

May 2026

Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission 2025 Election Report



Prepared by

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About the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission

The Commission is a seven-member, citizen body that interprets, administers and enforces the Seattle Elections Code, Ethics Code, Lobbying Code, and Whistleblower Protection Code. Three members are appointed by the Mayor, three are appointed by the City Council and the seventh is appointed by the other six. All seven are confirmed by the City Council. The term of office for a commissioner is three years.

2025 Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission Members

Zack Pekelis , Chair

Jonathan Schirmer, Vice Chair

Bobby Forch

Vivian Vassall

Kristin Hawes

(one vacancy)

Kai Smith

Commission Staff

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Executive Director

Chrissy Courtney

Lobbying Law, Education and Compliance

Marc Mayo (ret'd 1/26)

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Map of Seattle City Council Districts: <https://data-seattlecitygis.opendata.arcgis.com/>

Search for: City Council Districts

Biennial Report of Election Financing

In the last 10 years, Seattle's elections have undergone nothing short of a revolution. In 2015, money dominated elections. Those who had more of it won, and those without it lost. Incumbents had little to do other than avoid scandal to be assured reelection. Business and labor-backed candidates ran the City.

Today, after the passage—and now the renewal—of the Democracy Voucher Program, everything about that world has changed. Our officeholders have gotten younger, and their hold on office has grown tenuous. Only one incumbent officeholder in 2025 has twice won election to a full term.

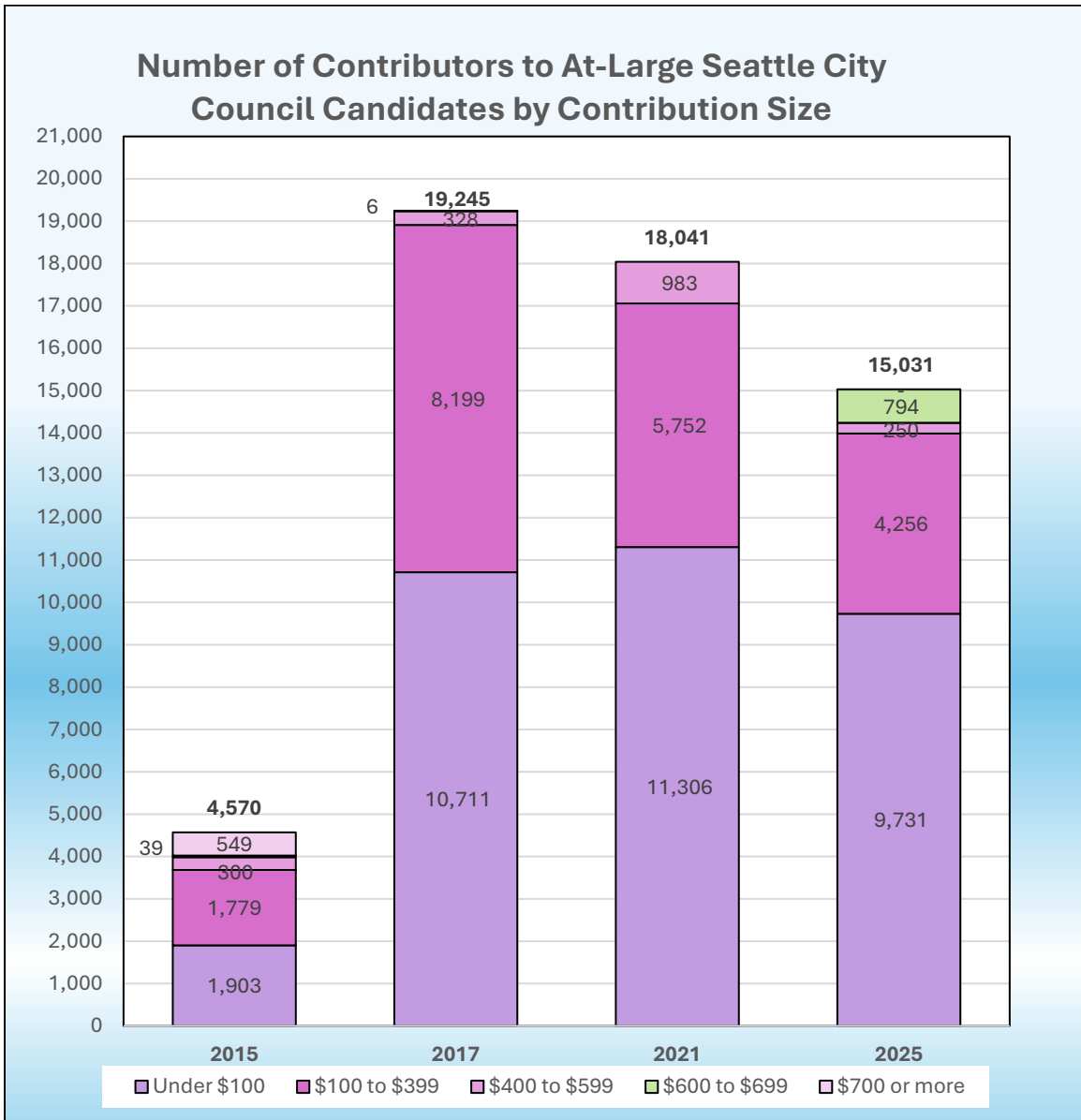
Sixty percent of Seattleites voted for the Democracy Voucher Program's renewal, and its promise of hotly contested elections where the outcome is never certain.

Summary of 2025 Contributions to candidates who appeared on the ballot

Candidates	Total Contributions	Candidate	Misc	Individuals & Groups			
				Voucher Proceeds	Monetary	No.	Average
Mayor							
Ry Armstrong	\$ 360,824	\$ 110	\$ 602	\$ 342,625	\$ 17,487	5,193	\$ 69.35
Clinton Bliss	\$ 2,739	\$ 2,739	\$ -	n/a	\$ -	-	\$ -
Bruce Harrell (I)	\$ 1,163,669	\$ 19,110	\$ 250	\$ 486,975	\$ 657,334	9,010	\$ 127.00
Joe Mallahan	\$ 162,888	\$ 57,487	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 105,401	298	\$ 353.69
Joe Molloy	\$ 5,145	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,045	76	\$ 66.38
Thaddeus Whelan	\$ 6,934	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 6,934	41	\$ 169.12
Isaiah Willoughby	\$ 2,684	\$ 2,684	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	\$ -
Katie Wilson (E)	\$ 1,024,960	\$ -	\$ 58	\$ 795,925	\$ 228,977	12,194	\$ 84.05
All Mayor	\$ 2,729,843	\$ 82,230	\$910	\$ 1,625,525	\$ 1,021,178	26,812	\$ 98.71
City Attorney							
Ann Davison (I)	\$ 370,311	\$ 433	\$ -	\$ 263,725	\$ 106,153	4,889	\$ 75.66
Erika Evans (E)	\$ 449,995	\$ 136	\$ -	\$ 339,075	\$ 110,784	5,964	\$ 75.43
Rory O' Sullivan	\$ 219,675	\$ -	\$ 12	\$ 197,650	\$ 22,013	4,202	\$ 52.28
Nathan Rouse	\$ 178,681	\$ 370	\$ -	\$ 145,325	\$ 32,986	2,935	\$ 60.75
All City Attorney	\$ 1,218,662	\$ 939	\$ 12	\$ 945,775	\$ 271,936	17,990	\$ 67.69
City Council Position 2							
Jeanie Chunn	\$ 104,993	\$ 45	\$ 4	\$ 91,525	\$ 13,419	1,295	\$ 81.04
Adonis Ducksworth	\$ 191,866	\$ 660	\$ 250	\$ 156,425	\$ 34,531	2,863	\$ 66.70
Jamie Fackler	\$ 88,782	\$ 910	\$ 2	\$ 72,700	\$ 15,170	1,235	\$ 71.15
Eddie Lin (E)	\$ 222,832	\$ 143	\$ -	\$ 193,750	\$ 28,939	4,035	\$ 55.19
All City Council Pos. 2	\$ 608,473	\$ 1,758	\$ 256	\$ 514,400	\$ 92,059	9,428	\$ 64.33
City Council Position 8							
Cooper Hall	\$ 3,491	\$ 3,491	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	-	\$ -
Jesse A. James	\$ 1,623	\$ 203	\$ -	n/a	\$ 1,420	7	\$ 202.86
Alexis Mercedes Rinck (I)(E)	\$ 313,712	\$ 350	\$ -	\$ 266,250	\$ 47,112	6,268	\$ 49.99
Ray A. Rogers	\$ 4,860	\$ -	\$ -	n/a	\$ 4,860	43	\$ 113.02
Rachael Savage	\$ 19,494	\$ -	\$ -	n/a	\$ 19,494	235	\$ 82.95
All City Council Pos. 8	\$ 343,180	\$ 4,044	\$ -	\$ 266,250	\$ 72,886	6,553	\$ 51.75
City Council Position 9							
Dionne Foster (E)	\$ 581,766	\$ 350	\$ -	\$ 356,025	\$ 225,391	6,497	\$ 89.49
Mia Jacobson	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	n/a	\$ -	-	\$ -
Connor Nash	\$ 129	\$ 129	\$ -	n/a	\$ -	-	\$ -
Sara Nelson (I)	\$ 620,969	\$ 1,464	\$ 140	n/a	\$ 619,365	1,975	\$ 313.60
All City Council Pos. 9	\$ 1,202,864	\$ 1,943	\$ 140	\$ 356,025	\$ 844,756	8,472	\$ 141.74
All City Council At-large	\$ 1,546,044	\$ 5,987	\$ 140	\$ 622,275	\$ 917,642	15,025	\$ 102.49
Total All Races	\$ 6,103,022	\$ 90,914	\$ 408	\$ 3,707,975	\$ 2,302,815	\$ 69,255	\$ 86.79

