

Office of Sustainability and Environment

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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: The City of Seattle aims to reduce total core greenhouse gas emissions 58% by 2030 and to become totally carbon neutral by 2050. OSE spearheads policies and programs for achieving these goals, including transitioning buildings to 100% clean energy, advancing zero carbon transportation, and investing in green jobs. In this role, OSE coordinates implementation of the Seattle Green New Deal, the One Seattle Climate Justice Agenda, and the Equity and Environment Initiative.

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

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Department Support				
General Fund Support	7,911,975	7,260,132	8,361,046	8,743,446
Other Funding - Operating	9,381,132	23,325,356	18,379,410	18,602,646
Total Operations	17,293,107	30,585,489	26,740,457	27,346,093
Total Appropriations	17,293,107	30,585,489	26,740,457	27,346,093
Full-Time Equivalent Total*	39.50	49.50	50.50	50.50

* 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

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Budget Overview

The Mayor's 2025-26 Proposed Budget continues OSE's core missions of advancing citywide climate and environment policy and programs and promoting healthy and resilient communities. This includes continued work coordinating the Seattle Green New Deal, continued work managing Citywide food policy, and extensive work funded by federal and state grants.

The proposed budget prioritizes investments across all program areas, meeting required regulatory functions, and adding external funding for local climate change initiatives as large opportunities become available at the state and federal level. Funding for most programming remains level for 2025 and 2026 with increases to address higher labor and internal services costs. Reductions relative to 2024 are focused on Payroll Expense Tax-funded activities, with the bulk of this change reflecting the expiration of \$4.0 million of one-time Payroll Expense Tax (payroll tax) adds.

General Fund and Sweetened Beverage Tax Programming

The Proposed Budget appropriates \$8.5 million in General Fund to OSE in 2025 and \$8.7 million in 2026. Sweetened Beverage Tax (SBT) appropriations are set at \$6.3 million in 2025 and \$6.4 million in 2026. General Fund appropriations at OSE will continue to support the bulk of OSE's staffing and administration, including core base support for Citywide environment policy and planning. For Sweetened Beverage Tax, over \$5 million annually will continue to support the Fresh Bucks voucher program for fresh fruits and vegetables. Remaining SBT programming includes Healthy Food in Schools – a healthy snack program supporting Seattle Public Schools – and food policy, including coordination of the Sweetened Beverage Tax Community Advisory Board or CAB.

Continued Green New Deal Programming

OSE will continue its role coordinating Citywide actions supporting the Seattle Green New Deal as well as facilitating the Green New Deal Oversight Board, whose recommendations inform budget decisions. The Proposed Budget allocates \$18.25 million in payroll tax-supported funding to the Green New Deal across several city departments. Of this amount, \$12.0 million in 2025 and \$12.2 million in 2026 is appropriated in OSE. Citywide climate initiatives are also supported by over \$35 million in state and federal grants awarded since 2023.

For OSE, this continued payroll tax-Green New Deal (GND) programming in 2025-26 includes:

- \$7.5 million for Clean Buildings and the Building Emissions Performance Standards (BEPS) program, including \$5 million for the Clean Buildings Accelerator, which provides technical assistance and funding to low-income building owners to help comply with revised City and State regulations.
- \$800,000 for Clean Heat Program rebates, which provide \$2,000 rebates to up to 400 households annually for converting homes from oil to electric heating sources.
- \$1,000,000 for Clean Energy Apprenticeships in coordination with Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) and the Office of Economic Development's priority hire initiatives.
- \$500,000 for Duwamish Valley Program Youth Leadership funding, providing awards to neighborhood organizations for job training, volunteer opportunities, and recreational programming.
- \$500,000 for urban forestry, including \$300,000 for greening industrial zones in the Duwamish Area, as well as staffing and policy coordination for tree planting efforts.
- \$1,050,000 for the Environmental Justice Fund.

Green New Deal funding for 2025 and 2026 also includes programming in other City departments. These items comprise:

- \$1,851,688 in 2025 and \$1,500,000 in 2026 for the Municipal Energy Efficiency Program (MEEP). In 2025, \$1,461,688 of this funding is allocated to Finance and Administrative Services (FAS), and \$195,000 each to

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Seattle Center and Seattle Parks and Recreation. OSE manages and coordinates MEEP, which supports energy retrofits in municipally owned buildings, many of them (such as those managed by Center, Parks, and Seattle Public Library) public-facing.

