



City of Kenmore  
City Council Special Meeting  
Agenda  
Monday, April 6, 2026  
7:00 PM

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**ZOOM - LINK:** <https://kenmorewa-gov.zoom.us/j/85406344194>

**Password:** 040626

Telephone: Dial US: +1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 854 0634 4194

SIGN UP FOR VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENT HERE: [kenmorewa.gov/virtualpubliccomment](https://kenmorewa.gov/virtualpubliccomment)

REQUEST AN ACCOMMODATION HERE: [kenmorewa.gov/accommodation](https://kenmorewa.gov/accommodation)

If you have technical difficulties accessing the meeting virtually, please contact [clerks@kenmorewa.gov](mailto:clerks@kenmorewa.gov).  
**Technical Difficulties** – If the virtual component of the meeting disconnects, and we cannot resolve technical difficulties to reconnect the virtual component, the in-person meeting will continue at City Hall if there is a quorum of the body to conduct business.

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**1. CALL SPECIAL MEETING TO ORDER - 7:00 PM**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**3. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We acknowledge that the City of Kenmore is situated upon the ancestral lands of the Snohomish, Snoqualmie, Sauk-Suiattle, Duwamish, Stillaguamish, Tulalip, Suquamish, Muckleshoot, and other tribes who are part of the Coast Salish Peoples. We recognize and express our deepest respect for their enduring stewardship and profound relationship with this land, which they have cherished and protected since time immemorial. We honor the First Peoples, acknowledge their vibrant cultures, and commit ourselves to learning from their wisdom in our journey to promote justice, equity, and mutual understanding. We pledge to stand alongside these communities in acknowledging past injustices and working towards a future that respects and celebrates the diverse heritage of this land.

**4. FLAG SALUTE**

**5. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

- A) Welcome to the Council's meeting. Please address your comments to the Mayor and Council. You'll have three minutes to speak. If there are more than 20 speakers, time will be reduced to two minutes per speaker. The Clerk will call your name when it's your turn. The Presiding Officer may choose to alternate between in-person and online comments. Please state your name and city of residence and keep within the allotted time. To make

every person feel welcome and safe here, please refrain from booing, clapping, heckling, yelling, or other interruptions. Please note: Under Washington State law (RCW 42.17A.555), public comment time may not be used to support or oppose candidates or ballot measures. Thank you for keeping remarks focused on City business. **While you may speak on any topic during Public Comments, for this meeting, the Council requests that your comments focus on the topic of the study session: fiscal strategics and revenue measures, to ensure that we are efficient with time this evening.** The meeting is recorded for transparency. Thank you for being here, and for sharing your input respectfully.

**VIRTUAL PUBLIC COMMENT PRE-REGISTRATION:** To provide public comments virtually, please fill out the [Virtual Public Comment Request Form](#) in advance of the meeting. The form will close on Monday at 12:00 Noon. You will be confirmed by the City Clerk's Office. If you are having difficulty, please reach out to the City Clerk's Office at [clerks@kenmorewa.gov](mailto:clerks@kenmorewa.gov).

## 6. STUDY SESSION AGENDA

- A) Fiscal Strategies and Revenue Measures, *for continued discussion and direction*
  - 1. Agenda Bill - Study Session
  - 2. Attachment 1 - Metropolitan Park District Research
  - 3. Attachment 2 - Levy Lid Lift Research
  - 4. Attachment 3 - Research Brief KenMORE (provided by Councilmember Culver)
  - 5. Attachment 4 - Presentation

## 7. ADJOURNMENT

### UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE:

- A) Monday, April 13, 2026 7:00 PM – City Council Regular Meeting  
Monday, April 20, 2026 6:00 PM-8:00 PM – City Council Round Table Town Hall  
Monday, April 27, 2026 7:00 PM – City Council Regular Meeting

### NOTICE OF POTENTIAL QUORUMS

- A) [Click here for information about Potential Quorums of the City Council](#). Now found on the City website under City Council Meetings.



Subject/Topic:	Proposed Council Action/Motion:
<p>Fiscal Strategies and Revenue Measures, <i>continued</i></p> <p><b>Department:</b> City Manager's Office</p> <p><b>Prepared by:</b> Michelle Kang Interim Assistant to the City Manager</p> <p><b>Attachments:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Memo – Metropolitan Park District Research</li> <li>2. Memo – Levy Lid Lift Research</li> <li>3. Research Brief KenMORE Enhanced Priorities Levy (provided by Councilmember Culver)</li> <li>4. Presentation (to be uploaded prior to 4/6)</li> </ol>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Information Only</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Receive and File</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Discuss</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Provide Direction</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Adopt/Approve</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Authorize</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other:</p>

Approvals:

Department \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Finance \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_  
 Head TK 3/31/2026 Attorney N/A Director MM 3/30/26 Manager TK 3/31/2026 Optional \_\_\_\_\_

**Summary/Background:**

At the City Council Retreat on March 21-22, 2026, the City Council discussed Fiscal Issues and Strategies. The Council determined that the discussion would be continued at a special meeting study session to be held on Monday, April 6, 2026. At this study session, the Council will continue discussion from the retreat and will provide direction to staff which may include potential action regarding fiscal strategies, councilmanic actions, and potential revenue measures.

Regarding the discussion that the Council will be having at the study session, Staff seeks direction on the following:

1. Whether to proceed with the police services study
2. Which Councilmanic actions to proceed with, if any:
  - 0.1% Transportation Sales Tax
  - 0.1% Public Safety Sales Tax
  - Other
3. Which potential revenue measures to proceed with, if any:
  - Police Study Levy Lid Lift
  - KenMORE Levy Lid Lift
  - Metropolitan Park District
  - Other options
4. When such revenues measures should be placed on a ballot

5. Any additional fiscal strategies to consider for the remainder of the year and for the 2027-2028 biennium

More detailed descriptions of both the Metropolitan Park District and Levy Lid Lift requirements are provided (Attachments 1 + 2) for Council reference.

Of note, when selecting a Levy Lid Lift revenue measure, Council has the option of either a single-year or multi-year cycle. Additionally, there is an option of whether the levy lid lift measure is “temporary” or “permanent.” Temporary measures return the tax rate back to what it was before voter approval with the ongoing 1% annual increase under statute. Permanent measures essentially raise the ongoing base for the six-year cycle and then the new base at the end of the period resets to the state statute 1% annual increase.

Both attachments also discuss the timeline options and nuances for both revenue measure options, noting timing limitations of both the Metropolitan Park District and the single-year levy lid lift compared to the multi-year levy lid lift.

- Metropolitan Park District: Once the MPD board is created, the board is required to hold a public hearing for the levy rate. The recommended latest election cycle for a MPD measure is August if the Council would like the MPD levy to go into effect January 1 the following year.
- Single-year levy lid lifts can go on the ballot of any election (February, April, August, November)
- Multi-year levy lid lifts are limited to only August primary or November general elections

Attachment 3 is analysis provided by Councilmember Culver exploring options and experiences from other cities on the various measures under discussion.

### Previous Council Action(s):

Monday, February 23, 2026 Special Meeting Study Session: Financial Forecast Update and Discussion

- [Council Meeting Agenda Packet and Materials](#)
- [Timestamped Council Meeting Video Recording](#)

Saturday, March 21, 2026 City Council Retreat Day One: Fiscal Strategies and Issues Discussion

- [Retreat Agenda Packet and Materials](#)
- [Timestamped Retreat Video Recording](#)

Sunday, March 22, 2026 City Council Retreat Day Two: Fiscal Issues and Strategies Discussion, cont.

- [Timestamped Retreat Video Recording](#)

### Fiscal Consideration:

The discussion and direction from the Monday, April 6, 2026 study session will inform Staff on actions for the remainder of the year as well as fiscal impacts for the 2027-2028 biennial budget planning process.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Consideration:**

[DEIA Strategic Plan](#) | [City's Equity Framework Toolkit](#)

Goal 2: Plans Policies & Budgets – Promote accountability to ensure our plans, policies, and budgets incorporate our foundational and core values so that we equitably address the needs of our communities.

**[City Council Priorities](#) or Budget Objective Being Addressed:**

Preamble: Safeguarding the City's finances.