City Council At-Large

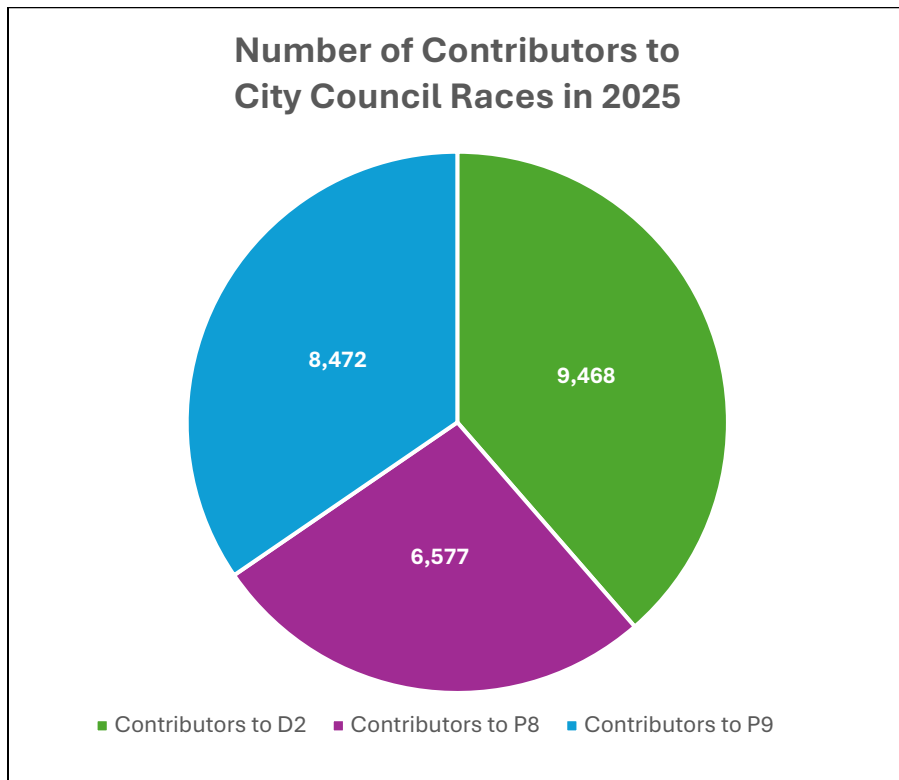
Number of Contributors by Contribution Size



In 2025 there was a 17% decrease in the number of contributors to citywide Council campaigns compared to 2021. Of the four candidates on the ballot in November, only two qualified for the DVP. Both at-large City Council races in 2025 had an incumbent running for re-election. The prior two cycles each included an open seat which may account for the higher numbers of contributors in those years.

City Council At-Large and Special Election

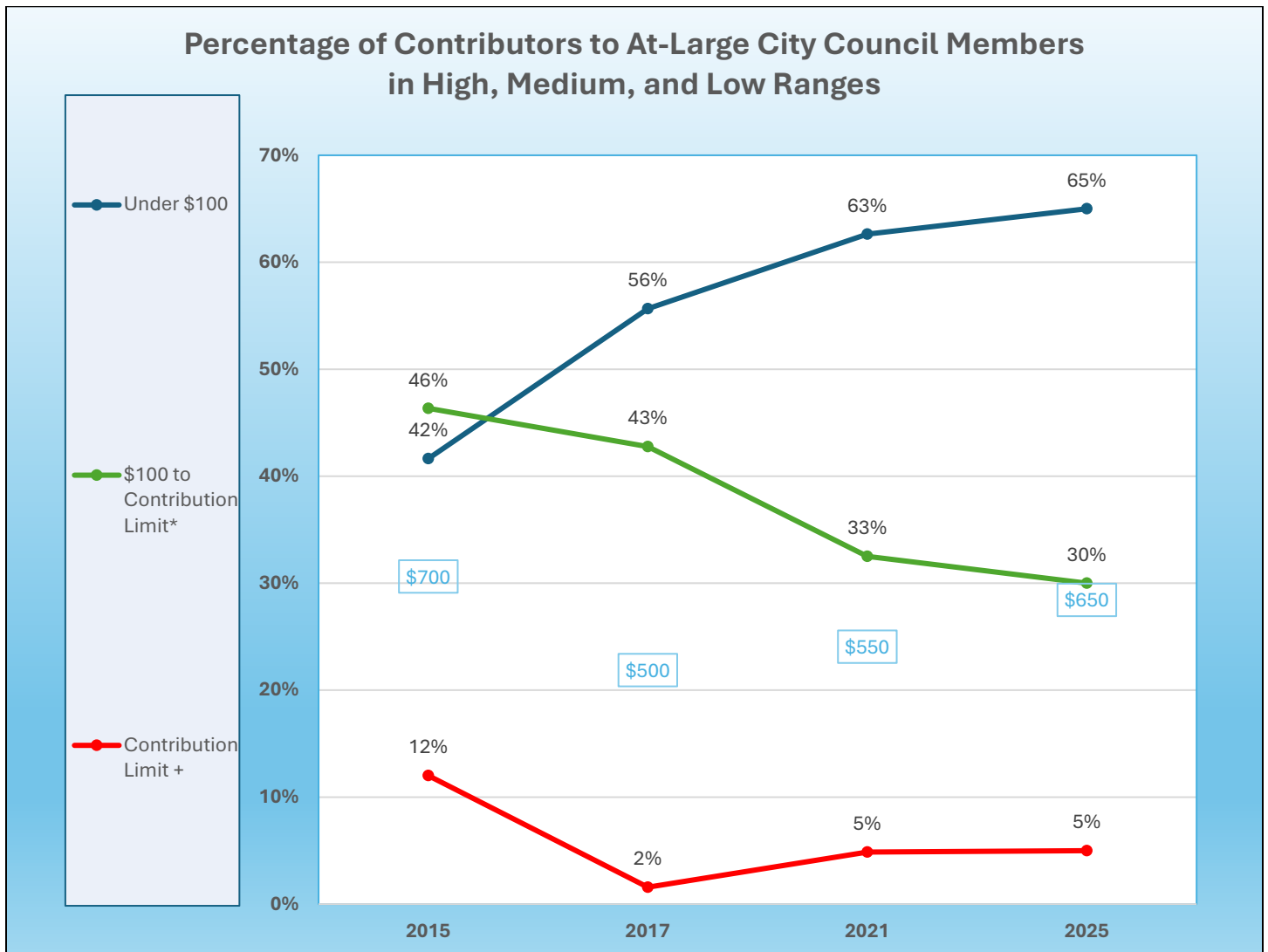
Number of Contributors



There was a special election in Seattle’s District 2. The number of contributors to D2 candidates more than doubled (from 4,697 to 9,438) compared to the prior D2 election in 2023. Four candidates ran for the open seat and all four qualified for Democracy Voucher Program funds.

