



**City Council  
Special Meeting  
February 20, 2026 - 9:00 AM  
Muckleshoot Casino Resort  
2402 Auburn Way South, Auburn, WA 98002  
Prairie Convention Room**

## **AGENDA**

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### **CALL TO ORDER**

### **ROLL CALL**

### **2027-2028 BIENNIAL BUDGET LEADERSHIP RETREAT DAY TWO**

- A. Mayor, Council, and Director Relationship Building
- B. Discussion on Aligning City Vision, Mission, and Goals
- C. Discussion of 2027-2028 Biennial Budget Priorities

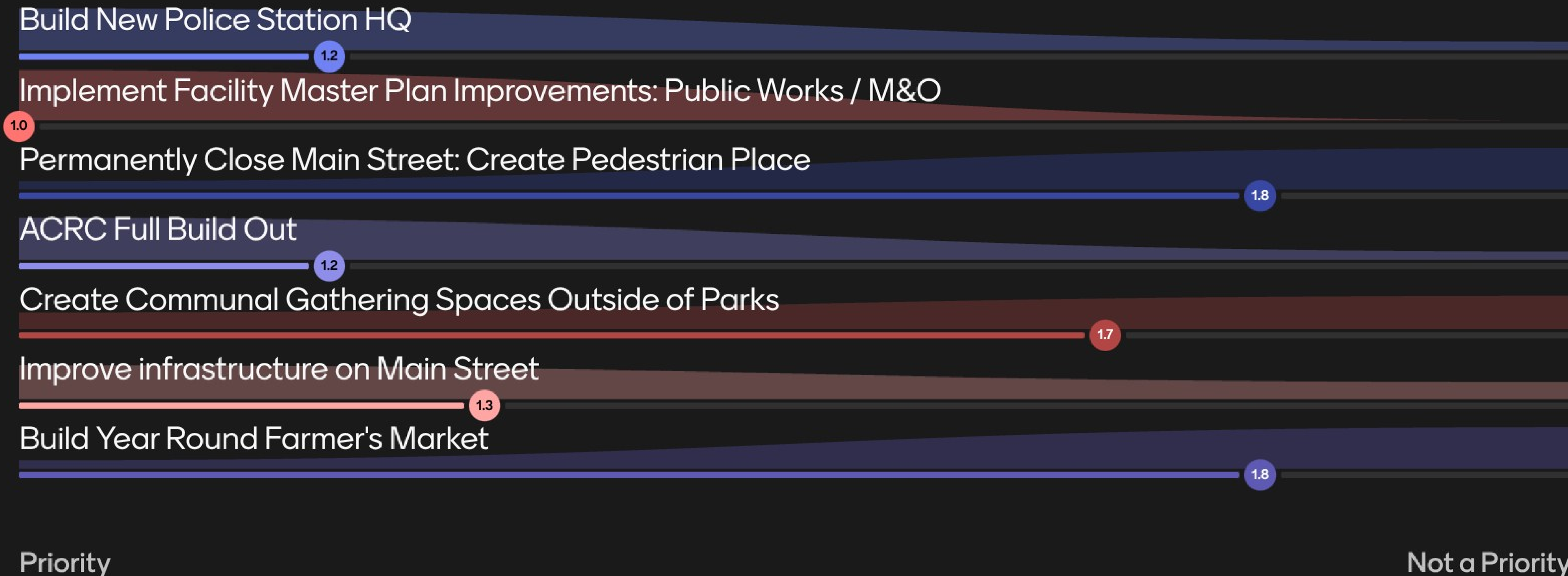
### **ADJOURNMENT**

Agendas and minutes are available to the public at the City Clerk's Office and on the City website (<http://www.auburnwa.gov>).