2026 City Council Priority #1: Ensure financial sustainability through revenue enhancement and cost-cutting measures.



# City of Kenmore, Washington

## Memorandum

Date: March 11, 2026  
To: City Manager Teri Killgore  
From: Michelle Kang, Interim Assistant to the City Manager  
Regarding: Metropolitan Park District

This one-pager is to provide quick information about the creation and general facts about Metropolitan Park Districts (MPD). Additional research can be provided upon request if the Kenmore City Council wishes to pursue this revenue measure.

The purpose of a Metropolitan Park District is to ensure stable, dedicated funding for park and recreation services, systems, and facilities.

The creation of an MPD:

1. Resolution adoption by the City Council proposing the formation of an MPD
2. Voter approval ballot measure – simple majority (50% + 1)

Other Formation Information:

- No feasibility or cost studies required
- Formation of an MPD is categorically exempt from the requirements of SEPA
- No public hearing requirements for the City Council prior to the resolution consideration/adoption

Funding Information for the MPD board:

- Funded primarily through regular property tax of up to \$0.75 per \$1,000 of assessed value
- Generally permanent; does not expire
- The levy is subject to the 1% annual property tax revenue growth limit under Washington law unless voters approve a levy lift

Revenue Uses

- Revenue from MPD can only be utilized for parks and recreation-related facilities, programs, and services established by the MPD and cannot be used by the City.
  - o Examples: park maintenance, recreation programming, parkland acquisition

### Timeline Projection Recommendations:

May: Adopt Resolution by August Primary deadline (beginning of May)  
August: Get voter approval of the creation of MPD in the August Primary Election  
Fall: MPD Board is created and authorized to levy a tax but must hold a public hearing per RCW 84.55.120.  
November: MPD must notify King County of intention to levy a tax by the November 30 deadline.  
January: MPD tax goes into effect January 1 and MPD can start collecting.

Resources:

Chapter 35.61 RCW                      RCW 84.52.020  
MRSC Revenue Guide for Washington Cities                      MRSC Inquiry Response

18120 68<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Kenmore, WA 98028

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# City of Kenmore, Washington

## Memorandum

Date: March 11, 2026  
 To: City Manager Teri Killgore  
 From: Michelle Kang, Interim Assistant to the City Manager  
 Regarding: Levy Lid Lifts

This memo is to provide brief information about the four variations of Levy Lid Lifts (LLL) for the City Council to consider. Additional research can be provided upon request if the Council wishes to pursue any of these options for a potential revenue measure.

### Basic Facts:

- Voter-approved ballot measure to allow a City to exceed the 1% annual levy lid for any of their existing levies
- Increases an existing property tax; a City needs a separate levy lid lift for each respective levy they want to increase
- Cannot utilize LLL if the City is already levying its maximum rate (aggregate regular levy rate for most local governments combined may not exceed \$5.90 per \$1,000 per assessed valuation [RCW 84.52.043])
  - Senior taxing district + Junior taxing district rates
- Cities can exempt senior citizens, disabled veterans, and other people with disabilities from the tax increase resulting from a levy lid lift, if desired (RCW 84.36.381). This must be stated in the ballot measure. This will result in two separate assessed valuations for your levy: One that applies to the levy amount below the lid lift, and a smaller assessed valuation that applies to the levy lid lift portion only.
- Simple Majority (50% + 1) and no minimum voter turnout requirement
- Single-Year LLL vs. Multi-Year LLL (up to six years) – two options within each

### Comparison of Levy Lid Lift Options

	“Single-Year” Option	“Multi-Year” Option
Number of years you can exceed the 1% annual levy limit	1	Up to 6
Temporary option	After Year 1, levy amount increases up to 1% annually for specified number of years. After measure expires, levy reverts as if lid lift never occurred.	Lid lift lasts up to 6 years, with annual limit factor specified by city. After measure expires, levy reverts as if lid lift never occurred.
Permanent option	Year 1 levy is used to calculate all future 1% levy increases	Levy amount in final year is used to calculate all future 1% levy increases
May be used for	Any lawful governmental purpose	Any limited purpose stated in the ballot measure
Supplanting restrictions?	None	None
Election date	Any special, primary, or general election	Primary or general election only
Voter approval required	Simple majority	Simple majority

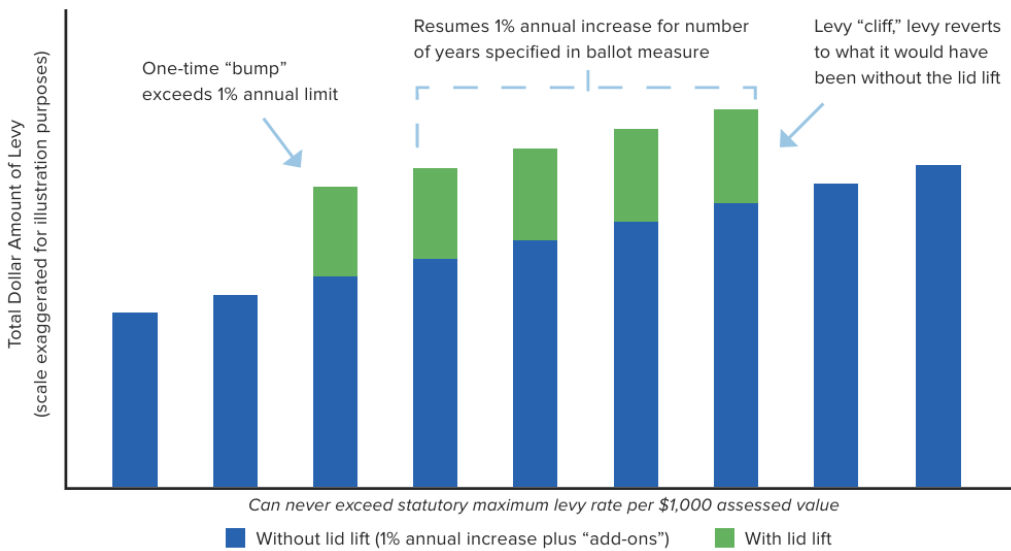
18120 68<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, Kenmore, WA 98028

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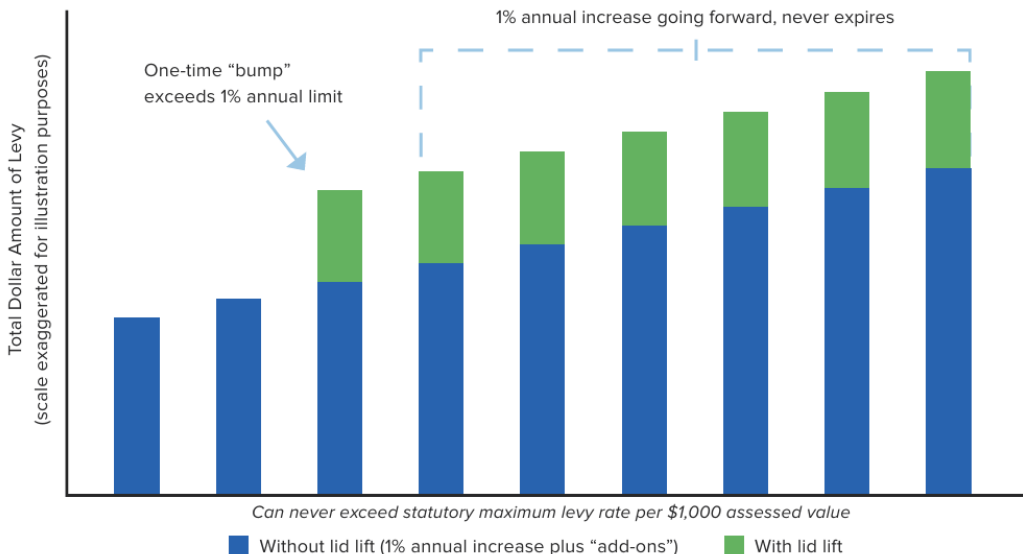
**Single-Year Levy Lid Lift:**

- RCW 84.55.050(1)
- On ballot measure, must state the maximum tax rate to be imposed in the first year (example: \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value)
- **Temporary:**
  - One time bump exceeds 1% annual limit
  - Resumes 1% annual increase until measure expires
  - Reverts back as if LLL did not exist
- **Permanent:**
  - One time bump exceeds 1% annual limit
  - Resumes 1% annual increase going forward
  - Never expires (does not revert back)