City Council At-Large

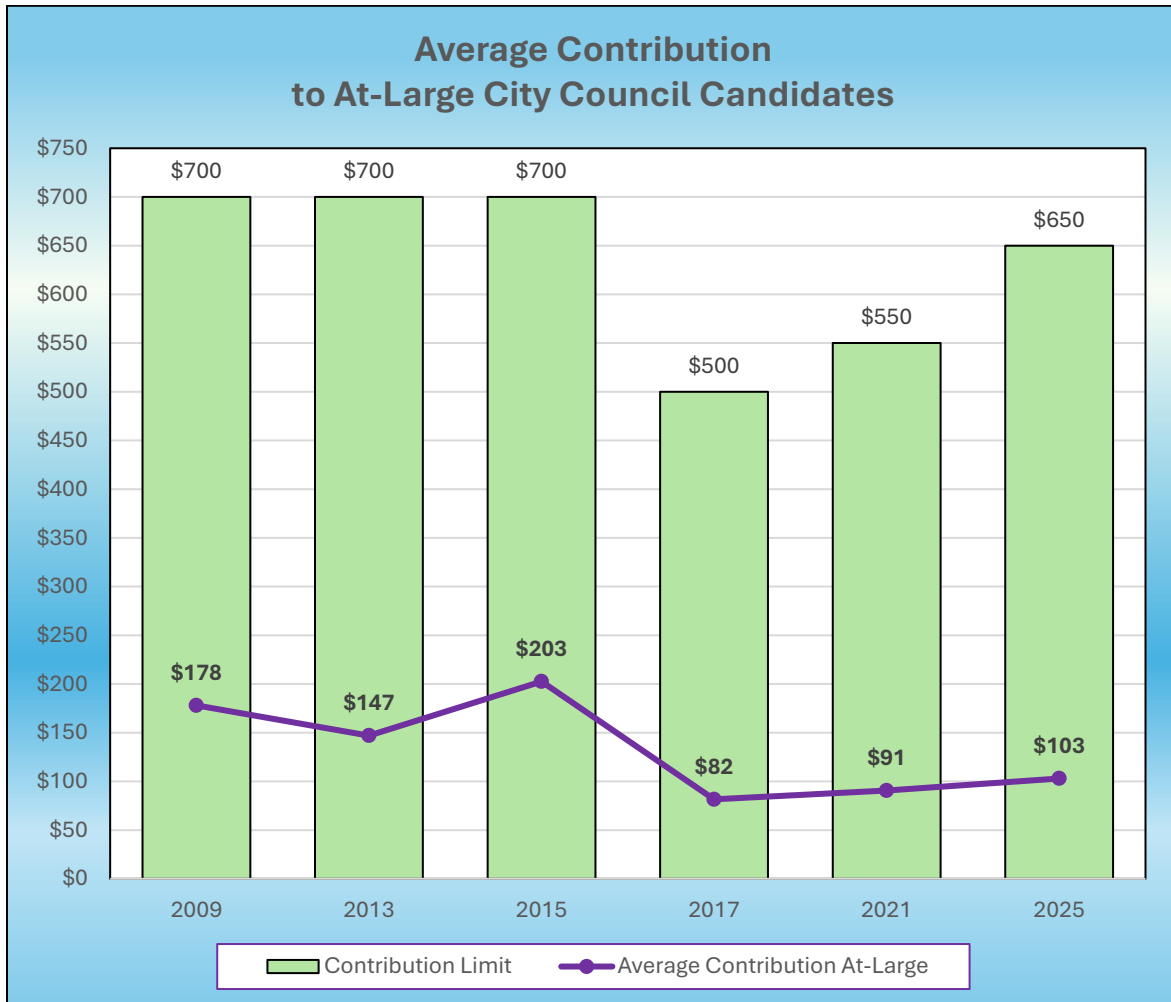
Percentage of Contributors to At-Large City Council Members



The percentage of low-dollar contributors continues to increase. In 2015, prior to the DVP program, just under 42% of contributors (1,903 out of 4,570) gave under \$100 to a candidate for an at-large City Council position. In 2025, almost 65% of contributors to at-large City Council candidates (9,731 out of 15,031) contributed less than \$100.

City Council At-Large

Average Contribution

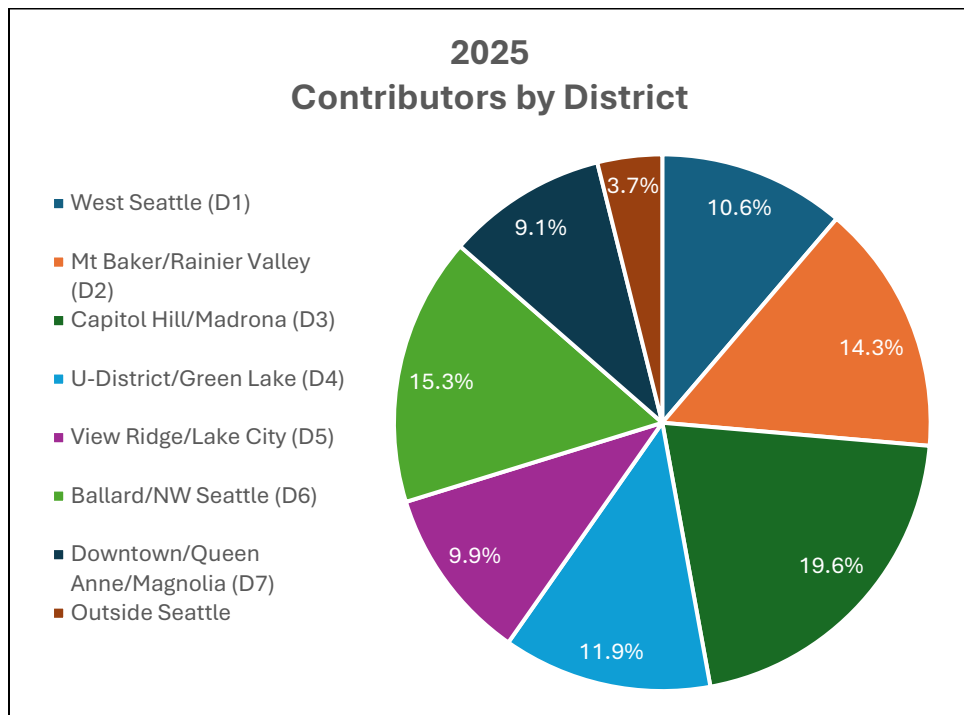
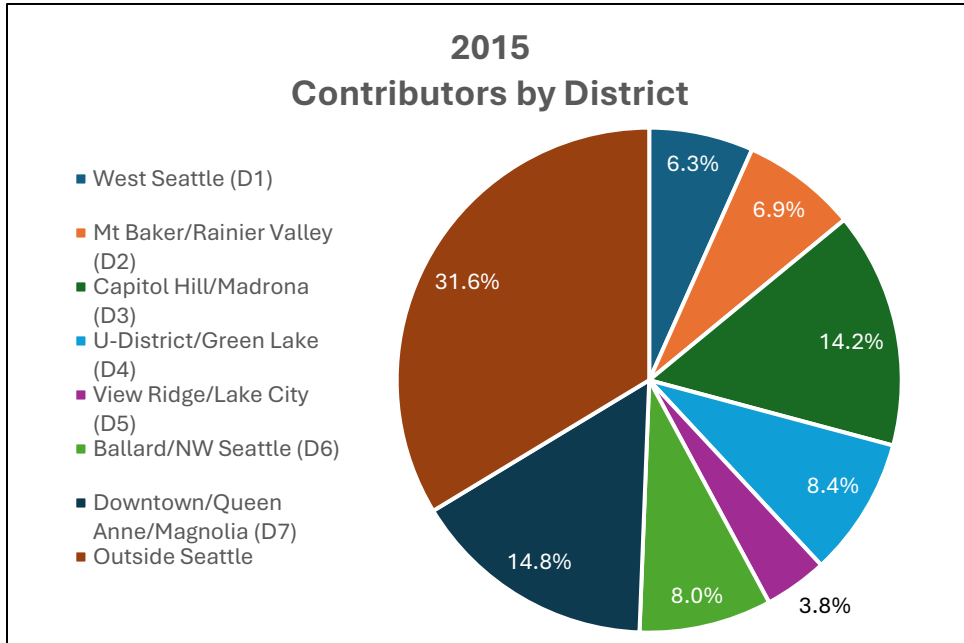


Since the implementation of the DVP in 2017 when the contribution limit dropped 29% and the average contribution dropped 60% for at-large City Council candidates, we've seen a slow but steady rise in both contribution limits and the average contribution amount. The average contribution is rising at a slightly slower rate than the contribution limit (26% to 30%). The 2025 election was the first one since 2017 that had no open at-large City Council seats.

