involves an Executive Steering Committee composed of key department and Mayor's Office personnel that facilitate coordination, leverage opportunities between programs, provide central vision and direction to the City's BIL efforts, and keeps the Mayor's Office, City Council and other stakeholders updated on the City's progress.

Real Estate Excise Tax (REET)

Funding of the City's general government capital program is highly dependent on revenue from Real Estate Excise Tax (REET), which is an excise tax imposed on the sale of real property. REET is a relatively volatile revenue source that generally tracks closely to local economic activity.

Projected REET revenue for the 2025-2030 Adopted CIP period reflects the ongoing impact that elevated interest rates are having on the local real estate market. Actual REET revenue collections in 2023 were lower than forecasted by nearly \$1 million and forecasted REET for 2024 are projected to be \$6.6 million more than the 2024 Adopted CIP. For the 2025-2030 Adopted CIP, revenues are projected to be approximately \$22.0 million more than 2024-2029 Adopted CIP estimates over the 6-year window.

The City's REET policy (Resolution 31952) requires a \$10 million REET fund balance reserve to protect against unexpected downturn in REET revenue collection and forecast. The Adopted 2024-2029 CIP necessitated the use of the REET fund balance reserve due to significant revenue shortfalls. For the 2025-2030 Adopted CIP, the fund balance reserve is replenished due to the increase in projected revenues and updates to bond issuances that are backed by REET.

The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP uses REET to make investments in a wide variety of asset preservation projects across the City's capital departments, to fund ongoing debt service for large capital investments such as Fire Station improvements and Tribal Interpretative Center, and to provide partnership funding for the rehabilitation of Memorial Stadium at Seattle Center.

Seattle's Recent History – Major Voter-Approved Levies and Capital Projects

In addition to reliance upon general tax sources, Seattle undertook several major capital projects during the last two decades using voter-approved funds and councilmanic debt. Voter-approved capital projects include improvements to Seattle Center and construction of new or expanded community centers and parks, new or remodeled downtown and branch libraries, new or remodeled fire facilities, parks improvements, transportation infrastructure improvements and replacement of the Elliott Bay Seawall. The following is a list of recent property tax levies that are still actively funding projects:

- *The Move Seattle Transportation Levy:* The Move Seattle Levy, a nine-year \$930 million levy was approved by voters in 2015, and expired at the end of 2024. The Adopted budget appropriates \$20.5 million in 2025 from this levy, as investments funded by the levy wind down. The remaining levy proceeds will be used to support safe routes, congestion relief, and maintenance and repairs of the City's bridges and arterial roadways. A major financing strategy in the Move Seattle Levy was the dependence on partnerships—leveraging external resources such as state and federal grants to accomplish transportation projects such as the Madison Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) – RapidRide G Line. These will continue as long as levy funds remain to close out these projects.
- *The 2024 Transportation Levy:* As the Move Seattle Levy expires, voters replaced it with a \$1.55 billion 8-year levy, that begins in 2025. The 2025-2026 Adopted and Endorsed budget appropriates \$177 million in 2025 to continue many of the original investments from the Move Seattle Levy, as well as expand SDOT's focus in areas of safety, bridge maintenance and replacement planning, and other core infrastructure maintenance and repairs.
- *Seattle Park District:* The Seattle Park District was passed by voters in 2014, with a goal to provide long term, stable funding to support recreation programming, parks projects and the critical needs for investment in major and ongoing maintenance. 2025 will be the third year of Cycle 2 of the Park District, a six-year funding cycle. The Park District Levy will provide about \$46 million in 2025 for major maintenance and capital projects.
- *The 2019 Library Levy:* A seven-year, \$219 million levy to support, maintain and improve core Library services. Included as part of the levy were resources for the preservation and maintenance of library facilities. The City Librarian and the Library Board of Trustees prepare annual progress reports that show how levy proceeds have been used each year. The levy provides an average of \$3.1 million annually for major maintenance and asset preservation projects; including maintenance necessary for building components such as roofs, floors, finishes, HVAC and mechanical systems. The levy also includes funding for earthquake retrofits at three Carnegie branches.
- *The 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy:* A six-year, \$146 million levy to acquire, develop, or restore, existing or new, parks, recreation facilities, cultural facilities, green spaces, playfields, trails, community gardens, and shoreline areas. This levy expired at the end of 2014, and the Seattle Park District is now providing on-going funding to help address major maintenance needs,

as well as park development, at the Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR). As of 2024, the 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Levy Fund carried a balance of about \$98,000.