**SINGLE-YEAR TEMPORARY LEVY LID LIFT**



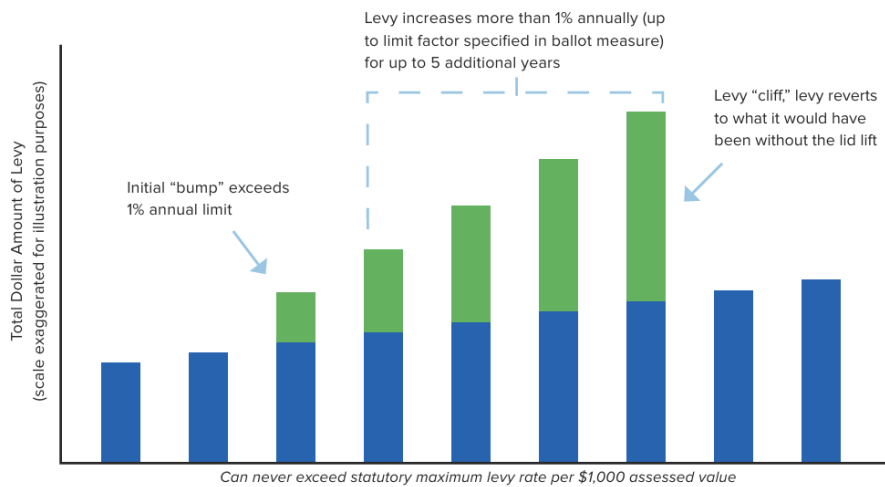
**SINGLE-YEAR PERMANENT LEVY LID LIFT**



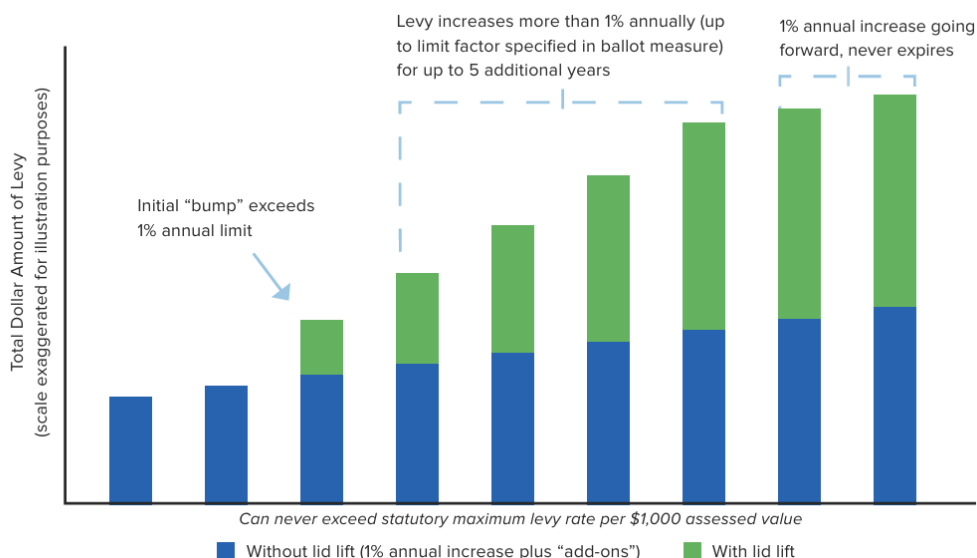
### Multi-Year Levy Lid Lift:

- RCW 84.55.050(2)
- Revenues must be used for a more limited purpose than single-year levy lid lifts; narrower than “any general fund purpose” or “general governmental purpose”
- Ballot measures cannot state the maximum levy rate for subsequent years after the first year, but instead must state the limit factor to be used for all subsequent years as either an annual percent increase or inflation index
- **Temporary:**
  - Initial bump exceeds 1% annual limit
  - Additional years can also exceed 1% up to five additional years
  - Reverts back as if LLL did not exist
- **Permanent:**
  - Initial bump exceeds 1% annual limit
  - Additional years can also exceed 1% up to five additional years
  - Resumes 1% annual increase going forward
  - Never expires (does not revert back)

#### MULTI-YEAR TEMPORARY LEVY LID LIFT



#### MULTI-YEAR PERMANENT LEVY LID LIFT



**Timeline Projection Option – February Special Election**

**(only available for Single-Year)**

- November Y1 Adopt Resolution and ballot measure language for Levy Lid Lift.
- December Resolution and ballot measure must be filed to King County by the February Special Election deadline (additional committee deadlines during this time period).
- February Y2 Get voter approval for the Levy Lid Lift during the February Special Election. Election is certified late February.
- November Levy Lid Lift must be certified with King County by the November 30 deadline per RCW 84.52.020.
- January Y3 New property tax levy goes into effect January 1.

**Timeline Projection Option – April Special Election**

**(only available for Single-Year)**

- January Adopt Resolution and ballot measure language for Levy Lid Lift.
- February Resolution and ballot measure must be filed to King County by the April Special Election deadline (additional committee deadlines during this time period).
- April Get voter approval for the Levy Lid Lift during the April Special Election. Election is certified early May.
- November Levy Lid Lift must be certified with King County by the November 30 deadline per RCW 84.52.020.
- January New property tax levy goes into effect January 1.

**Timeline Projection Option – August Primary Election**

**(available for either Single-Year or Multi-Year)**

- April Adopt Resolution and ballot measure language for Levy Lid Lift.
- May Resolution and ballot measure must be filed to King County by the August Primary Election deadline (additional committee deadlines during this time period).
- August Get voter approval for the Levy Lid Lift during the August Primary Election. Election is certified mid-August.
- November Levy Lid Lift must be certified with King County by the November 30 deadline per RCW 84.52.020.
- January New property tax levy goes into effect January 1.

**Timeline Projection Option – November General Election**

**(available for either Single-Year or Multi-Year)**

- July Adopt Resolution and ballot measure language for Levy Lid Lift.
- August Resolution and ballot measure must be filed to King County by November General Election deadline (additional committee deadlines during this time period).
- November Get voter approval for the Levy Lid Lift during the November General Election. Election is certified late November.
- November Levy Lid Lift must be certified with King County by the November 30 deadline per RCW 84.52.020.
- January New property tax levy goes into effect January 1.

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Resources:

MRSC

King County Election Services

## KenMORE Enhanced Priorities Levy

Research Brief for Kenmore City Council — March 2026

Kenmore has declared climate action, affordable housing, and human services as enhanced priorities but has not yet structurally funded any of them. Cities across Washington and the country have taken these priorities to voters — and won. This document reviews that evidence, examines the less encouraging track records of public safety levies and metro parks districts, and outlines what a Kenmore measure could look like.

### 1. Washington State Evidence — Climate, Housing, Human Services

Housing, climate, and human services measures have a strong track record in Washington, including in suburban communities comparable to Kenmore.

Jurisdiction	Year	Measure	Rate / Amount	Result
Seattle	2023	Housing Levy renewal (7th cycle) Affordable housing production, rental assistance	\$970M / 7 yrs ~\$0.45/\$1,000 AV	PASSED 69%
Vancouver, WA	2023	Housing levy replacement Rental assistance, shelter, affordable housing	Property tax levy (replaced expiring)	PASSED 54%
King County	2023	Veterans, Seniors & Human Services Levy (4th renewal)	Countywide property tax	PASSED 71%
Bellingham	2023	Greenways Levy Equity + climate resilience framing	\$0.41/\$1,000 AV (to \$1.55 total)	PASSED
Seattle	2025	Families, Education & Childcare Levy (\$1.3B)	Levy lid lift	PASSED easily

Housing levies pass comfortably in progressive-leaning WA jurisdictions. Vancouver's 54% margin shows that more moderate/suburban communities can get there, but margins are tighter. The King County VSHSL model — bundling multiple human services categories under one umbrella levy — is closest to what a KenMORE measure would resemble.

### 2. National Evidence

#### Climate-Focused Measures

## Analysis provided by Councilmember Culver

Jurisdiction	Year	Measure	Revenue	Result
Denver, CO	2020	Measure 2A: Climate Protection Fund 0.25% sales tax for renewable energy, EV infrastructure, climate justice	Projected \$40M/yr Actual ~\$200M/yr	PASSED 64%
Ann Arbor, MI	2022	Community Climate Action Millage \$1/\$1,000 taxable value, 20 years Solar, energy efficiency, transit, trees	~\$7M/yr ~\$140M lifetime	PASSED 71%
Portland, OR	2018	Clean Energy Fund (Measure 26-201) 1% surcharge on large corp. retail sales Clean energy, green jobs, equity focus	Projected \$54–71M/yr Actual ~\$200M/yr	PASSED 65%

Climate revenue measures consistently outperform their initial projections, often dramatically — Denver and Portland both came in at roughly 3–5x forecast. The economic activities being taxed are growing sectors.