City Council At-Large

Contributions and Contributors by District

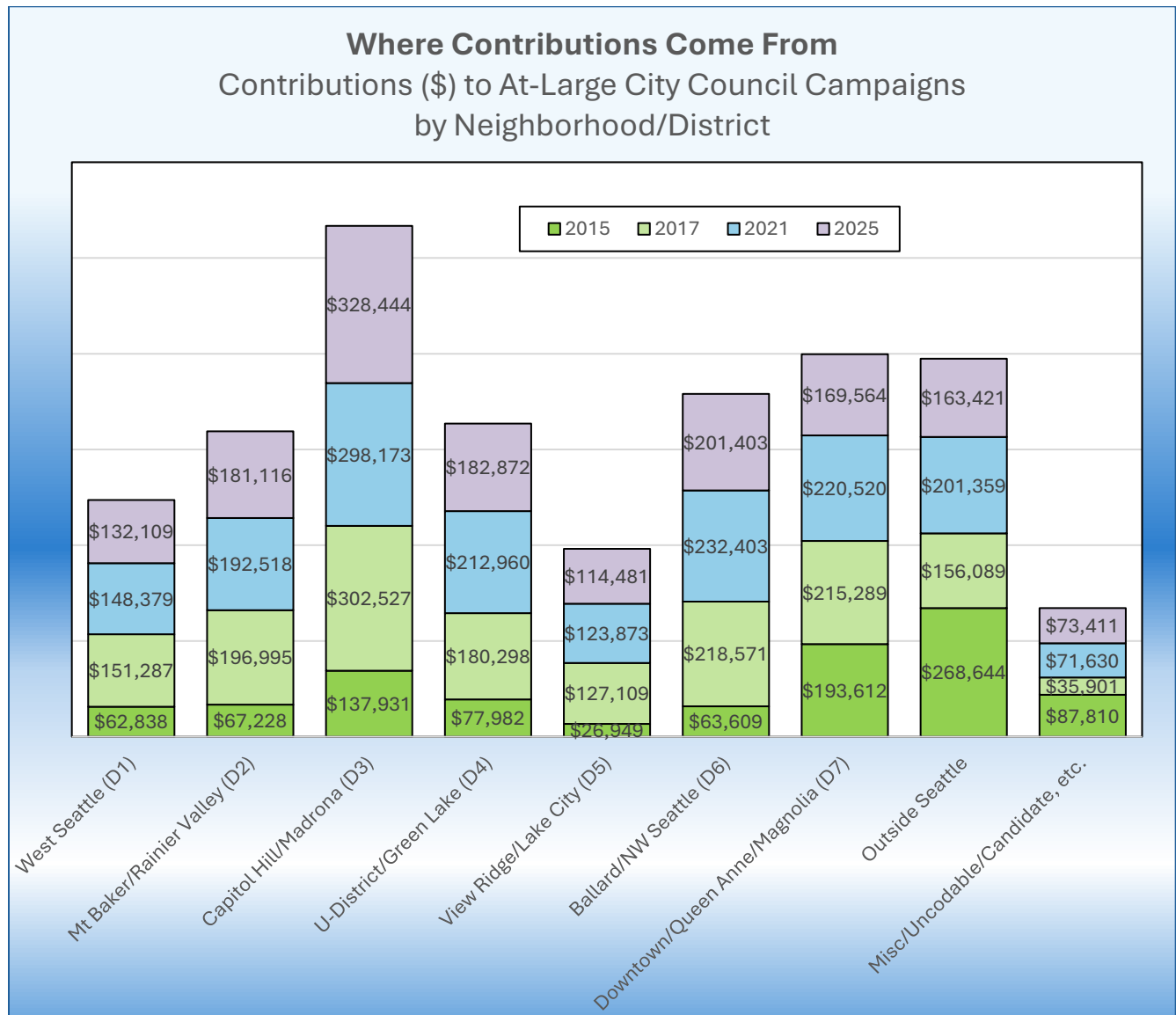
In 2015, prior to the implementation of the DVP, contributors to at-large City Council candidates came from three areas: Outside of Seattle (32%), Downtown Seattle, Queen Anne and Magnolia (15%) Capitol Hill, Madrona (14%). Contributors from the remaining districts accounted for between 4% and 8%. In 2025, less than 4% of contributors came from outside of Seattle. Each district accounted for at least 9% of contributors to at-large City Council races.



The charts above do not include miscellaneous contributions or contributions with no identifiable address.

City Council At-Large

Contributions and Contributors by District: Contributions - Where the Money Comes From

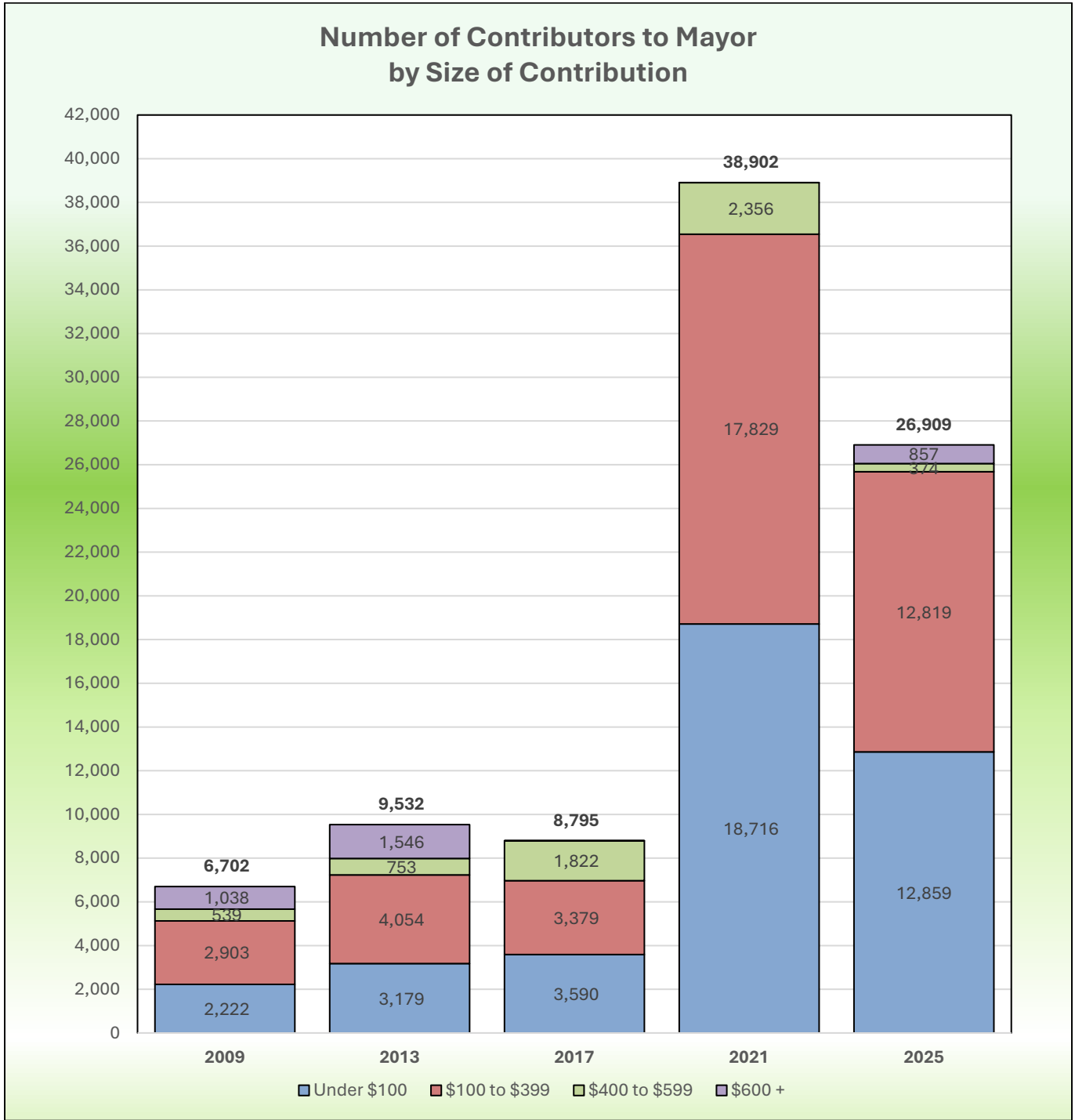


Prior to the implementation of the DVP in 2017, the top three areas that a council candidate was most likely to receive money from were: 1. Outside of Seattle, 2. What is now D7 (Downtown, Queen Anne, Magnolia) and 3. What is now D3 (Capitol Hill, Madrona). In 2025, “Outside of Seattle” came in 5th place just ahead of D1 (West Seattle) and D5 (North Seattle).

Before the DVP, five of the seven districts contributed less than \$80,000 to at-large City Council candidates. Since the implementation of the DVP, all districts regularly contribute more than \$100,000 and most contribute more than \$150,000. Contributions from outside Seattle accounted for almost \$300,000 of at-large Council contributions in 2015. Since the implementation of the DVP, contributions from outside Seattle have fallen to between \$150,000 and \$200,000. As a percentage of total contributions, they’ve fallen from 27% in 2015 to 11% in 2025.