- \$1.8 million for the Office of Housing (OH) to fully fund oil-to-electric home heating conversions for low-income households under the Clean Heat Program and in coordination with OSE.
- \$841,250 in 2025 and \$1.8 million in 2026 in FAS for debt service costs of EV charging stations for facility build-outs.
- \$1.6 million in 2025 and \$1.8 million in 2026 to support the City's commitment to Seattle Transit 3 (ST3). This will fund ST3 staffing and planning efforts around West Seattle and Ballard Link Extensions. Of this, \$1.4 million in 2025 and \$1.6 million in 2026 will be set aside in Finance General. Another \$186,000 in 2025 and \$198,000 in 2026 will continue funding existing ST3 staffing at the Office of Planning and Community Development. These investments are in line with commitments made by the City of Seattle's 2019 Green New Deal Resolution (Res 31895), which committed the City to reducing transportation emissions and making transit widely accessible.

In addition, pilot funding appropriated in the 2023-24 budget for Indigenous Sustainability Projects is in the process of being encumbered by OSE with partner organizations. Once encumbered, these funds will support key climate sustainability investments with Tribes through 2026, addressing commitments made by Mayor Harrell during the 2023 Seattle Tribal Nations Summit.

For more on non-OSE actions, please see Budget Book sections for the departments named above. More information on OSE-specific changes is presented in the following pages.

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Incremental Budget Changes

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	Dollars	FTE
2024 Adopted Budget	30,585,489	49.50
Baseline		
Removal of One-Time Items from Department Baseline	(4,057,398)	-
Technical Change to BEPS Compliance and Language Access Baseline Budget	135,000	-
Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	795,576	-
Bargained Annual Wage and Market Wage Increases to Base Budget	847,344	-
Technical Corrections to Assign Account Codes	-	-
Accounting Update for IT Costs	-	-
Proposed Operating		
Cut City Funding, Transition Heavy Duty EV Incentives to Other Entities	(900,000)	-
Align BEPS IT Budget with Actuals	(551,871)	-
Reduce OSE Workforce and Small Business Investments in Duwamish Valley	(400,000)	-
Restore Baseline Environmental Justice Fund Funding	250,000	-
Add Climate Data Impact Analysis and Reporting Capacity	100,000	-
Consolidate Duwamish River Opportunity Fund and Environmental Justice Fund	-	-
Proposed Technical		
Ongoing Changes from Current Year Legislation	-	1.00
Final Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes	(63,683)	-
Revenue Update (April Forecast)	-	-
Revenue Update (August Forecast)	-	-
Total Incremental Changes	\$(3,845,032)	1.00
Total 2025 Proposed Budget	\$26,740,457	50.50

Description of Incremental Budget Changes

Baseline

Removal of One-Time Items from Department Baseline

Expenditures \$(4,057,398)

This item removes items from the department's baseline budget that were funded as one-time items in the 2024 Adopted Budget. This includes one-time appropriations for Payroll Expense Tax funded investments in the Seattle Green New Deal, Building Emissions Performance Standards, and Urban Forestry, as well as a small General Fund appropriation that supported the Tree Canopy Report completed in 2024.

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Technical Change to BEPS Compliance and Language Access Baseline Budget

Expenditures \$135,000

This change increases Payroll Expense Tax appropriation authority for OSE. This action trues up funding for compliance and language access for the Building Emissions Performance Standards (BEPS) program. The amount restored here was incorrectly flagged as one-time appropriations during the 2023 budget process.

Citywide Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$795,576

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.

Bargained Annual Wage and Market Wage Increases to Base Budget

Expenditures \$847,344

This centrally administered change adjusts appropriations to reflect the Annual Wage Increases and Market Adjustments, as outlined in the agreements between the City and the Coalition of Unions or other standalone Unions, for personnel costs included in this department's baseline budget. This includes increases to salary, FICA, Medicare, retirement, overtime and temporary labor.

Technical Corrections to Assign Account Codes

Expenditures -

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

Accounting Update for IT Costs

Expenditures -

This item makes a net-zero change to update the account code being charged for IT costs at OSE.

Proposed Operating

Cut City Funding, Transition Heavy Duty EV Incentives to Other Entities

Expenditures \$(900,000)

The General Fund revenue forecast for the City's 2025-2026 Proposed Budget is insufficient to cover all anticipated Citywide costs. Budget reductions were identified to mitigate this shortfall. These actions include reductions to Payroll Expense Tax-funded programming in order to provide resources for core City functions funded by the General Fund.

This item reduces Payroll Expense Tax appropriation authority in OSE by reducing city funding for Heavy Duty Electric Truck incentives. These efforts have comprised a pilot program launched in 2023 which focused on the Duwamish Valley. This pilot aimed to fund point of sale rebates for new electric trucks, buses, or vans. This has been intended to incentivize the deployment of more electric heavy-duty vehicles in the Duwamish Valley (e.g., drayage trucks, school buses, and other fleets) while addressing cost barriers, spurring rapid adoption, and reducing harmful diesel pollution in highly exposed communities.