### Housing-Focused Measures

Jurisdiction	Year	Measure	Amount	Result
LA County, CA	2024	Measure A: 0.5% sales tax Homeless services + affordable housing	\$1.1B/yr (no sunset)	PASSED
Pitkin County, CO	2024	Question 1A: Property tax Affordable/workforce housing, 25 years	\$8.5M/yr	PASSED
Charlotte, NC	2024	Housing bond	\$100M	PASSED
Asheville, NC	2024	Housing bond	\$20M	PASSED
Ingham County, MI	2024	Housing & homelessness millage	Property tax	PASSED 62%
San Antonio, TX	2022	Measure F: Housing bond Part of \$1.1B civic investment package	\$150M	PASSED

Housing ballot measures passed at historically high rates in 2024, even amid voter anxiety about cost of living. The National Housing Crisis Task Force notes that dozens of local governments have followed Seattle's 1986 model. Support transcends geographic and partisan divides.

### Combined / Companion Measures

Denver's 2020 approach is the most instructive national model. Denver ran Measure 2A (climate) and Measure 2B (homelessness/human services) as companion measures on the same ballot. Both passed at

## Analysis provided by Councilmember Culver

~64%. Voters said yes to each priority independently rather than facing an all-or-nothing omnibus vote, which insulated each measure from any controversy attached to the other.

### 3. Public Safety Levy Track Record

Property tax-based public safety measures have a poor track record in Washington, particularly in suburban King County and Snohomish County cities. Sales tax measures have fared somewhat better, but the overall picture is discouraging.

#### November 2024 — Public Safety Measures

Jurisdiction	Mechanism	Description	Result
Spokane	Sales tax	Police, fire, municipal court	PASSED
Longview	Sales tax	Police staffing	PASSED
Langley	Sales tax	Police and criminal justice	PASSED
Woodway	Levy lid lift	Public safety services	PASSED
Vancouver	Levy lid lift	Police and public safety	FAILED
Edgewood	Levy lid lift	Law enforcement and city services	FAILED
Des Moines	Levy lid lift	Police staffing and public safety	FAILED
Monroe	Levy lid lift	Public safety and parks	FAILED
Tacoma	Levy lid lift	Fire department response	FAILED
Snohomish Co.	Sales tax	Crime prevention, fentanyl response	FAILED

#### November 2025 — Public Safety Measures

Jurisdiction	Mechanism	Description	Result
Vancouver	Levy lid lift	Police/public safety (\$6M/yr) — 2nd try	PASSED
Mt. Vernon	Levy lid lift	Fire, police, parks	PASSED (narrowly)
Goldendale	Sales tax	Public safety (0.1%)	PASSED (narrowly)
Mansfield	Levy lid lift	Public safety, parks, services	PASSED (by 1 vote)
Burien	Levy lid lift	Police staffing, co-response model	FAILED (narrowly)
Lake Forest Park	Levy lid lift	Police, jails, mental health crisis	FAILED (<20 votes)

Jurisdiction	Mechanism	Description	Result
Edmonds	Levy lid lift	Police, parks, infrastructure	FAILED (wide margin)
Mercer Island	Bond	\$103M public safety/maintenance facility	FAILED
Yakima	Levy lid lift	Public safety and city services	FAILED (narrowly)
Cathlamet	Levy lid lift	Public safety and essential services	FAILED

**The pattern is stark.** Across the 2024 and 2025 cycles, public safety levy lid lifts in suburban/mid-size WA cities failed far more often than they passed. Notable:

- **Lake Forest Park** (Nov 2025): Police/jails/mental health levy failed by fewer than 20 votes. LFP hasn't passed a property tax increase in 25 years — a 2010 levy failed 78% against, a 2021 parks/sidewalks levy failed 65% against. The trend improved but still didn't cross the line.
- **Burien** (Nov 2025): Police staffing and co-response levy failed narrowly — the second time Burien has failed to pass a public safety property tax measure.
- **Edmonds** (Nov 2025): An omnibus police/parks/infrastructure levy failed by a wide margin — echoing Everett's 2024 omnibus failure. Bundling public safety with other categories didn't help; if anything, it muddied the message.
- **Vancouver** needed two tries — failed in Nov 2024, passed in Nov 2025 after a year of additional community engagement.

*An "enhanced priorities" levy that funds climate, housing, and human services — displacing general fund spending on those items — would free up general fund capacity for KCSO contract costs without requiring voters to approve a standalone public safety property tax increase.*

## 4. Parks Levies & Metro Parks Districts

The recent track record for metro parks district formation in small WA cities is consistently poor, though standalone park levies within existing districts have had mixed-to-decent results.

### Metro Parks District Formation Attempts

Jurisdiction	Year	Proposed Rate	Description	Result
Kirkland	2015	"Blank check" — no fixed rate	MPD to fund Aquatic & Recreation Center (ARC)	FAILED 65% against
Kirkland	2023	Levy lid lift (not MPD)	Aquatics, parks, recreation 86,000 sq ft center	FAILED 59% against

## Analysis provided by Councilmember Culver

Jurisdiction	Year	Proposed Rate	Description	Result
Toppenish	2024	Not specified	MPD for parks, recreation, swimming pool	FAILED
Lacey	Aug 2025	Up to \$0.45/ \$1,000 AV	MPD governed by council ex officio	FAILED (narrowly)

### Park Levy Successes (for comparison)

Jurisdiction	Year	Type	Result
King County	Aug 2025	6-year parks, trails, open space levy (~\$1.4B)	PASSED easily
Spokane	Nov 2025	\$240M parks & recreation levy lid lift	PASSED
N. Whidbey Island PRD	Nov 2024	6-year park & recreation district levy	PASSED
Tanglewilde PRD	Aug 2025	6-year regular levy (replacement)	PASSED
Davenport (Lincoln Co.)	Nov 2024	6-year park levy	PASSED by 2 votes

**The distinction matters.** Existing park and recreation districts renewing or adjusting their levies generally pass. Creating a *new* metropolitan park district — which establishes a separate governing body (or council sitting ex officio) with independent taxing authority — has failed repeatedly. Voters are skeptical of new taxing entities even when they support parks in principle.

Kirkland's experience is particularly telling: voters rejected both the 2015 MPD (65% against) and the 2023 levy lid lift alternative (59% against) for what was essentially the same aquatics center project. The project itself may be the issue, but the pattern suggests that big-ticket single-facility asks are harder sells than broader parks-and-trails packages (cf. King County's \$1.4B levy passing easily).

A levy lid lift earmarked for parks is a more viable path to expanded parks funding than a new metro parks district — but it competes for the same levy capacity as the enhanced priorities package.

## 5. What a KenMORE Measure Could Look Like

Drawing from the most successful models nationally and in Washington, here is an illustrative structure.

**Vehicle:** Levy lid lift (RCW 84.55.050) with earmarking ordinance, or a combination of affordable housing levy (RCW 84.52.105) + lid lift for climate and human services.

**Rate:** ~\$0.40–\$0.50 per \$1,000 AV. At Kenmore's median home value (~\$700K), that's roughly \$23–29/month.

**Duration:** 7–10 years.

**Estimated annual revenue:** \$2.2–\$2.75M.

### Illustrative Allocation

Priority	Share	~Annual \$	Example Uses
Affordable Housing	40%	\$880K–\$1.1M	ARCH contributions, local housing trust fund, homeowner repair, foreclosure prevention
Climate Action	35%	\$770K–\$960K	Building electrification incentives, EV infrastructure, tree canopy, resilience planning
Human Services	25%	\$550K–\$690K	Behavioral health co-response, senior services, youth programs, food security

**5-year program total: \$11–\$14M in new dedicated revenue.**

## 6. Patterns: What Passes and What Fails

**Measures that pass tend to share these traits:**

- 1. Specificity.** Concrete deliverables and named spending categories. Ann Arbor's A2Zero plan, Seattle's housing production targets, and Denver's itemized categories all gave voters something to say yes to. "Enhanced priorities" works as an internal label, but the ballot measure itself needs specific programs and dollar amounts.
- 2. Aspirational framing.** Successful measures are framed as investments in community identity — "this is who we are" — not gap-filling for budget shortfalls. Voters approve visions; they reject bailouts.
- 3. Moderate taxpayer cost.** Measures under ~\$20/month for a median homeowner pass comfortably. Above ~\$25–30/month, margins get thin (Vancouver at 54%) or measures fail (Everett at 40%).
- 4. Equity mandates.** Explicit commitments to prioritize low-income communities appear in most successful recent measures and broaden the coalition rather than narrowing it.