Funding Dynamics for Significant Future Capital Projects

Given general resource funding challenges, the City will continue to rely on a mix of general government resources and voter-approved funding packages to complete major capital projects and to secure needed funding for basic asset preservation. The City has identified several major priority areas for which significant capital investments will be needed. The following sections describe these priority areas at a high level.

Public Safety Facilities

Planning for the future of Seattle's public safety facilities is critical to maintaining the high level of service expected of the Seattle Fire Department (SFD) and Seattle Police Department (SPD). Both departments have a number of large capital facility needs, such as improvements to the Fire Station Headquarters and growing capital needs at police facilities. This CIP provides funding for a new Fire Station 31 in North Seattle, as well as continued support of police facility improvements.

Electrifying the City's Fleet

The Green Fleet Action Plan (GFAP) and Mayoral Executive Orders established the need for a capital program to plan for the future support of rapid electrification of the City's fleet and also support decarbonizing facilities to promote sustainability. The Drive Clean Seattle program originally funded four major projects to install vehicle charging infrastructure that supports transportation electrification to meet greenhouse gas emission reduction goals for the City. This CIP provides continues funding the next phase of prioritized projects, including the necessary power upgrades to key fleet locations at both Charles Street and Haller Lake facilities. The power upgrades are needed to support large-scale electric vehicle charging hubs and future facility decarbonization.

Transportation

The City's existing transportation network faces an extensive backlog of major maintenance. Current funding is insufficient to maintain the City's roads, bridges, signs, etc. In addition, through a series of long-term planning efforts the City has compiled the previously named "modal plans" into one Seattle Transportation Plan that identifies large potential investments in a transit network, bicycle facilities, freight projects and pedestrian-oriented infrastructure. The \$1.55 billion 2024 Transportation Levy, which was approved by voters in November of 2024, will help to support some of the required maintenance funding. This budget reflects the expiration of the Levy to Move Seattle, reprioritizing base department funding to invest in critical infrastructure and services with new levy funding. The Department is anticipating federal funding through the BIL and IRA bills that will help address some of these needs.

Waterfront

In 2025, the City will open to the public all the projects included in the redevelopment of Seattle's central waterfront. The projects include the opening of the Overlook Walk connecting Pike Place Market to the waterfront promenade, completion of Waterfront Park at Pier 58, and completing the Alaskan Way Main Corridor project which is a multimodal transportation project that includes pedestrian walkways, bicycle lanes, and roadway.

Funding

The 2025-2030 Adopted Capital Improvement Program includes the final bonding authority for the Alaskan Way Main Corridor Project (MC-TR-C072) and Overlook Walk and East-West Connection Project (MC-TR-C073). This amount is sized to ensure the completion of the project, and actual final bond issuances may be smaller as the project progresses based on need and potential addition of more State funding.

Protecting and Creating Opportunities for Workers

The City considers not only what capital projects to fund, but also how to deliver them and achieve broader goals for fairness, equity, and opportunity in the community. The Department of Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) leads several policy initiatives to ensure social responsibility and equity in the spending of City capital dollars.

Fair and equitable treatment of workers: FAS monitors and enforces fair and equitable treatment of workers in City construction contracts. In 2013, FAS increased its monitoring and enforcement of wage and labor conditions on City-contracted construction projects, including Office of Housing-financed projects. Funding was provided in 2019 to allow FAS to continue this program, including compliance monitoring for wage and labor violations for relevant projects. It also includes funding to support the Acceptable Worksite program, which trains, teaches and enforces anti-harassment and anti-bullying interventions on City-funded construction projects.

Reduce barriers to construction jobs: The City's spending on major capital investments can help drive employment within the local economy. Construction jobs and related positions offer living-wage jobs that can support individuals and families. The City's Priority Hire program provides training and opportunities for City residents to work on City-funded capital projects. For major capital projects, City contractors are bound by the City's Community Workforce Agreement, which is intended to increase employment for women, people of color and those living in economically distressed areas of the City through establishment of aspirational and mandatory labor hours for the respective groups. In 2017, the Priority Hire program was expanded to include applications from public-private partnership projects with significant City investment such as the Climate Pledge Arena project and the Ocean Pavilion (Seattle Aquarium Expansion) project.