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This innovative pilot program has led to new engagement and investment from other Port affiliated organizations. It is anticipated that this work will transition to another entity who can scale up the program with state and federal resources. Of the original \$1 million in ongoing allocation for this program, OSE will retain \$100,000 to ensure continued support for Seattle's Transportation Electrification Blueprint, Mayor Harrell's Transportation and Climate Justice Executive Order, and intragovernmental coordination.

Align BEPS IT Budget with Actuals

Expenditures \$(551,871)

This item makes reductions to Payroll Expense Tax-funded programming in OSE to help address the City's forecasted revenue shortfall for 2025 and 2026. This reduction will achieve savings by aligning OSE's budget for BEPS technology solutions with actual projected spending needs.

Reduce OSE Workforce and Small Business Investments in Duwamish Valley

Expenditures \$(400,000)

This item makes reductions to Payroll Expense Tax-funded programming in OSE to help address the City's forecasted revenue shortfall for 2025 and 2026. This action reduces funding currently used to support OSE's workforce development and small business assistance efforts in the Duwamish Valley. OSE's role in place-based support for small businesses in the South Park and Georgetown neighborhoods, including marketing and financial assistance, will shrink, as will OSE's funding for place-based workforce development strategies in the area.

Despite these reductions, small business support will continue to be available from the Office of Economic Development. In addition, OSE will continue clean energy workforce development efforts (including but not exclusive to South Park and Georgetown), such as Clean Energy Apprenticeship funding and workforce development related to Clean Buildings and BEPS work.

OSE will also continue to lead and manage a large portfolio of investments in the Duwamish Valley including:

- \$500,000 annually for Youth Leadership and Programming
- \$300,000 annually for greening and tree planting
- \$2.5 million in continued one-time Duwamish Valley Program spending (awarded by Ord 126675), an effort that includes support community supportive spaces such as the South Park Neighborhood Center and Georgetown Community Spaces

OSE's Duwamish Valley Program work will also continue to include work funded by external grants and continued collaboration with Seattle Public Utilities' on their Duwamish Valley Resiliency program which aims to address flood risk mitigation and other climate change vulnerabilities.

Restore Baseline Environmental Justice Fund Funding

Expenditures \$250,000

The proposed budget allocates \$18 million in Payroll Expense Tax proceeds in 2025 to the Green New Deal. This item uses payroll tax funding to restore the Environmental Justice (EJ) Fund baseline to \$1,050,000. This change restores the EJ Fund baseline to \$1,050,000 (including the Duwamish River Opportunity Fund or DROF, proposed for consolidation, below), in line with 2022 funding levels. This will allow the fund to continue supporting a wide variety of climate and environmental justice organizations.

The EJ Fund awards grants to a wide variety of community-led projects that improve environmental conditions and advance environmental justice for communities most impacted by pollution, environmental degradation, and climate change. Since its launch in 2018, the EJ Fund has awarded over \$2.6 million to 43 community-based organizations over five grant cycles. These organizations are led by or are in partnership with communities of color

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impacted by environmental injustice.

Until 2021, the Environmental Justice Fund was funded at \$250,000, using General Fund dollars. Funding was increased to \$800,000 in 2022 based on recommendations by the Equitable Communities Initiative. The 2023 Adopted Budget continued that expansion using payroll tax, with Council further expanding funding (one-time) to \$2 million. The 2024 Adopted cut the program's \$250,000 continuing General Fund budget. With the removal of the one-time Council adds from 2023, the EJ Fund and DROF combined would drop to \$800,000, instead of the \$1,050,000 provided with this budget action.

Add Climate Data Impact Analysis and Reporting Capacity

Expenditures \$100,000

The proposed budget allocates \$18 million in Payroll Expense Tax proceeds in 2025 to the Green New Deal. This item adds funding to OSE to increase departmental capacity for climate impact data analysis and reporting, including urban forestry. Funding will help OSE implement new tools to measure Seattle's progress on key climate indicators and inform citywide coordination around policies addressing climate change, energy transition, and urban forestry.

In 2025-2026, this funding will address urban forestry data and reporting priorities. These projects will integrate urban forestry data and information, which is currently dispersed across multiple reports, maps, and interfaces, into a single, publicly available technology resource. This tool will better track Seattle's urban forest over time in response to changing environmental conditions and ongoing management.

Ongoing funding will also support continual climate and urban forestry data surveillance. Funding would also help maintain and enhance other Citywide climate data tools managed by OSE, such as the One Seattle Climate Portal, and will support development of new policies like the updated Seattle Climate Action Plan.