**Measures that fail tend to share these traits:**

- 1. Omnibus budget bailouts.** Everett (2024, 40% yes) and Edmonds (2025, wide-margin failure) both bundled too many categories and read as "the city can't manage its budget." A KenMORE measure needs to

## Analysis provided by Councilmember Culver

read as an affirmative choice to fund new priorities, not a rescue package for the general fund.

**2. Public safety property tax asks.** The data in Section 3 speaks for itself. Suburban WA voters are deeply skeptical of property tax increases labeled as public safety funding.

**3. New taxing entities.** Metro parks districts and other new governance structures trigger "blank check" concerns. Voters prefer increases within existing, familiar tax mechanisms.

**4. Levy stacking / fatigue.** Timing relative to other ballot measures matters. Kenmore residents already pay the King County VSHSL and the recently-passed King County parks levy.

## 7. Key Considerations

**General fund capacity for public safety.** A levy that funds human services (behavioral health co-response, homelessness services) and climate/housing programs currently competing for general fund dollars would free up that capacity for KCSO contract costs and other core services. Dedicated revenue for declared priorities addresses the structural deficit indirectly — and avoids the public safety property tax track record documented in Section 3.

**King County VSHSL overlap.** Kenmore residents already pay the countywide human services levy. A city-level human services component would need to fill specific gaps the county levy doesn't cover — local behavioral health co-response, Kenmore-specific senior and youth programming — rather than duplicating county services.

**Denver's companion approach.** Running two smaller measures (e.g., an affordable housing levy under RCW 84.52.105 + a separate lid lift for climate and human services) would let voters say yes to each independently. If one priority proves more controversial, it wouldn't sink the other.

**Metro parks district alternative.** The MPD formation track record is poor (Kirkland 2x, Toppenish, Lacey — all failed). A levy lid lift earmarked for parks is more viable, but it competes for the same levy capacity as the enhanced priorities package. These are not easily combined.

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## Appendix: Legal Toolkit in Washington

**Affordable Housing Levy (RCW 84.52.105):** Up to \$0.50/\$1,000 AV, voter-approved, up to 10 years. Restricted to affordable housing for households at 50% AMI or below, plus homeownership assistance and home repair for 80% AMI or below. If both city and county impose this levy, the combined rate cannot exceed \$0.50/\$1,000.

**Housing & Related Services Sales Tax (RCW 82.14.530):** Up to 0.1% sales tax. Can be imposed councilmanically (no ballot needed). Covers affordable housing, behavioral health, and related services.

**General Levy Lid Lift (RCW 84.55.050):** The most flexible vehicle. Voter-approved increase to the city's regular property tax levy rate. Revenue goes to the general fund and can be earmarked by ordinance for any combination of priorities. This is the cleanest instrument for an omnibus "enhanced priorities" package.

*At \$0.40–\$0.50/\$1,000 AV on Kenmore's estimated \$5.5B total assessed valuation, a levy lid lift would generate roughly \$2.2–\$2.75M per year.*

# Analysis provided by Councilmember Culver

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Sources: RCW 84.52.105, RCW 82.14.530, RCW 84.55.050 | MRSC Ballot Measure Recaps (2024, Aug 2025, Nov 2025) | Ballotpedia | NLIHC | National Housing Crisis Task Force | Denver Climate Protection Fund | Ann Arbor A2Zero | Portland Clean Energy Fund | King County Elections

*Prepared for informational purposes. Not legal or financial advice. Revenue estimates are illustrative.*