The Mayor's Race

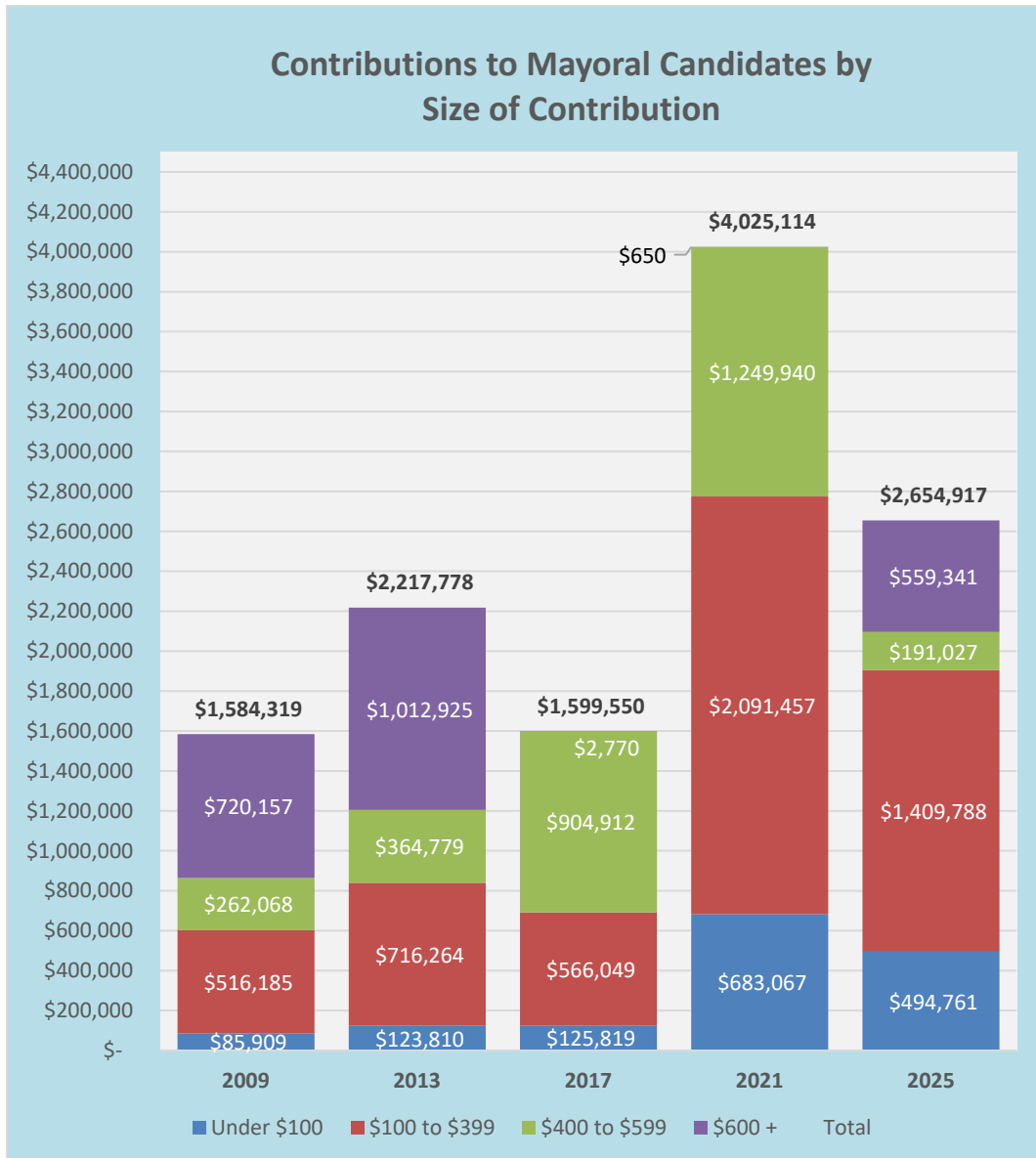
Number of Contributors by Size



While the total number of contributors to mayoral candidates went down in 2025, the focus on contributions from small donors (under \$400) inched higher from 94% in 2021 to 95% in 2025.

The Mayor's Race

Amount of Contributions by Size

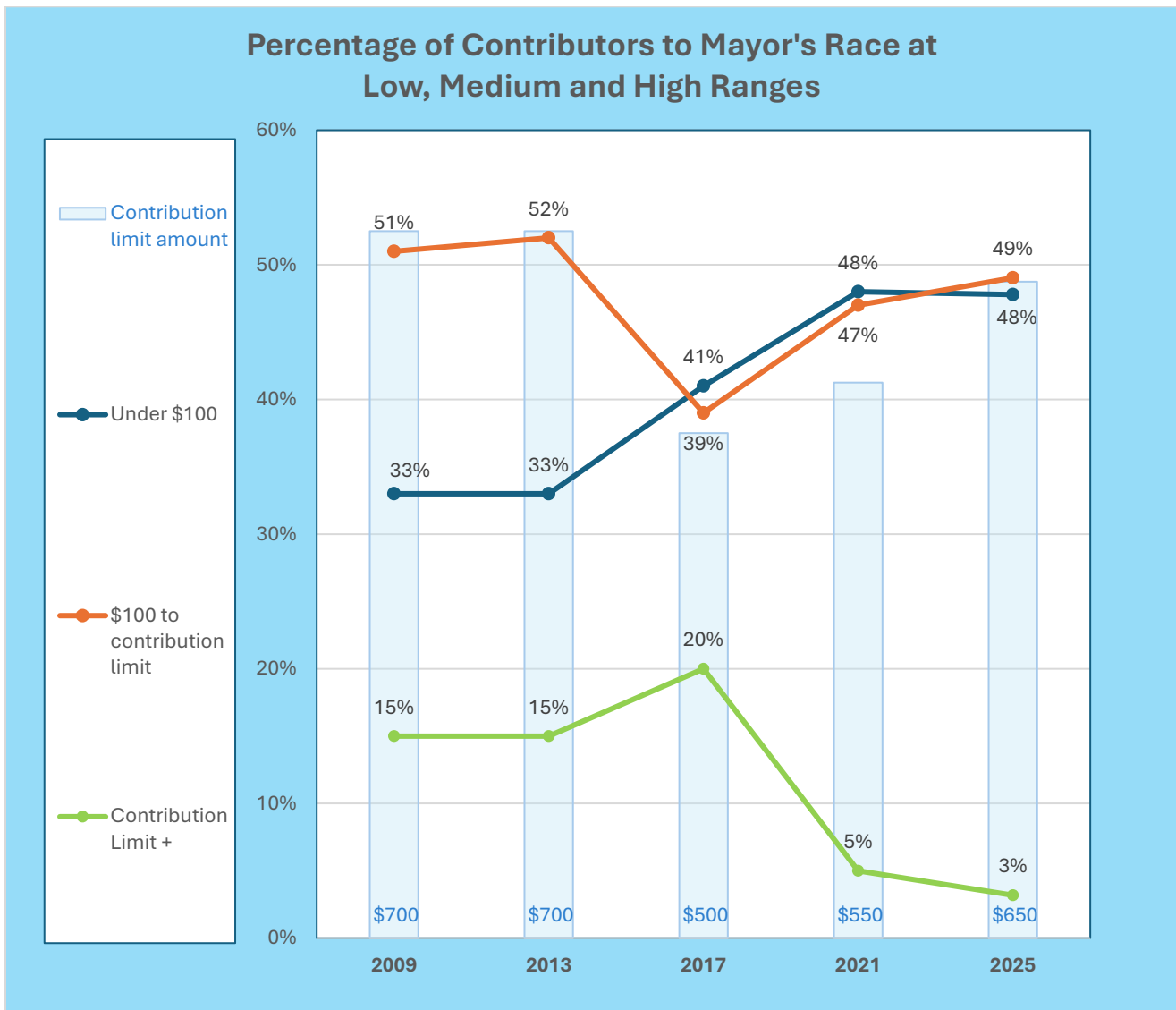


The contribution limit went from \$700 to \$500 in 2017. The 2021 election was the first one in which mayoral candidates could participate in the Democracy Voucher Program (DVP). The contribution limit rose from \$500 to \$600 that year. Prior to the implementation of the DVP in mayoral races, the data shows that candidates focused on raising large contributions. Mayoral candidates raised 57% of their funds from contributions of \$400 or more in 2017. In 2025, only 28% of contributions came from high-dollar contributors.

In 2025, the contribution limit rose from \$600 to \$650. Candidates for Mayor in 2025 raised less money at the \$400 or more level than mayoral candidates in each of the last five election cycles. Since the implementation of the DVP, mayoral candidates raise more money overall, from more contributors, residing in the City, giving smaller contributions.

The Mayor's Race

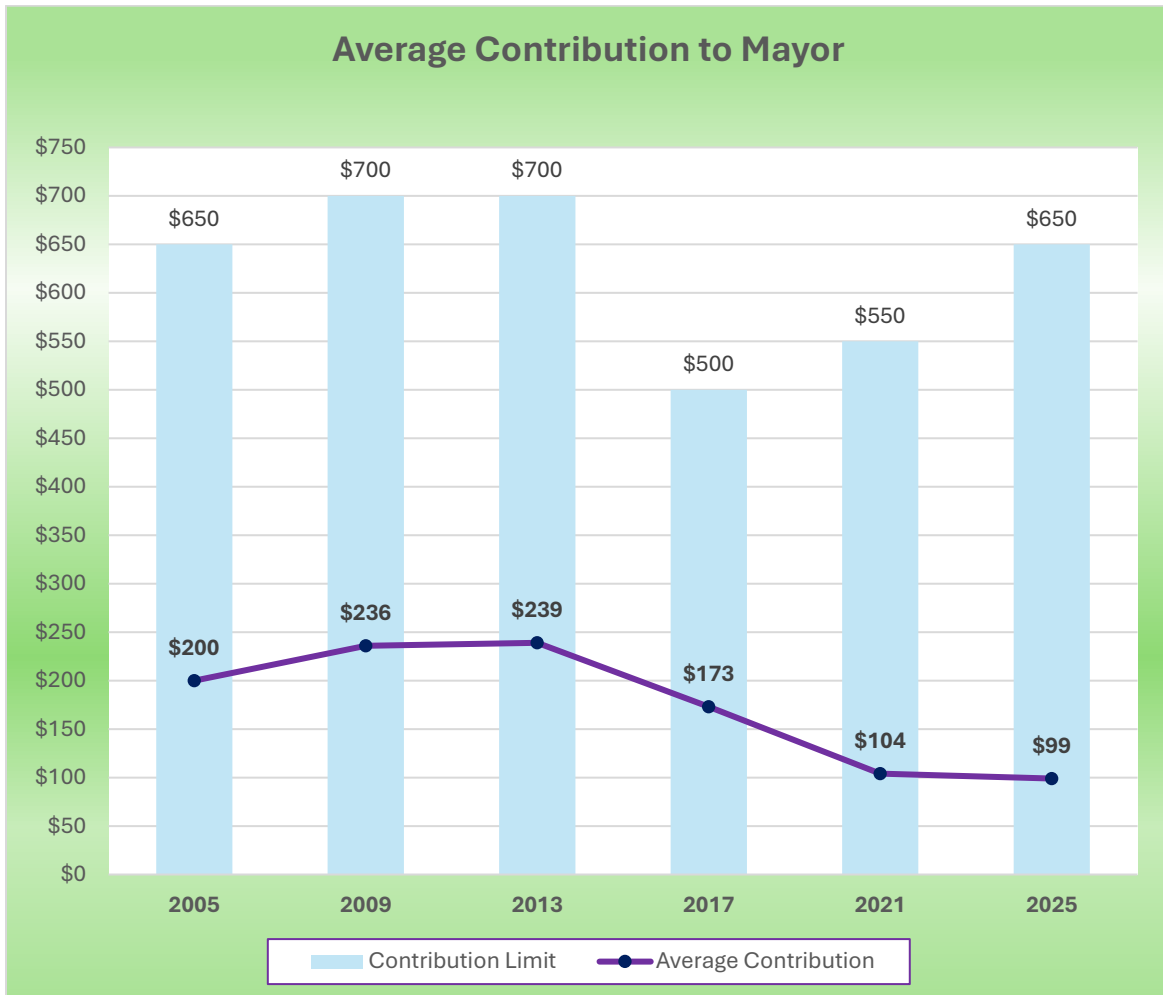
Percentage of Contributions Contributing in High, Medium and Low Ranges