Women and Minority Owned Business (WMBE): The City continues to successfully address contracting equity for minority- and women-owned businesses. In 2011, FAS implemented a Citywide requirement on all public work bids and contracts above \$300,000 called the "Public Works WMBE Inclusion Plan" that continues to effectively encourage and enforce commitments by contractors to use WMBE firms. In 2014, FAS launched prompt pay initiatives, which WMBE firms report as very significant and meaningful for their business cash flow. The objective is to continue to provide WMBE firms with business and technical guidance that helps them compete more successfully for public projects, including better equipping them to participate on Priority Hire projects. In 2024, FAS began efforts to modernize the city-wide procurement process and implement a centralized electronic software solution. This e-procurement software solution aims to improve consistency and provide greater accessibility for a wider swath of vendors to submit bids to the City, increasing opportunities for contract equity.

2025-2030 Adopted Capital Improvement Program Summary

The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP totals \$8.1 billion for six years and includes approximately 479 projects¹. Approximately \$5.8 billion of the six-year total (71.4%) are utility projects managed by Seattle City Light (SCL) and Seattle Public Utilities (SPU), and mostly funded by utility rates. The Seattle Department of Transportation's CIP totals \$1.1 billion (14.0%) over the six-year period, while the remaining departments (Parks and Recreation, Finance and Administrative Services, Seattle Center, Seattle Public Library, and Seattle Information Technology Department) account for approximately \$1.2 billion (14.6%) of the six-year CIP.

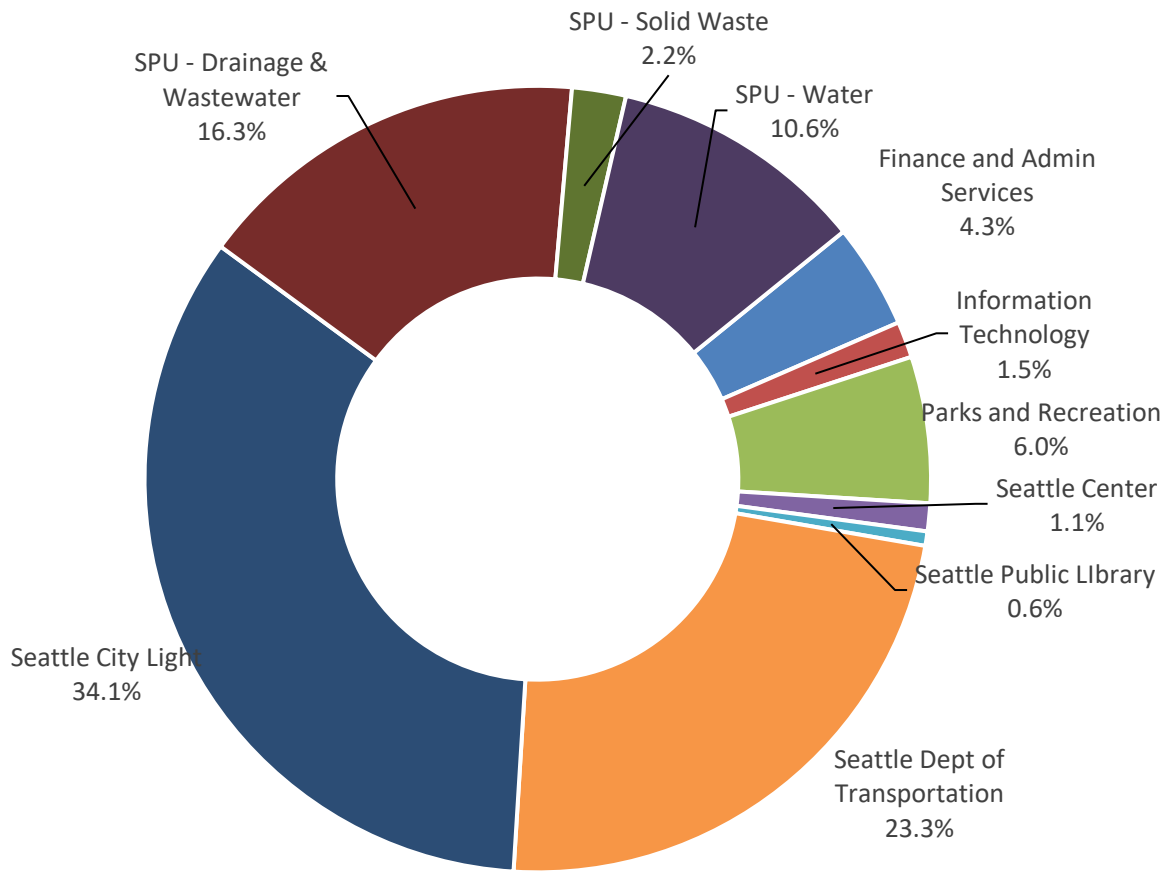
2025-2030 Adopted CIP by Department (000s)