Consolidate Duwamish River Opportunity Fund and Environmental Justice Fund

Expenditures -

The proposed budget allocates \$18 million in Payroll Expense Tax proceeds in 2025 to the Green New Deal. This item is a budget neutral change for OSE's payroll tax-GND funding which will consolidate the Duwamish River Opportunity Fund (DROF) and the Environmental Justice (EJ) Fund. Together with a separate item adding \$250,000 to the EJ Fund budget, this will result in a streamlined \$1,050,000 grant program serving OSE's core mission around sustainability and environmental justice

The combined Environmental Justice Fund will continue to invest in community-led projects led by and for communities disproportionately impacted by environmental issues and climate change. This budget neutral efficiency measure will streamline grantmaking led by OSE and continue to allow for investment in place-based, community-led efforts in the Duwamish Valley through the EJ Fund. Consolidation will help reduce application burdens on potential awardees -- many of whom currently apply (and receive funding from) both programs -- and help OSE more efficiently maximize existing staff capacity supporting these award processes.

Although many DROF awards currently support groups active in the climate and environmental justice space, some current awardees may be made ineligible by narrowing award criteria to these areas. OSE and the City will seek to ensure these organizations are given ample time to re-focus their grant applications and direct them towards other potential City or external awards.

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Proposed Technical

Ongoing Changes from Current Year Legislation

Position Allocation 1.00

This change includes ongoing budget and/or position changes resulting from current year legislation in 2024, including the Year End Supplemental Ordinance.

Final Adjustments for Standard Cost Changes

Expenditures \$(63,683)

Citywide technical adjustments made in the proposed 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 for the department. These adjustments reflect final decisions about these costs made during the Proposed Phase of the budget process.

Revenue Update (April Forecast)

Revenues \$43,877

This is a technical adjustment to capture centrally projected and forecast General Fund revenue increments for this department.

Revenue Update (August Forecast)

Revenues \$490,304

This is a technical adjustment to capture centrally projected and forecast General Fund revenue increments for this department.

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Expenditure Overview

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Appropriations				
OSE - BO-SE-X1000 - Office of Sustainability and Environment				
00100 - General Fund	7,911,975	7,260,132	8,361,046	8,743,446
00155 - Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund	6,014,121	6,151,220	6,336,822	6,423,345
14000 - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund	4,473	-	-	-
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	3,362,537	17,174,136	12,042,588	12,179,301
Total for BSL: BO-SE-X1000	17,293,107	30,585,489	26,740,457	27,346,093
Department Total	17,293,107	30,585,489	26,740,457	27,346,093
Department Full-Time Equivalents Total*	39.50	49.50	50.50	50.50

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Budget Summary by Fund Office of Sustainability and Environment

	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
00100 - General Fund	7,911,975	7,260,132	8,361,046	8,743,446
00155 - Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund	6,014,121	6,151,220	6,336,822	6,423,345
14000 - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund	4,473	-	-	-
14500 - Payroll Expense Tax	3,362,537	17,174,136	12,042,588	12,179,301
Budget Totals for OSE	17,293,107	30,585,489	26,740,457	27,346,093

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Revenue Overview

2025 Estimated Revenues

Account Code	Account Name	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
337010	Grants & Contr From Local Govt	178,287	-	-	-
341300	Administrative Fees & Charges	-	-	-	-
341900	General Government-Other Rev	3,398,268	3,689,501	4,120,682	4,250,635
350180	Misc Fines & Penalties	28,000	20,000	123,000	73,000
360220	Interest Earned On Delinquent A	4,001	-	-	-
360900	Miscellaneous Revs-Other Rev	149,207	154,926	154,926	-
367010	Private Grants & Contr	103,699	-	-	-
Total Revenues for: 00100 - General Fund		3,861,462	3,864,427	4,398,608	4,323,635
331110	Direct Fed Grants	4,473	-	-	-
Total Revenues for: 14000 - Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund		4,473	-	-	-
Total OSE Resources		3,865,935	3,864,427	4,398,608	4,323,635

Appropriations by Budget Summary Level and Program

OSE - BO-SE-X1000 - Office of Sustainability and Environment

The purpose of the Office of Sustainability and Environment Budget Summary Level is to coordinate interdepartmental environmental sustainability initiatives, identify and develop next generation policies and programs, and lead the City's climate change action planning to move towards carbon neutrality.

Program Expenditures	2023 Actuals	2024 Adopted	2025 Proposed	2026 Proposed
Office of Sustainability and Environment	17,293,107	30,585,489	26,740,457	27,346,093
Total	17,293,107	30,585,489	26,740,457	27,346,093
Full-time Equivalents Total*	39.50	49.50	50.50	50.50

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