In 2017, the contribution limit dropped from \$700 to \$500. Candidates for Mayor that year were not eligible to participate in the DVP. The incumbent Mayor was not on the ballot, and 21 candidates vied for the position that year. One in five contributions were at the contribution limit that year. After implementation of the DVP, in 2021 and 2025, the number of contributors giving to mayoral candidates at the higher level dropped to 5% in 2021 and 3% in 2025.

The Mayor's Race

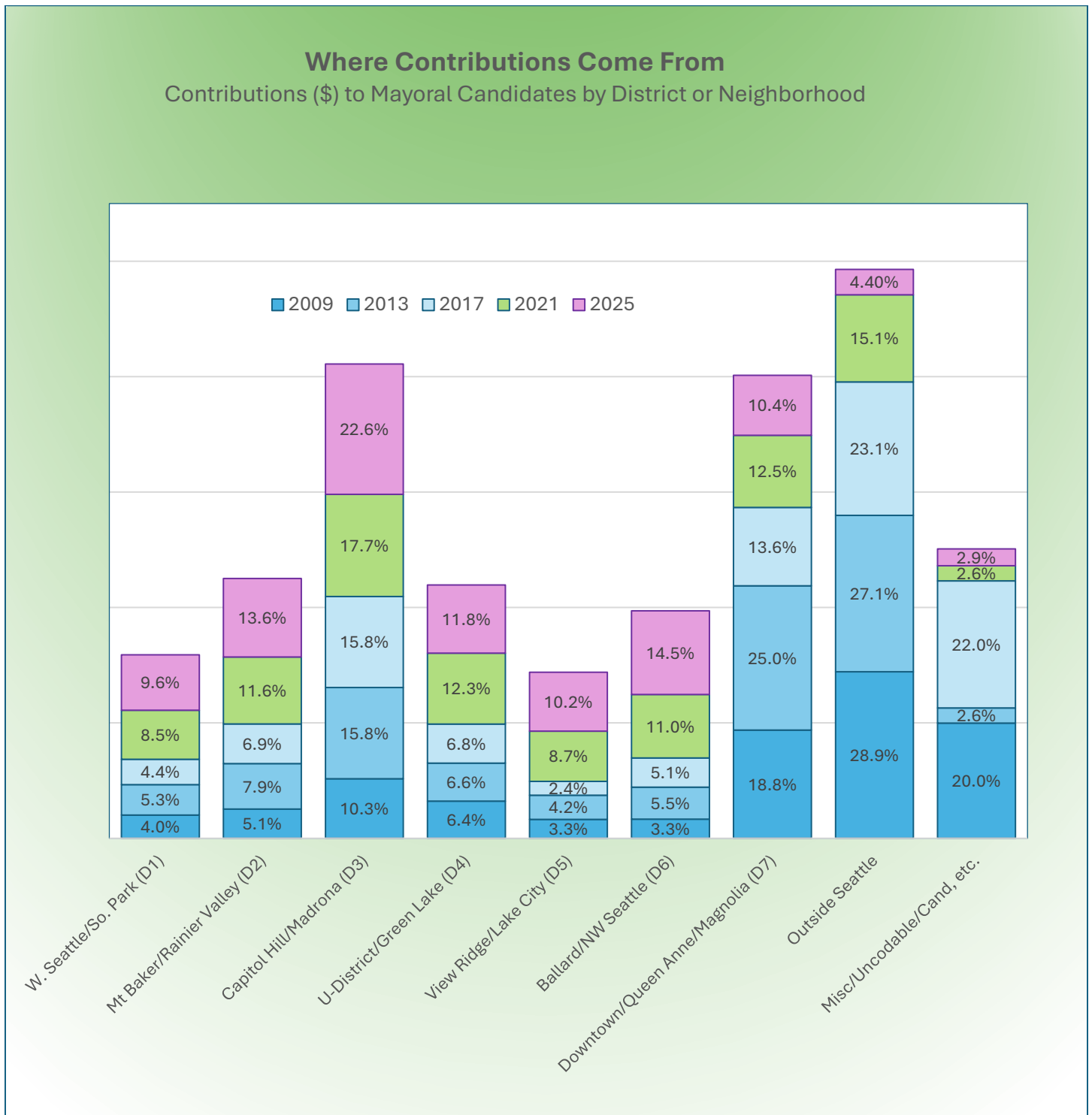
Average Contribution



The downward trend in average contributions to mayoral candidates continues – even as the contribution limit increases. The average contribution to mayoral candidates in 2025 was \$99, down from \$104 in 2021. Since 2017, the average contribution has decreased 43% from \$173 to \$99, even though the contribution limit has increased 30% from \$500 to \$650.