Department	2024 Adopted	2025 Adopted CIP	2026-2030 Adopted CIP	2025-2030 Adopted CIP
Finance and Admin Services	60,036	61,071	156,496	217,566
Information Technology	24,493	21,076	81,743	102,819
Parks and Recreation	93,451	85,176	642,916	728,092
Seattle Center	5,073	16,212	101,222	117,434
Seattle Public Library	5,937	8,375	10,032	18,407
Seattle Dept of Transportation	384,308	329,452	1,805,888	2,135,340
Subtotal	573,298	521,362	2,798,297	3,319,658
City-owned Utilities				
Seattle City Light	446,028	482,746	2,599,701	3,082,447
SPU - Drainage & Wastewater	257,486	231,072	1,307,787	1,538,859
SPU - Solid Waste	31,072	31,380	86,688	118,069
SPU - Water	139,227	149,537	880,346	1,029,883
Subtotal	873,813	894,734	4,874,523	5,769,257
City Total	1,447,111	1,416,096	7,672,819	9,088,915

Note: 2024 Adopted totals are based on the 2024-2029 Adopted CIP. Not all funds above are appropriated; see the 2024 Adopted Budget for a list of capital appropriations by department.

¹ The project total includes all projects with a CIP Project Page in the 2025-2030 Adopted CIP.

2025 Adopted CIP by Department - \$1,416 million



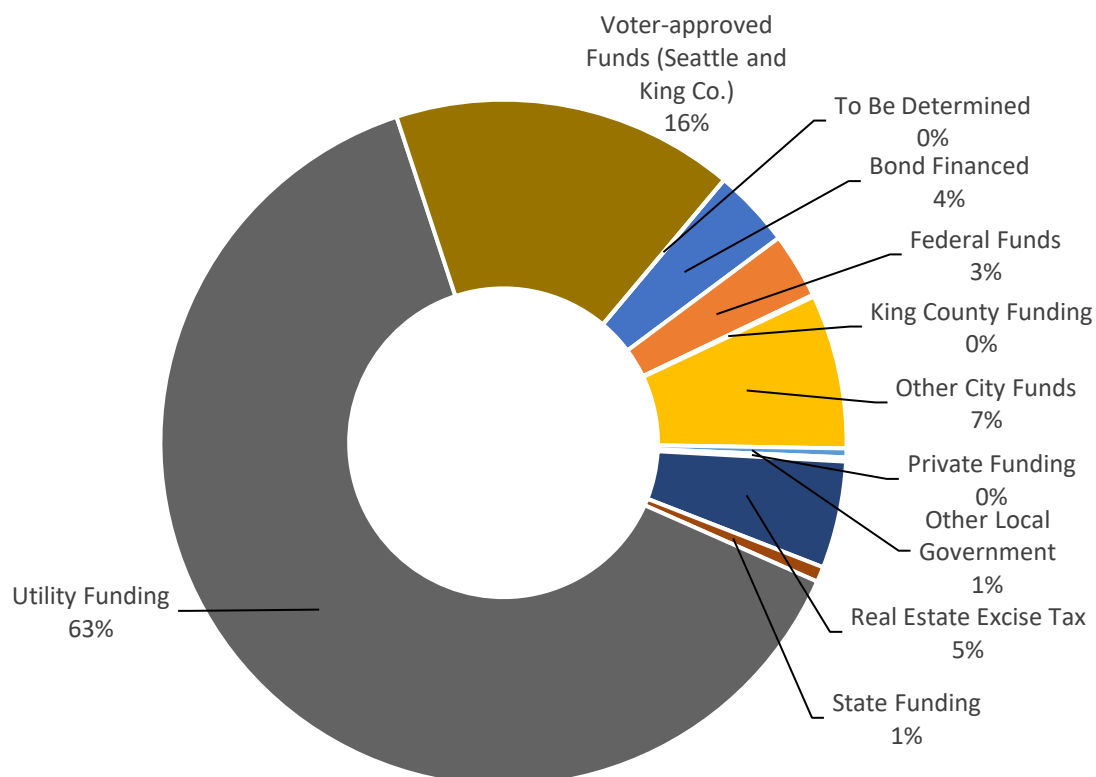
Overview

The table below identifies funding sources for the 2025-2030 Adopted CIP by Revenue Source Group