**CITY OF KENMORE**

# **Financial Sustainability Study Session**

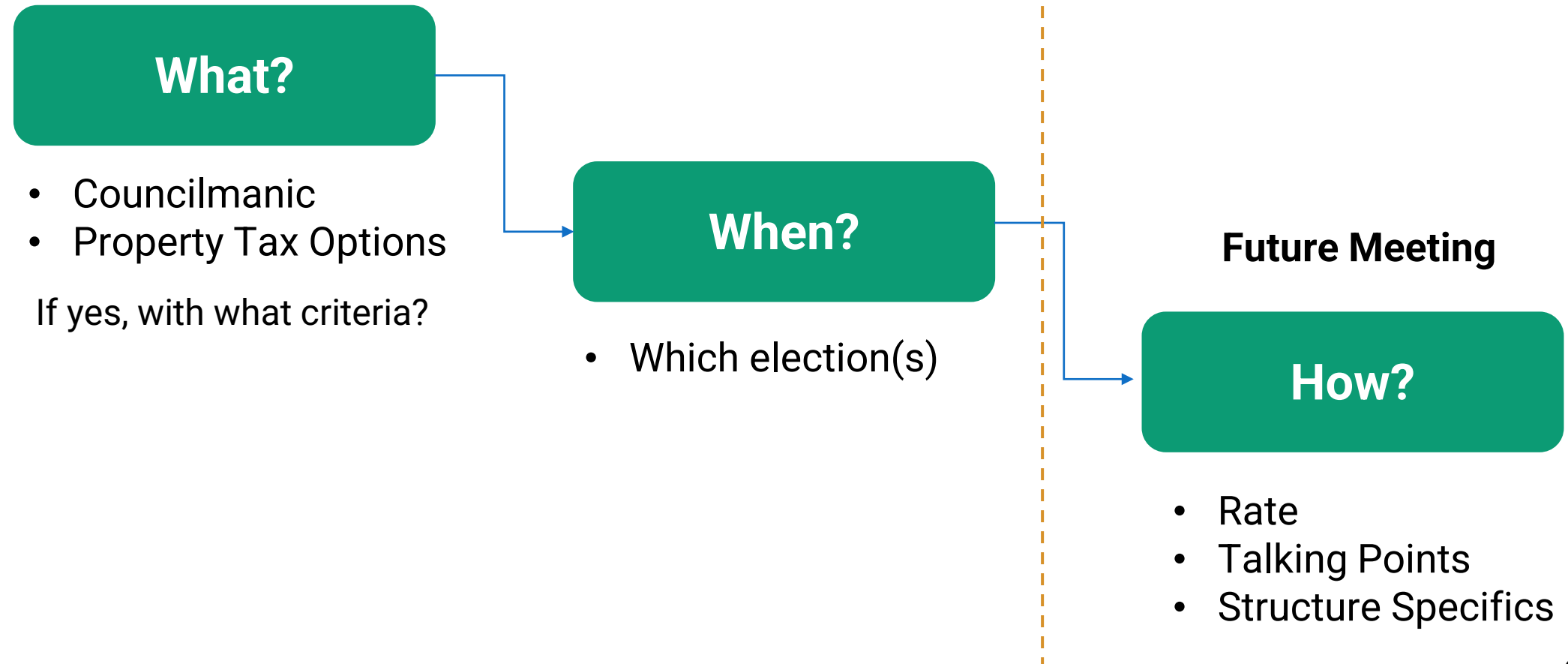
**April 6, 2026**

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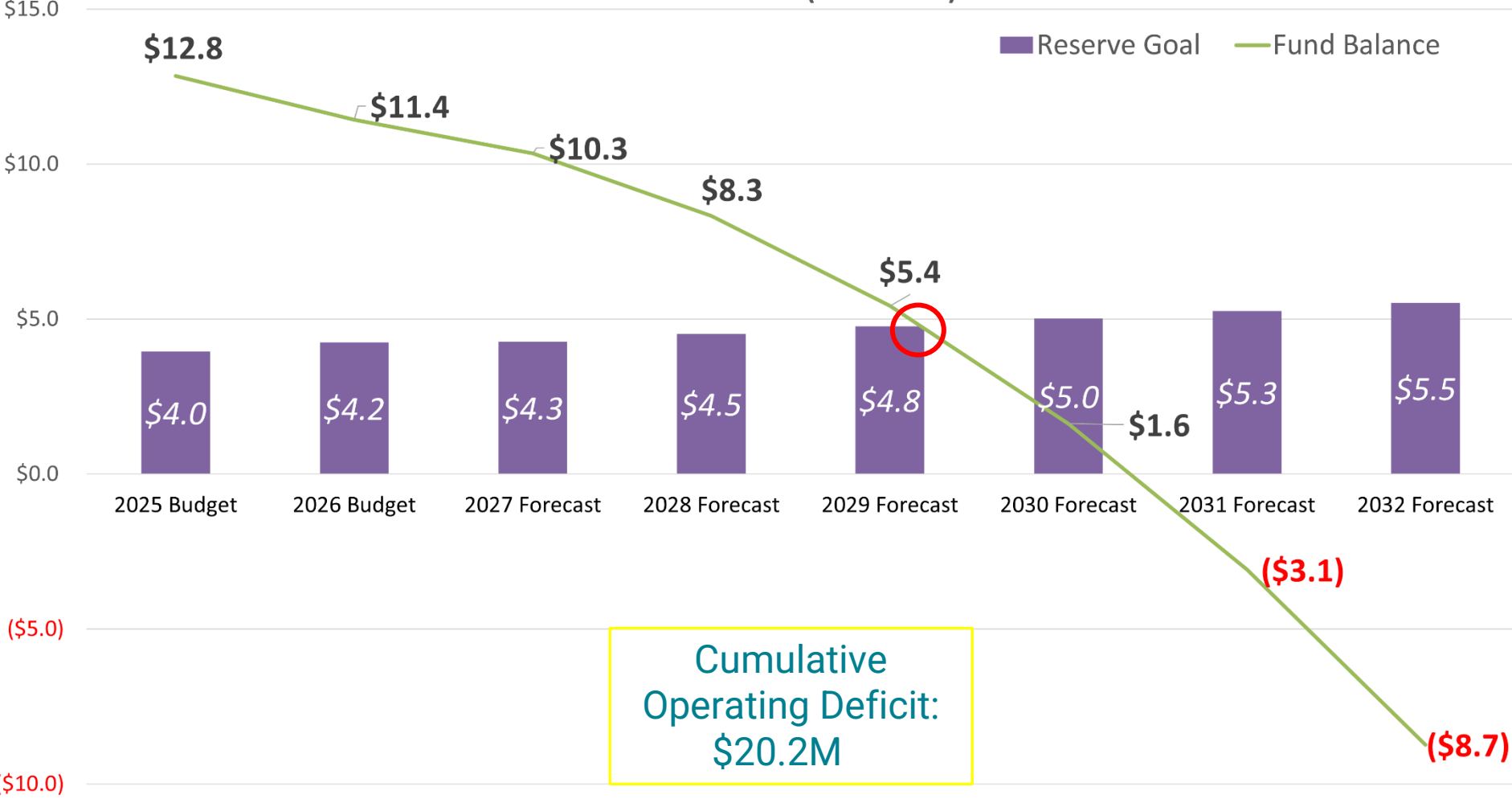


# Revenue Measure Options

*Alignment is critical in each stage before moving to the next.*



Consolidated General and Streets Funds Reserves (Regular)  
2025-2032 Forecast (in millions)

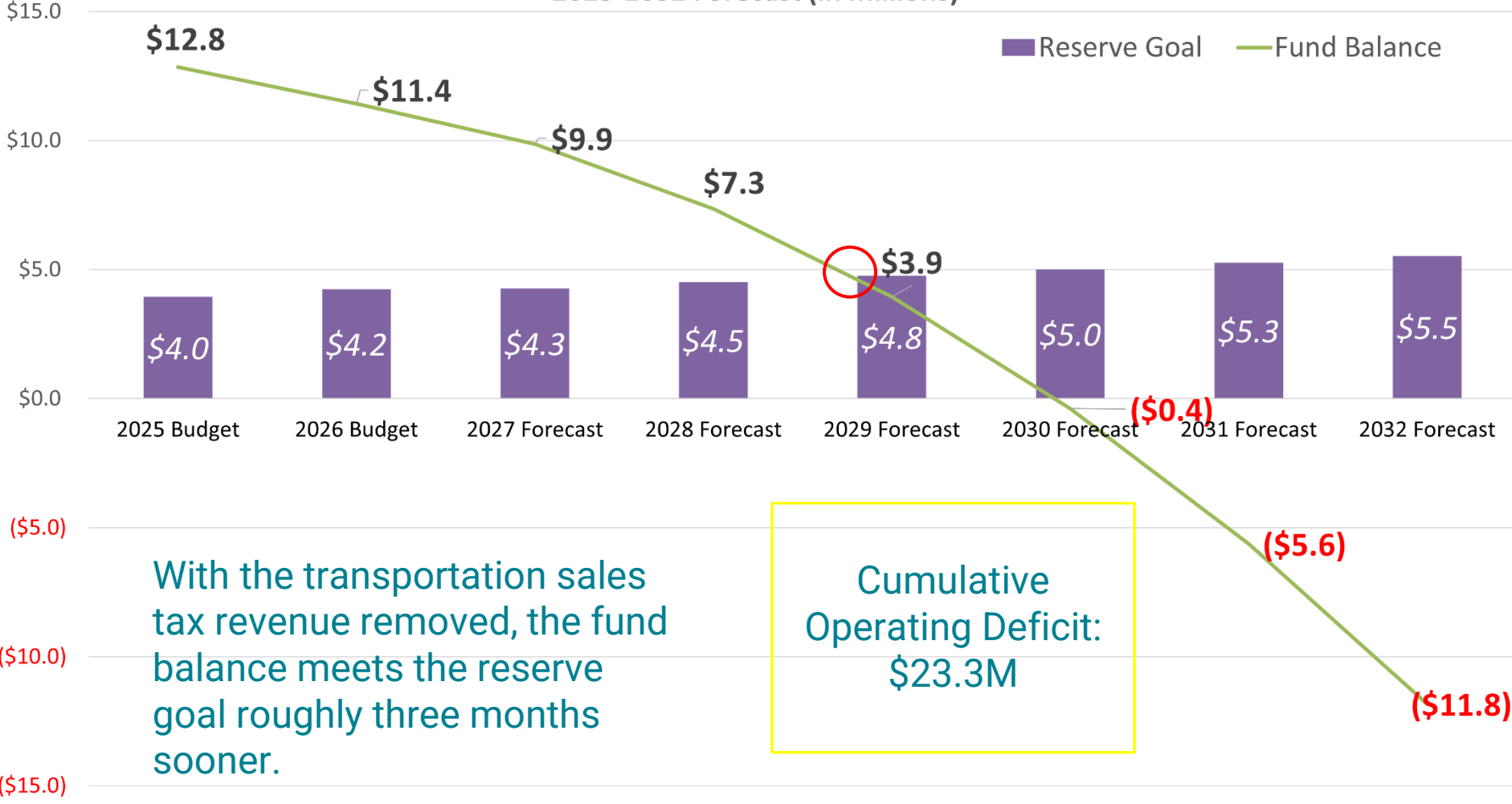


# General & Street Funds – Regular Expense Escalation

Includes Transportation Sales Tax Revenue



Consolidated General and Streets Funds Reserves (Regular, No Transportation Sales Tax)  
2025-2032 Forecast (in millions)



# General & Street Funds – Regular Expense Escalation

# Removes Transportation Sales Tax Revenue

# Under Discussion

## Councilmanic

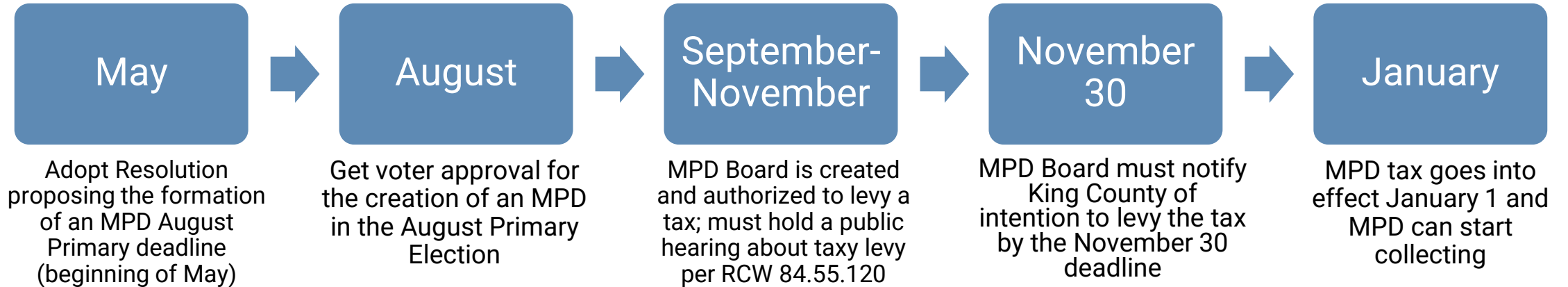
- Transportation (0.1%)
- Public Safety (0.1%)
- Utilities (Cable, Electric, Surface Water)
- Car Tabs