The Mayor's Race

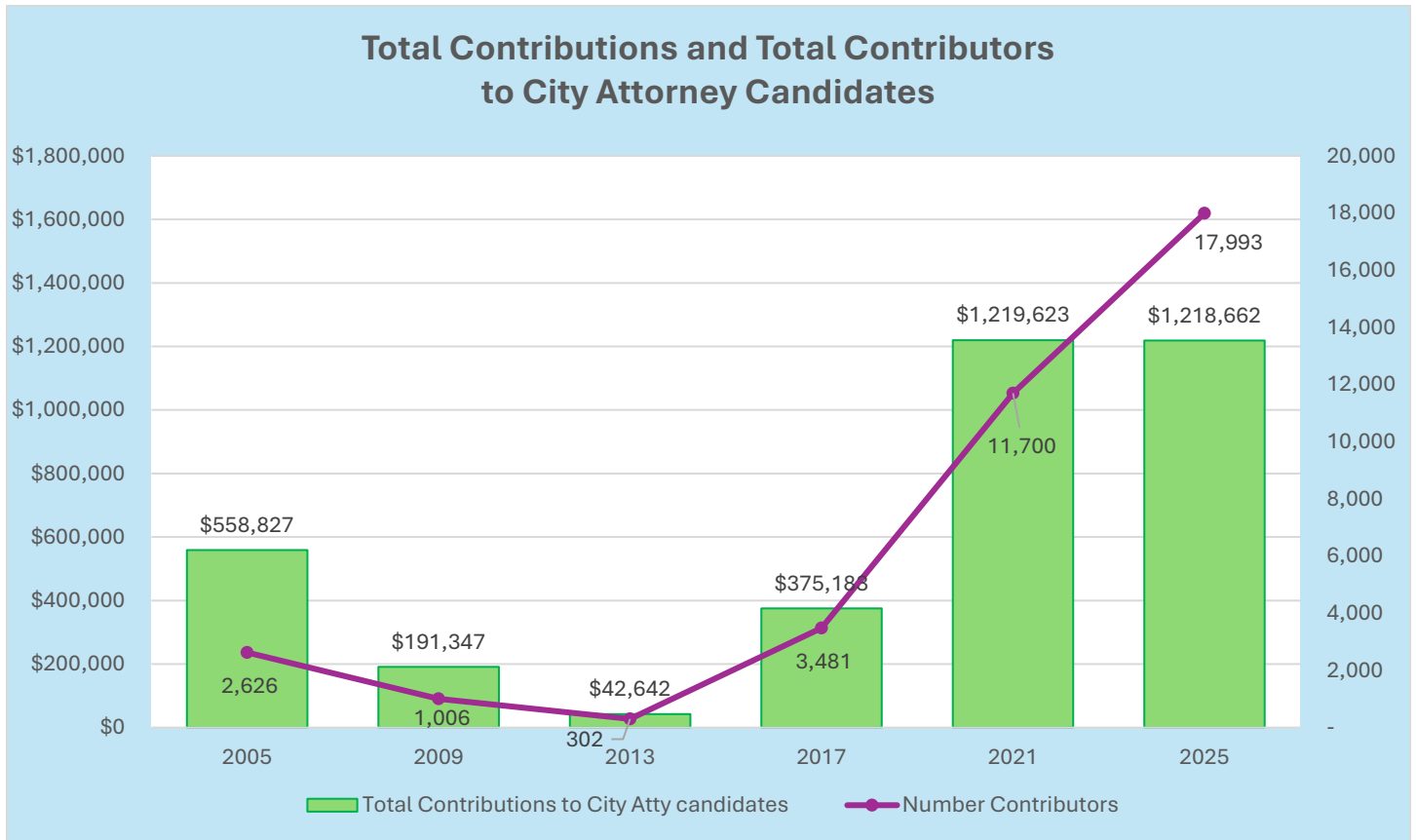
Where Contributors Come From



From 2009 to 2017, before the implementation of the DVP, contributors from each of the Districts – other than Downtown (D7) and Capitol Hill (D3) – made up between 2% and 9% of the contributors to mayoral campaigns. Contributors from outside Seattle made up between 23% and 29%. In 2025, contributors from each of the Districts excluding Capitol Hill made up 10% to 15% of contributors to mayoral campaigns. Contributors from outside Seattle dropped to 4%.

The City Attorney's Race

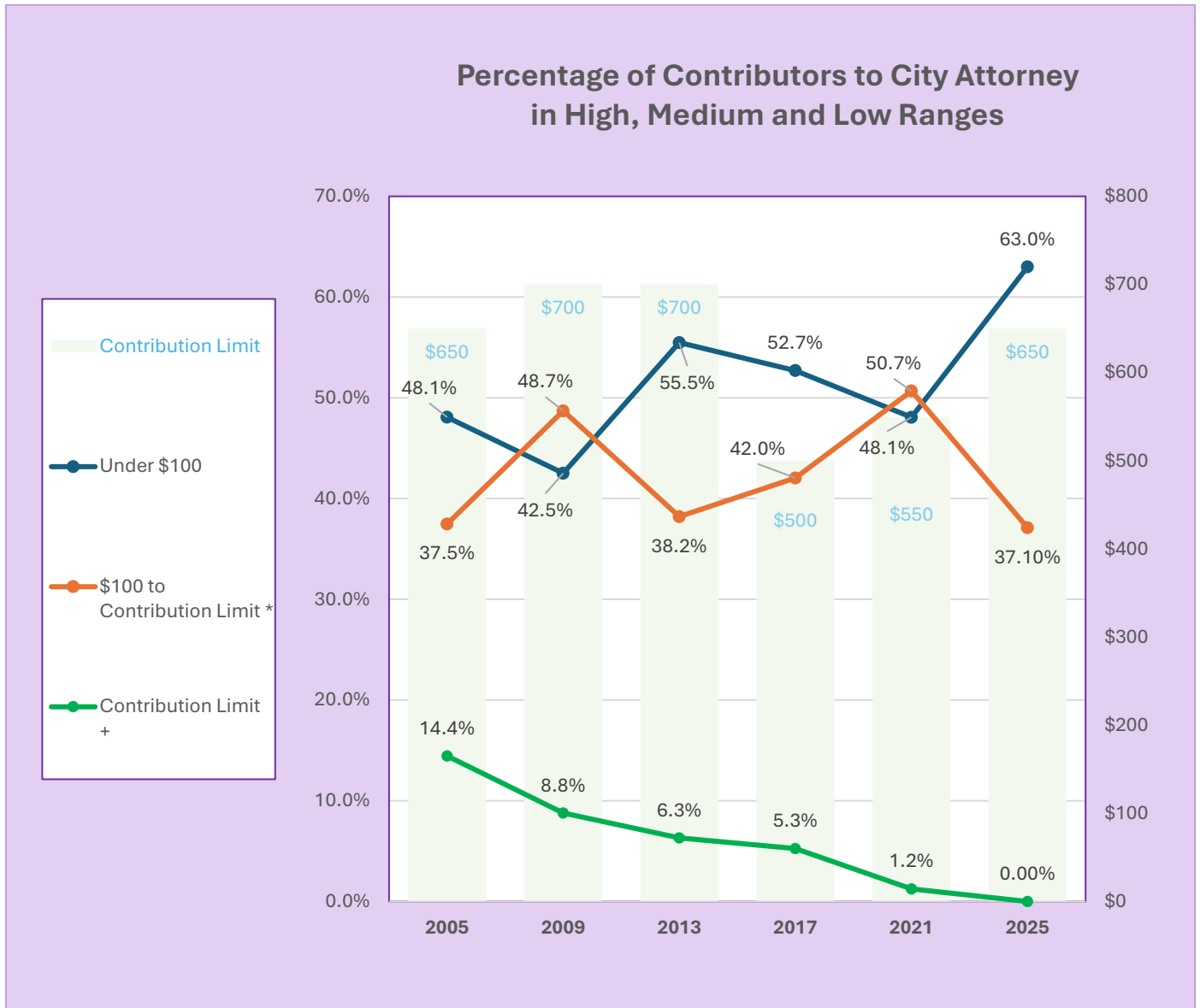
Number of Contributors by Contribution Size



The number of contributors to City Attorney races has grown exponentially in recent years. The number of candidates who run for this office has slowly increased as well, from unchallenged incumbents in 2005 and 2013 to an incumbent and three challengers running in 2025 – all of whom participated in the Democracy Voucher Program.

The City Attorney's Race

Number of Contributors by Contribution Size

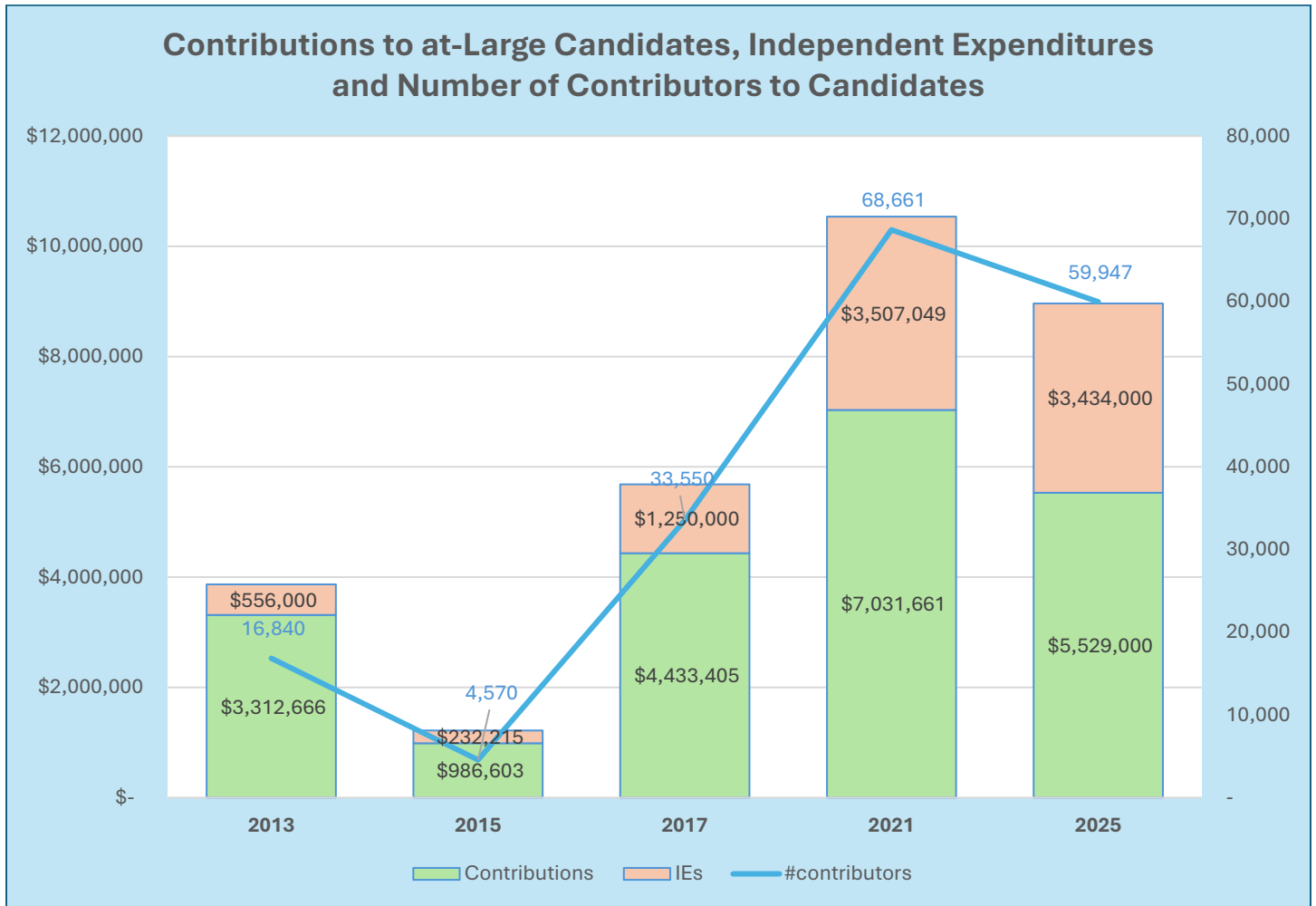


Despite the recent increase in contribution limit, candidates for Seattle City Attorney are taking advantage of the Democracy Voucher Program (DVP) and increasing the number of low-dollar (under \$100) contributors. More than 11,300 contributors (63%) contributed at the Under \$100 level.