Revenue Source Group	2024 Adopted	2025 Adopted	2026-2030 Adopted CIP	2025-2030 Adopted CIP
Bond Financed	90,297	52,438	246,659	299,097
Federal Funds	69,708	43,741	62,550	106,291
King County Funding	4,719	1,300	6,500	7,800
Other City Funds	75,793	102,955	380,770	483,725
Other Local Government	21,410	5,935	20,505	26,440
Private Funding	22,707	2,741	18,276	21,017
Real Estate Excise Tax	60,841	71,309	441,991	513,299
State Funding	21,038	10,223	56,999	67,222
Utility Funding	903,175	896,634	4,874,862	5,771,496
Voter-approved Funds (Seattle and King Co.)	177,423	228,820	1,125,706	1,354,526
To Be Determined	-	-	438,000	438,000
Grand Total	1,447,111	1,416,096	7,672,818	9,088,914

Note: 2025 Adopted totals are based on the 2024-2029 Adopted CIP.

2025-2030 Adopted CIP Revenues (000s)



Adopted CIP by Revenue Source - \$1,416 million

2025-2030 Adopted Capital Improvement Program

Asset Preservation

The four general government departments in the City's CIP (Finance and Administrative Services, Seattle Public Library, Seattle Parks and Recreation, and Seattle Center) are responsible for approximately 6.9 million square feet of building space, 2.6 million square feet of parking space, and 240 million square feet of grounds (primarily green space) and multiple work yards. These assets require significant investments in preservation and rehabilitation each CIP period.

For 2025, the City will spend a total of \$21.2 million from the two Real Estate Excise Tax Funds and an additional \$78.1 million from various other resources on asset preservation and improvements for general government infrastructure in parks, libraries, civic buildings, and on the Seattle Center campus. With the expiration of the Levy to Move Seattle at the end of 2024 and the passage of the new 2024 Transportation Levy, the Department of Transportation will spend \$16.6 million of REET resources, \$154 million of new Transportation Levy funds, and \$158.9 million of other transportation resources on infrastructure asset preservation and improvements during the 2025 budget period.

Neighborhood Projects

As the City adapts to the impacts of unprecedented growth, and plans for yet further development, a focus on the livability of neighborhoods is essential. The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP reflects this focus, and as highlighted below, supports neighborhood-scale capital investments in several different ways.

Neighborhood Matching Fund

The 2025-2030 Adopted CIP maintains funding to [Neighborhood Matching Fund](#) (NMF) grant programs. Several CIP projects, particularly in Seattle Parks and Recreation, include funding from NMF.

The City created the NMF in 1988 to provide funding to Seattle neighborhood groups and organizations for a broad array of neighborhood-initiated improvement, organizing, or planning projects. Many of these projects also support citywide initiatives such as Race and Social Justice, Youth Violence Prevention, Environment and Sustainability, and Neighborhood Planning. Awards range from a few thousand dollars (Small Sparks projects are up to \$5,000, and the Community Partnership Fund projects range from \$5,001 to \$50,000), and NMF funds can cover all phases of a capital project except property acquisition. The NMF program requires a 1:2 match for capital projects, which means all awards leverage other private and public contributions. Matches consist of volunteer labor, donated materials, professional services, or money. The Department of Neighborhoods administers the granting process.

Art and Design Funding for City Capital Projects - 1% for Art Program

The [1% for Art program](#), established by Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 20.32, requires the City deposit 1% of eligible CIP project budgets in the Municipal Arts Fund for the commission, purchase, and installation of artworks throughout Seattle. The Office of Arts and Culture (ARTS) manages the 1% for Art program and the Municipal Arts Fund.