## Property Tax

- Public Safety LLL
- Metropolitan Parks District (MPD)
- KenMORE (Affordable Housing, Environment, Human Services, Economic Development/Strategic Opps)

# Ballot Measure Option Timelines

## Metropolitan Park District



## Levy Lid Lift – Example for November General Election



# Levy Lid Lift – Election Limitations

## FEBRUARY SPECIAL ELECTION

*ONLY available for:  
SINGLE-year  
Levy Lid Lift*

## APRIL SPECIAL ELECTION

*ONLY available for:  
SINGLE-year  
Levy Lid Lift*

## AUGUST PRIMARY ELECTION

*Available for both:  
SINGLE-year  
and  
MULTI-year  
Levy Lid Lifts*

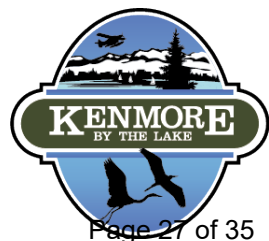
## NOVEMBER GENERAL ELECTION

*Available for both:  
SINGLE-year  
and  
MULTI-year  
Levy Lid Lifts*

# Ballot Measure Timing

Election Date	Council Action Deadline (Resolution and Ballot Measure Language)	Documents to King County Elections*
November 3, 2026	July 2026	August 4, 2026
February 9, 2027	November 2026	Early December 2026
April 27, 2027	January 2027	Mid-to-Late February 2027
August 3, 2027	April 2027	Early May 2027
November 2, 2027	July 2027	Early August 2027
February 8, 2028	November 2027	Early December 2027
April 25, 2028	January 2028	Mid-to-Late February 2028
August 1, 2028	April 2028	Early May 2028
November 7, 2028	July 2028	Early August 2028

\*Estimated timeframes. King County Elections release deadlines 8  
have not released deadlines for 2027 and 2028 elections.



# Property Tax Options

- **Levy Lid Lift**
  - Public Safety
  - Public Safety + Human Services
- **Metropolitan Park District**
- **Other Options?**
  - KenMORE ♥ : climate action, affordable housing, economic development, human services

# Councilmanic Revenue Options

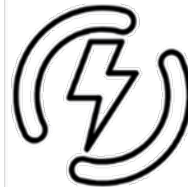
## Legal caps on tax increases – remaining options



Kenmore  
**\$40**

### Car tabs

Can increase to \$50, would generate \$175K



Kenmore  
**4%**

### Electric

Cap is 6% which adds \$400K unless voters approve a higher rate



Kenmore  
**6%**

### Surface Water

Each 1% increase generates \$50K, no limit



### Public Safety Sales Tax

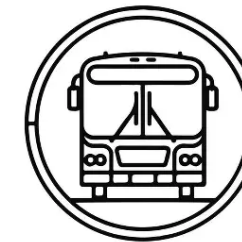
0.1% Councilmanic tax increase will generate \$425K



Kenmore  
**6%**

### Cable

May not be “unduly discriminatory”



This tax is included in the model

### Transportation Sales Tax

0.1% Councilmanic tax increase will generate \$425K

\* + any tax revenues generated by new construction, improvements to property, state assessed utility value increases, and wind turbines, solar, biomass, and geothermal facilities added to the tax rolls in the past year

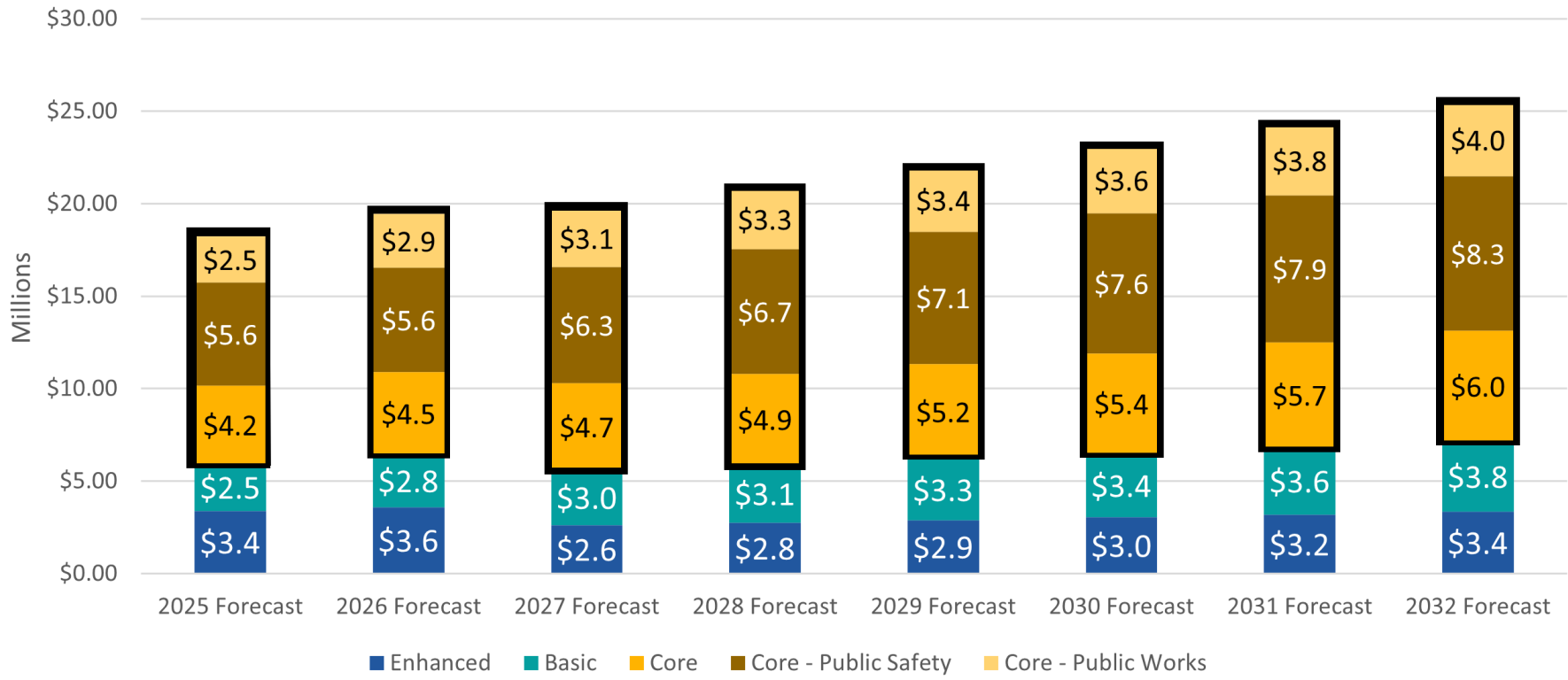
Current Kenmore rate – “legal max” not attained



# Gap To Fill

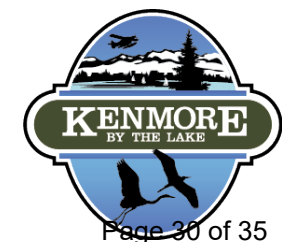
## 2025 – 2032 Forecasted General Fund Expenses

Core, Basic, and Enhanced Expenses (in millions)



In seven years, we forecast the following increases:

- Total Core expenses (Core, Public Safety, and Public Works) increase by \$6.0M
  - Public Safety increases by \$2.7M
  - Public Works increases by \$1.8M
- Basic expenses increase by \$1.3M



Total Core Costs	\$12.3	\$13.0	\$14.1	\$14.9	\$15.7	\$16.9	\$17.4	\$18.3
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**CITY OF KENMORE**