Of the four candidates for City Attorney, all participated in the DVP and all four had a \$450 contribution limit throughout the election cycle. Consequently, there were no contributors making contributions at the highest end of the contribution range.

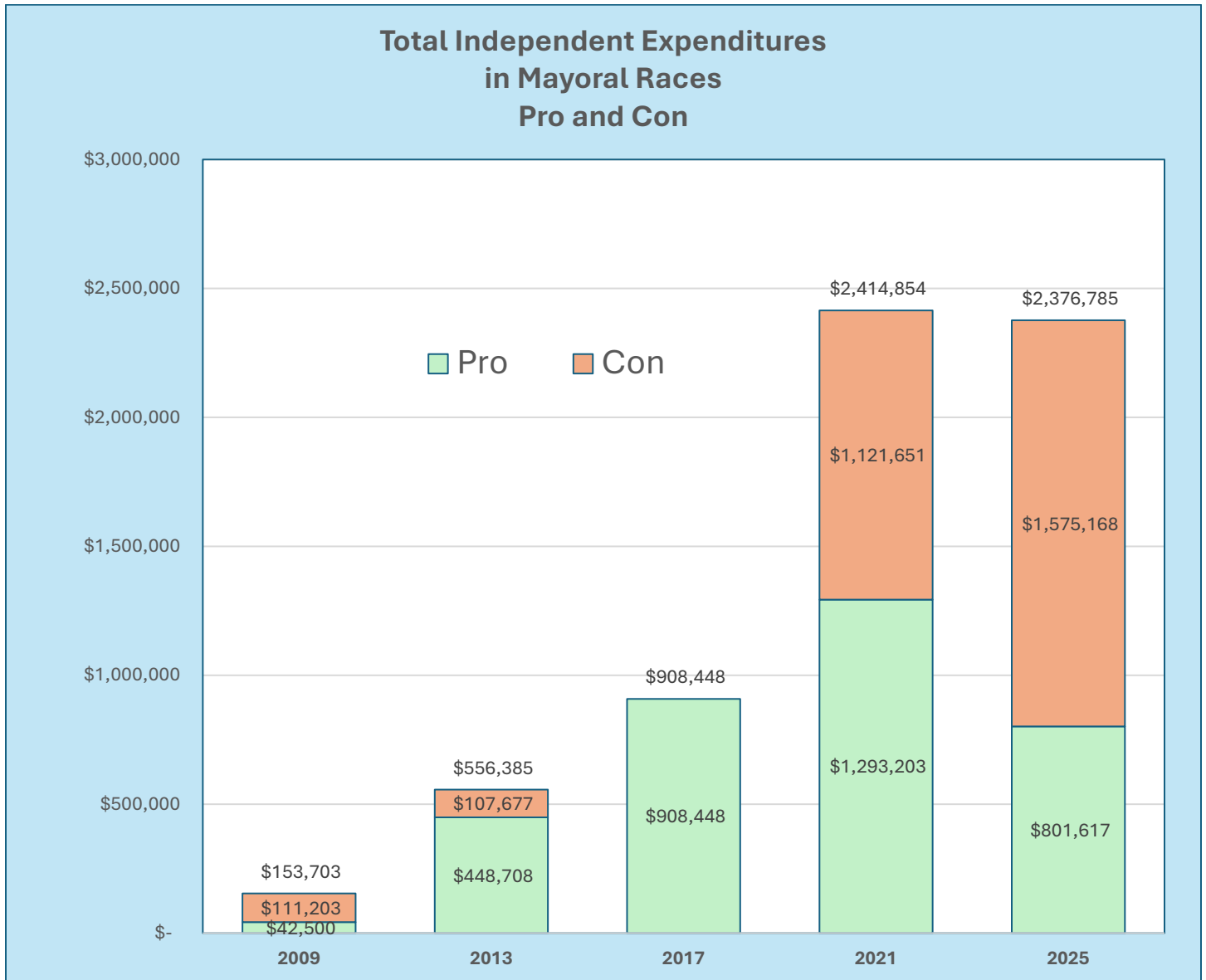
Independent Expenditures

Independent Expenditures in City-wide Races



The amount of independent spending on citywide candidates correlates with the number of contributors and the amount contributed directly to campaigns. When campaign spending goes up, independent spending goes up. When the number of contributors to citywide candidates goes up, so does independent spending.

Total Independent Expenditures in Mayoral Races (Pro Con)



In 2025, Independent spending on the mayor's race was down slightly compared to the independent spending in 2021. In 2025, Independent Expenditure makers spent almost twice as much on ads advocating *against* a candidate as they did on ads advocating *for* a candidate.

2025 Vote Returns

Primary Election Vote Returns - August 5, 2025

Registered Voters	Ballots Cast	Turnout
501,438	198,071	39.50%

City of Seattle Mayor	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	194,229	38.73%
Joe Mallahan	8,538	4.40%
Ry Armstrong	2,120	1.09%
Isaiah Willoughby	817	0.42%
Bruce Harrell (I)	80,043	41.21%
Clinton Bliss	2,046	1.05%
Thaddeus Whelan	716	0.37%
Joe Molloy	799	0.41%
Katie Wilson	98,562	50.75%
Write-in	588	0.30%

City Attorney	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	190,304	37.95%
Ann Davison (I)	63,587	33.41%
Rory O' Sullivan	10,973	5.77%
Nathan Rouse	9,073	4.77%
Erika Evans	106,254	55.83%
Write-in	417	0.22%

City Council Position 8	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	182,068	36.31%
Jesse A. James	4,339	2.38%
Cooper Hall	2,306	1.27%
Alexis Mercedes (I)	142,537	78.29%
Rachael Savage	23,609	12.97%
Ray A. Rogers	8,138	4.47%
Write-in	1,139	0.63%

City Council Position 9	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	189,315	37.75%
Connor Nash	5,532	2.92%
Dionne Foster	110,636	58.44%
Sara Nelson (I)	66,909	35.34%
Mia Jacobson	5,845	3.09%
Write-in	393	0.21%

City Council Position 2 (Special Election)	Registered Voters	Ballots Talled	Turnout
		69,092	23,641
Adonis Ducksworth		6,941	29.36%
Eddie Lin		11,205	47.40%
Jamie Fackler		2,397	10.14%
Jeanie Chunn		2,992	12.66%
Write-in		106	0.45%

Proposition 1 Democracy Voucher Program Levy	Ballots Talled	Turnout
		193,080
Yes	114,140	59.12%
No	78,940	40.88%

2025 Vote Returns

General Election Vote Returns -November 4, 2025

Registered Voters	Ballots Cast	Turnout
505,393	280,375	55.48%

City of Seattle Mayor	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	276,762	54.76%
Katie Wilson (E)	138,931	50.20%
Bruce Harrell (I)	136,920	49.47%
Write-in	911	0.33%

City Attorney	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	266,778	52.79%
Erika Evans (E)	178,470	66.90%
Ann Davison (I)	87,886	32.94%
Write-in	422	0.16%

City Council Position 8	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	255,372	50.53%
Alexis Mercedes Rinck (I) (E)	207,892	81.41%
Rachael Savage	46,266	18.12%
Write-in	1,214	0.48%

City Council Position 9	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	264,219	52.28%
Dionne Foster (E)	165,930	62.80%
Sara Nelson (I)	97,710	36.98%
Write-in	579	0.22%

City Council Position 2 (Special Election)	Registered Voters	Ballots Talled	Turnout
		69,552	33,754
Eddie Lin (E)		21,775	64.51%
Adonis Ducksworth		9,976	29.56%
Write-in		83	0.25%

Proposition 1 Families, Education, Preschool, and Promise Levy	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	271,734	53.77%
Yes	217,294	79.97%
No	54,440	20.03%

Proposition 2 Changes to the Business and Occupation Tax	Ballots Talled	Turnout
	268,513	53.13%
Yes	190,555	70.97%
No	77,958	29.03%

2025 Vote Returns

After a 10% dip in General Election voter turn-out in 2023, voters came back in force with even higher turn-out than in 2021.

General Election Turn-out			
2019	2021	2023	2025
54.46%	54.57%	45.93 %	55.48%