Municipal Art Fund revenues from the 1% for Art program can fluctuate significantly from year-to-year depending on changes in City capital investments. In 2025, the Municipal Art Fund is estimated to receive approximately \$2.4 million from capital departments for the 1% for Art program, as described below. Actual receipts may vary because of project timing, prior year credits, actual CIP expenditures, and City Council changes to the CIP.

1% for Art Revenues (Estimated)	2025 Adopted
City Light	\$284,811
Seattle Public Utilities	\$1,366,879
Seattle Center	\$14,000
Parks & Recreation	\$190,000
Transportation	\$561,600
Total	\$2,417,290

Design Commission

Established in 1968, the [Seattle Design Commission](#) advises the Mayor, the City Council and appropriate City departments on design and environmental aspects of the City's CIP. Commission members are appointed by the Mayor for a renewable two-year term. Membership is comprised of two licensed architects, one professional fine artist, one appointee from the Get Engaged program, one lay member, and at least one and no more than two from each of the following categories, for a maximum total of five: professional urban planner, professional environmental or urban designer, landscape architect, and licensed professional engineer. The Design Commission is fully funded with funds from the Cumulative Reserve Fund.

Projects eligible for review include any on-or above-grade structure, including buildings and additions to buildings, bridges, park developments, street furniture, and all similar installations. The Commission reviews below-grade structures such as tunnels, arcades and underground passageways that are regularly visible to the public. Projects reviewed by the Commission must be financed in-whole or in-part with City funds, be on land belonging to the City, or be subject to approval by the City. Commission involvement in capital improvement projects begins as early in the planning process as possible, starting with participation in the consultant selection process and continuing through the many stages of project development. This includes project reviews at the scope briefing or pre-design stage, conceptual design, schematic design, design development, and sometimes construction documents stages.

Background of Capital Improvement Program Policy Drivers

As described above, City investments in capital projects are guided by a set of key policies reflecting the City's values and priorities. These policies shape how the City takes care of buildings and infrastructure, invests in capital projects in areas that have accepted growth as envisioned in the City's Comprehensive Plan, preserves the City's historic buildings, supports sustainable building practices, and ensures that all members of the community have access to the economic opportunities capital projects create. The following section details some of these key policies.

Sustainable Building Policy

In February 2000, the City Council adopted a Sustainable Building Policy for the City of Seattle ([Resolution 30121](#)) which articulated the City's commitment to environmental, economic and social stewardship and set the expectation that new municipal facilities meet established green building standards. Specifically, it called for all new construction and major remodel projects over 5,000 square

feet to achieve a LEED Silver rating. When adopted, this policy was the first of its kind in the nation and represented a groundbreaking approach to demonstrating City leadership and transforming the marketplace.

Since 2000, the green building community has experienced exceptional growth in expertise and capacity. Recognizing this change, in 2011 the City passed an updated Sustainable Building Policy ([Resolution 31326](#)). The update represents a comprehensive approach that reflects advances in the green building industry, aligns the policy with the City's increased attention to climate change, addresses a greater range of project types, and ensures that Seattle continues to provide leadership that advances sustainable development in both the public and private sectors. The updated policies include the following requirements.

- For new construction, additions, and major renovation projects 5,000 square feet or greater:
 - The minimum required green building rating is LEED Gold.
 - There are minimum requirements for energy and water efficiency, construction waste reductions, and bicycle amenities.
- For tenant improvement projects 5,000 square feet or greater, where the scope includes mechanical, electrical, and plumbing:
 - The minimum required green building rating is LEED Gold.
 - There are minimum requirements for water efficiency and construction waste reductions.
- Completion of a Capital Green checklist is required for projects smaller than 5,000 square feet or those otherwise not eligible for a LEED rating.
- City departments are encouraged to test new approaches and standards, such as the Living Building Challenge and the Sustainable Sites Initiative.
- Annual reporting of performance under the policy is required by March 31st of each year.

Additionally, the resolution directs City departments to evaluate and improve existing standards and processes that relate to tenant improvements, leasing, and site management.

City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is a 20-year vision and roadmap for Seattle's future. The plan guides City decisions on where to focus development for new jobs and households, how to improve our transportation system, and where to make capital investments such as utilities, sidewalks, and libraries. The Plan is the framework for most of Seattle's big-picture decisions on how to grow. The latest update of the City's Comprehensive Plan "[Seattle 2035](#)" was passed by the City Council in October 2016. The City began the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan in 2021 and the Mayor's draft plan was released in 2024.