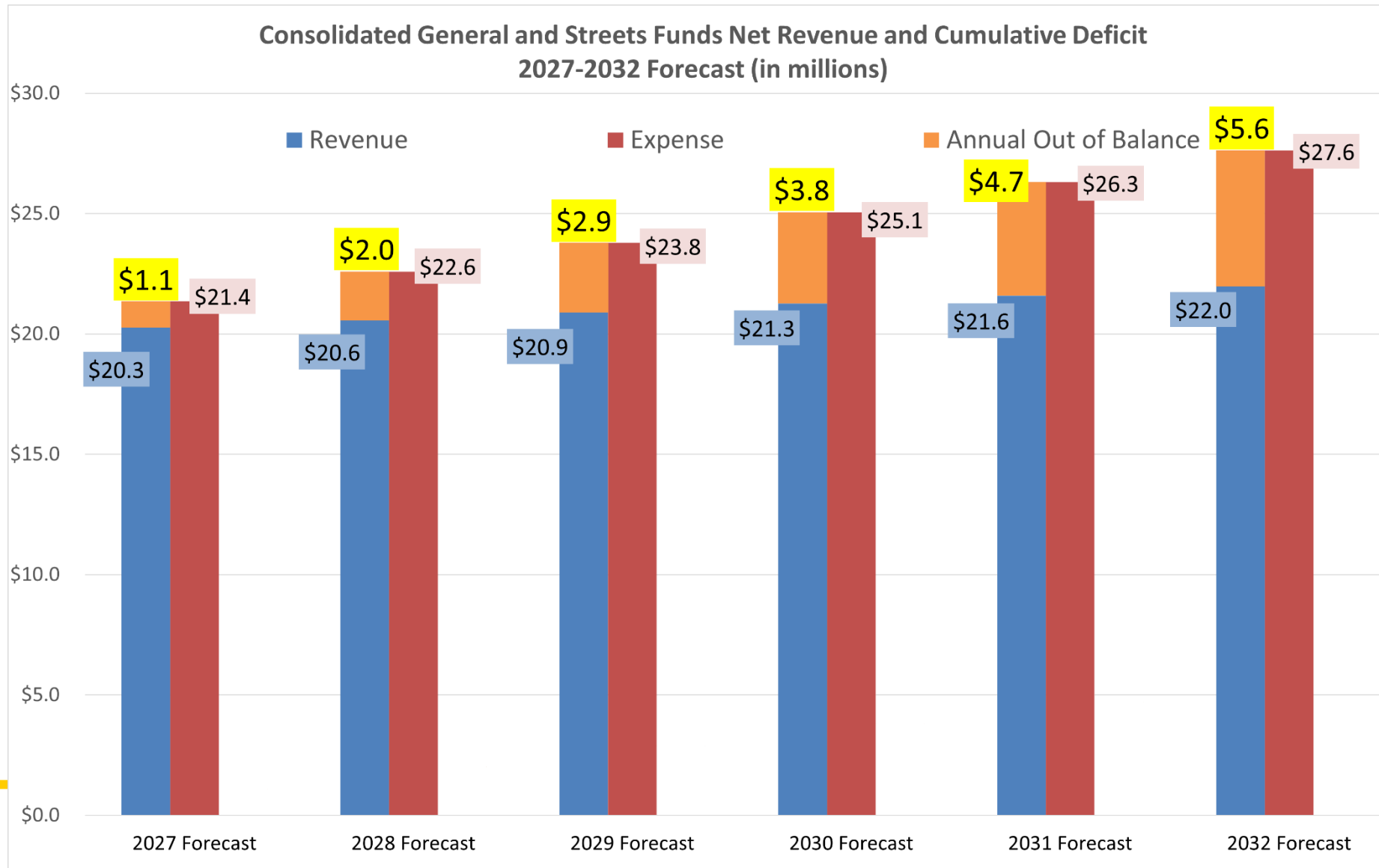
# Reference Slides

**April 6, 2026**

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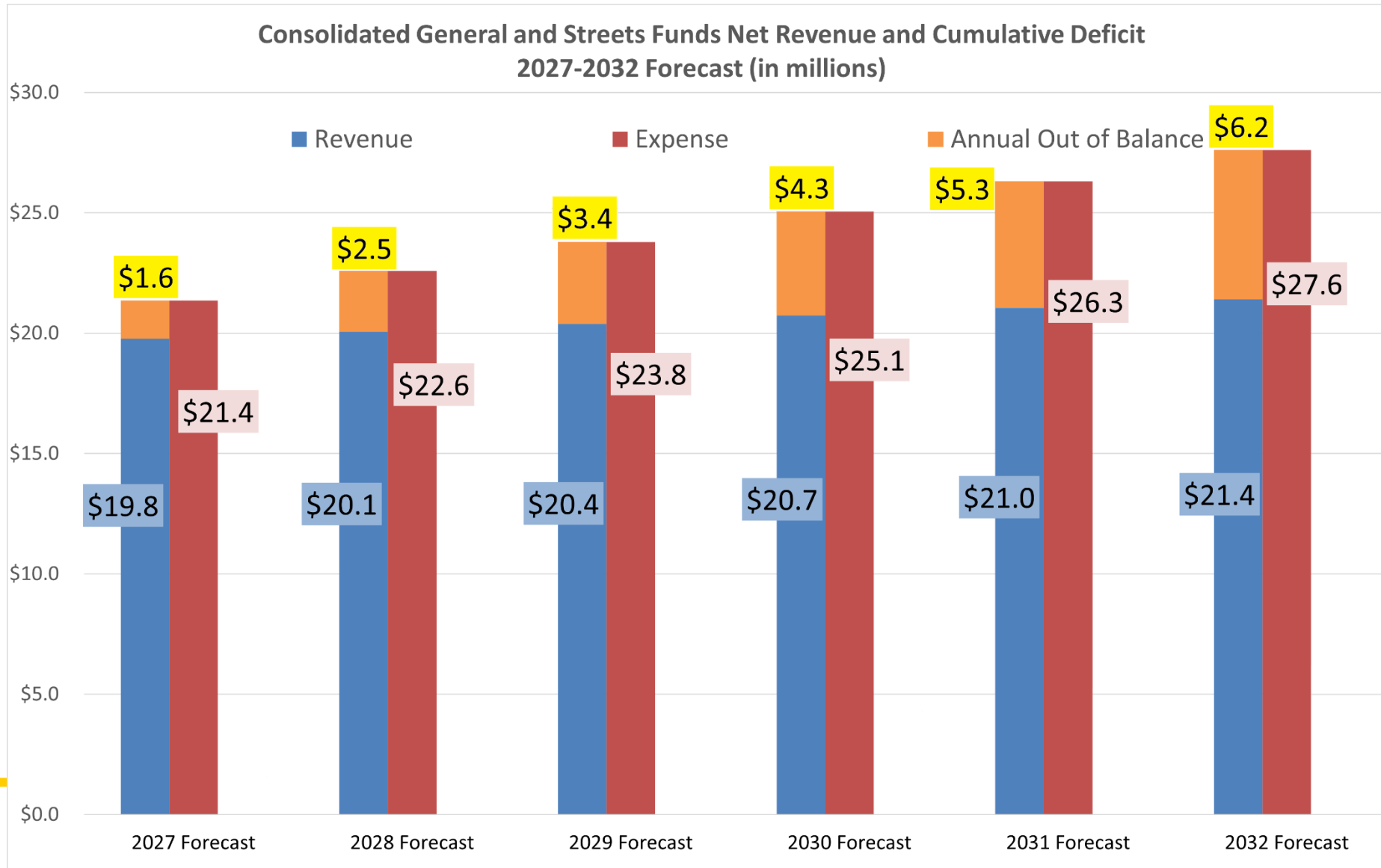


# The Gap To Fill



Cumulative  
Operating Deficit:  
\$20.2M

# The Gap To Fill



Transportation Sales Tax Revenue Excluded

Cumulative Operating Deficit:  
\$23.3M  
(-\$3.1M)

# Fallback Approaches

If no revenue measure goes forward, or one does not pass – at a high level, what approach should we take?

Forecasted  
Operating Deficit:  
General Fund +  
Streets Fund

	In Millions		
<b>Budget Cycle</b>	<b>2027-2028</b>	<b>2029-2030</b>	<b>2031-2032</b>
Forecast	(3.1) -7%	(6.7) -14%	(10.5) -19%
+Special Projects	(5.2) -11%	(9.1) -18%	(13.0) -23%

# Fallback Approaches

If no revenue measure goes forward, or one does not pass –  
at a high level, what approach should we take?

## *OPTIONS*

- Balance the Operating Budget starting in FY2027-2028 until significant new revenue, by one or more of the following:
  - Eliminate all special projects and reduce Enhanced programs first
  - Cut in reverse order of priorities
  - Broad reduction of service levels across programs
  - Some amount from additional efficiencies
- Proceed as is in 2027-2028 cycle, spend down reserves, then bigger changes in 2029-2030.
- Lower reserve requirements.