The Comprehensive Plan helped inform the development of the 2025-2030 Adopted CIP as departments have taken special note of capital projects in neighborhoods targeted for substantial growth in the future or that have received substantial growth in the last few years. This effort is intended to make sure areas receiving growth have the appropriate physical infrastructure to accommodate such growth, while balancing the major maintenance of existing facilities, such as power distribution systems, pipes, community centers, swimming pools, libraries, and streets that are located throughout the City, not just in targeted growth areas.

Federal and State Regulatory Requirements

The City's utilities have several facility projects in their Capital Improvement Programs to meet federal and state regulatory requirements. The City of Seattle must abide by the City's two National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, one for storm water and one for combined sewer system. The City is required, for example, to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in the combined sewer/storm water system over the next several years to control the number of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) into receiving bodies of water, including Lake Washington and Puget Sound. This is per a CSO Consent Decree with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Department of Ecology (DOE), which outlines how the City will become compliant with EPA and DOE regulatory requirements regarding sewage releases from the city conveyance system.

City Light operates its hydroelectric dams and powerhouses under licenses from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Licenses include Settlement Agreements that require City Light to perform protection, mitigation and enhancement activities. City Light is currently completing mitigation under the current Skagit license (expires in 2025) and is well under way with Boundary License implementation.

City Light also complies with a wide range of permitting requirements and environmental regulations. Examples include the mitigation of soil contamination at former substations, and ongoing environmental mitigation in the Endangered Species Act project. Street-use permits and regulations are a major part of City Light projects that expand and repair the electric distribution system.

Endangered Species Compliance

The Cedar River Watershed Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is a 50-year, ecosystem-based plan that was prepared to address the declining populations of salmon, steelhead and other species of fish and wildlife in the Cedar River basin. The HCP was prepared under the Endangered Species Act and is designed both to provide certainty for the City of Seattle's drinking water supply and to protect and restore habitats of 83 species of fish and wildlife that may be affected by the City of Seattle's water supply and hydroelectric operations on the Cedar River. Seattle Public Utilities is continuing to implement its commitments under the HCP, which include downstream habitat protection and restoration, upland forest restoration, logging road decommissioning, and ongoing monitoring. City Light is also acquiring salmon habitat in the Green/Duwamish, Skagit, and Snohomish watersheds.

Americans with Disabilities Act

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) conducted an audit of select City of Seattle facilities, practices and procedures, in order to assess City compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and reported its findings to the City. While the City is largely in compliance, there are some elements within facilities that the DOJ has requested that the City update or alter to improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities. The City is working on an update to its ADA Transition Plan that will guide the development of a long-term strategy that manages the City's most critical public-facing ADA deficiencies first and maximizes accessibility to the greatest extent possible.

FAS coordinates and oversees implementation of ADA improvements in certain City facilities, determines and reports compliance to DOJ, and reviews and modifies as needed the facilities design and construction process with regard to the ADA. The City is in the process of moving towards a new approach to ADA improvements in which these improvements are included in ongoing maintenance and other remodeling work.

In order to provide additional proactive monitoring of compliance with ADA standards for new capital projects, the City added staffing dedicated to monitoring ADA compliance of new projects. All capital departments have a specific ADA coordinator and large departments such as Seattle Parks and Recreation, SDOT, and FAS have dedicated ADA staffing.

Historic Preservation

Seattle's commitment to historic preservation began with citizen efforts in the 1960s to block the demolition of two of Seattle's oldest neighborhoods—Pike Place Market and Pioneer Square. Both neighborhoods were threatened with proposals that would have irreversibly changed the character of the districts. The Pike Place Market was faced with an Urban Renewal Plan that would have demolished it, while Pioneer Square was threatened with a major roadway project. In 1970, the City Council created the Pioneer Square Preservation District, Seattle's first historic district. Then, in 1971, voters approved an initiative to create the Pike Place Market Historical District. In 1973, the City Council adopted a Landmarks Preservation Ordinance to safeguard properties of historic and architectural significance throughout the City. Today, Seattle's Historic Preservation Program encompasses eight historic districts located across the City and more than 400 designated landmarks. The City currently owns or maintains many of those landmarks, including libraries, park buildings, and fire stations.