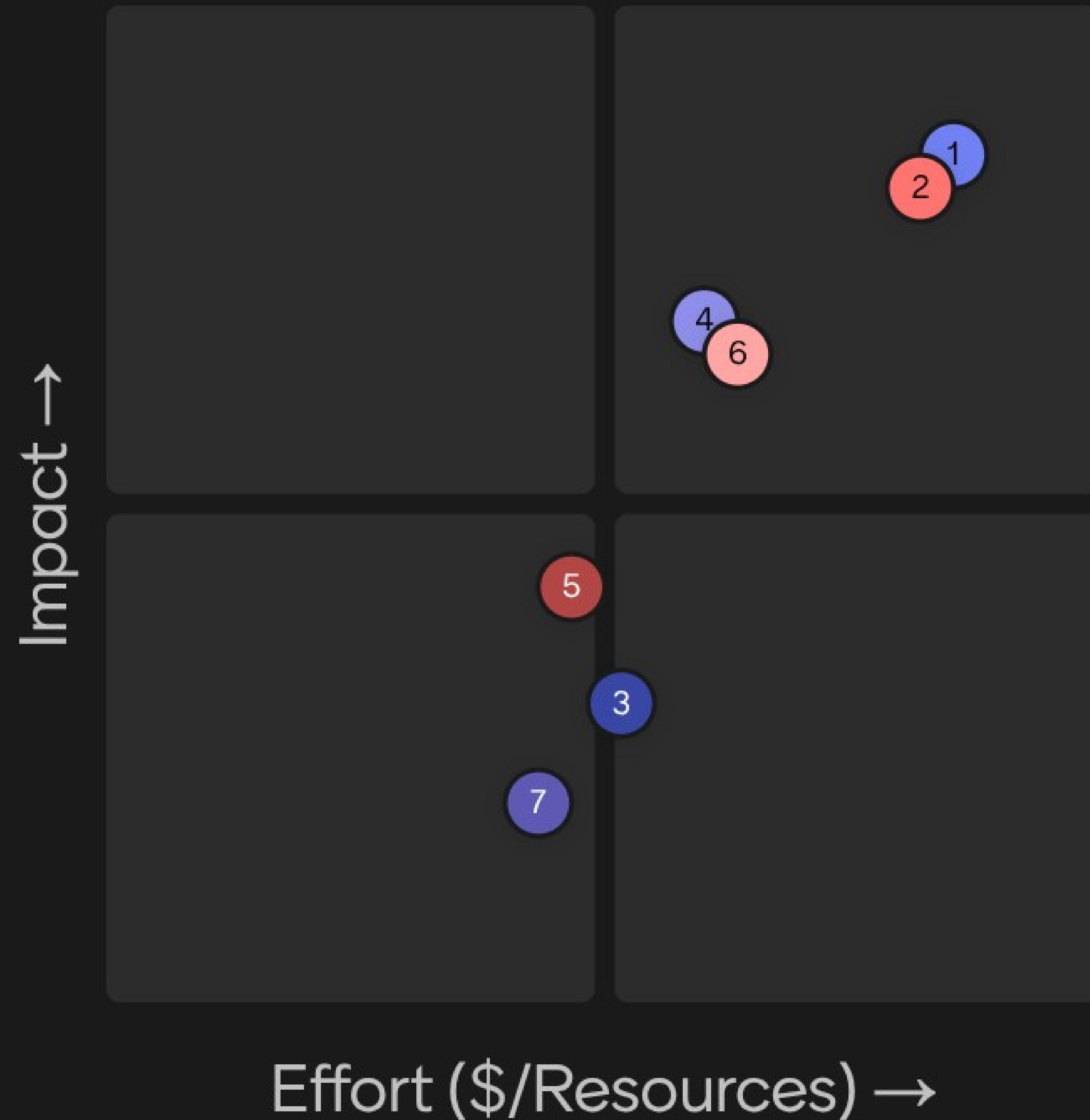
Name up to 5 of your favorite TV shows...

the good fight  
west wing  
lincoln lawyer  
spartacus  
of my five entourage sopranos  
paradise bridgerton landman  
tell me lies fleabag csi his and hers tulsa  
the expanse name rez dogs tv shows  
the bing bang theory

# Priority: How would you rate the City Controlled items?

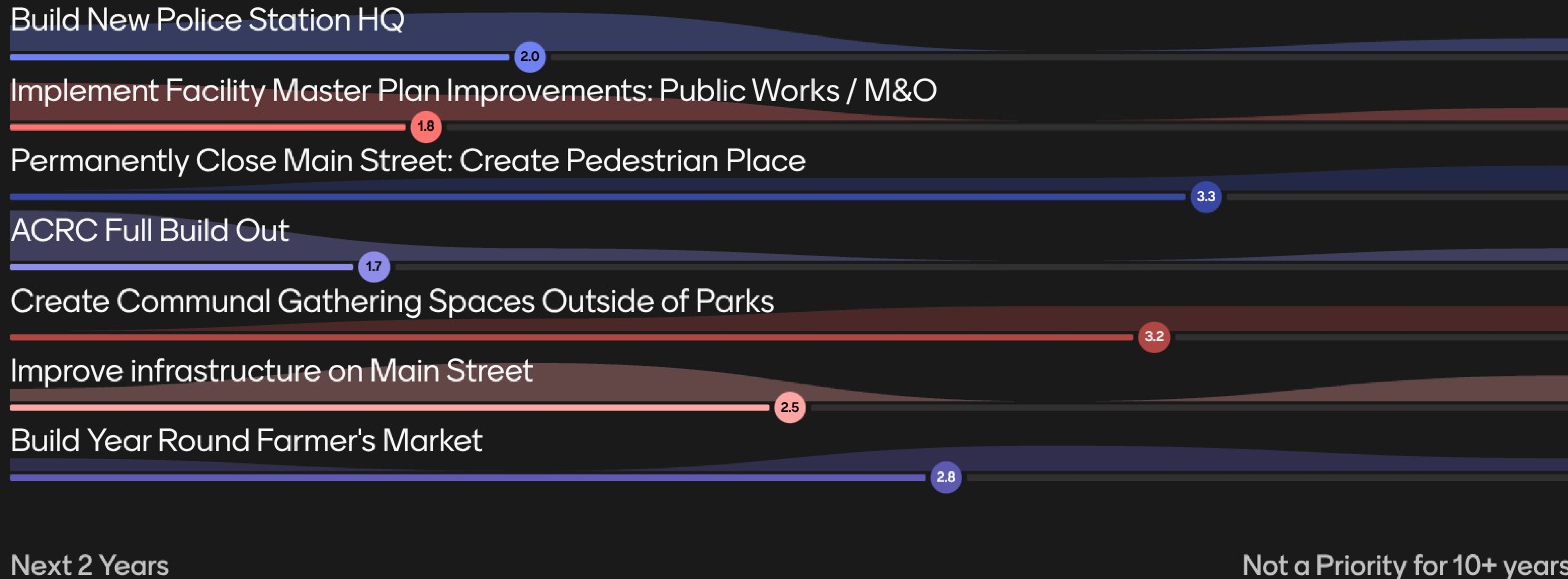


# Impact: How do you see impact & resource needs of **City Controlled**?



- 1 Build New Police Station HQ
- 2 Implement Facility Master Plan Improvements: Public Works / M&O
- 3 Permanently Close Main Street: Create Pedestrian Place
- 4 ACRC Full Build Out
- 5 Create Communal Gathering Spaces Outside of Parks
- 6 Improve infrastructure on Main Street
- 7 Build Year Round Farmer's Market

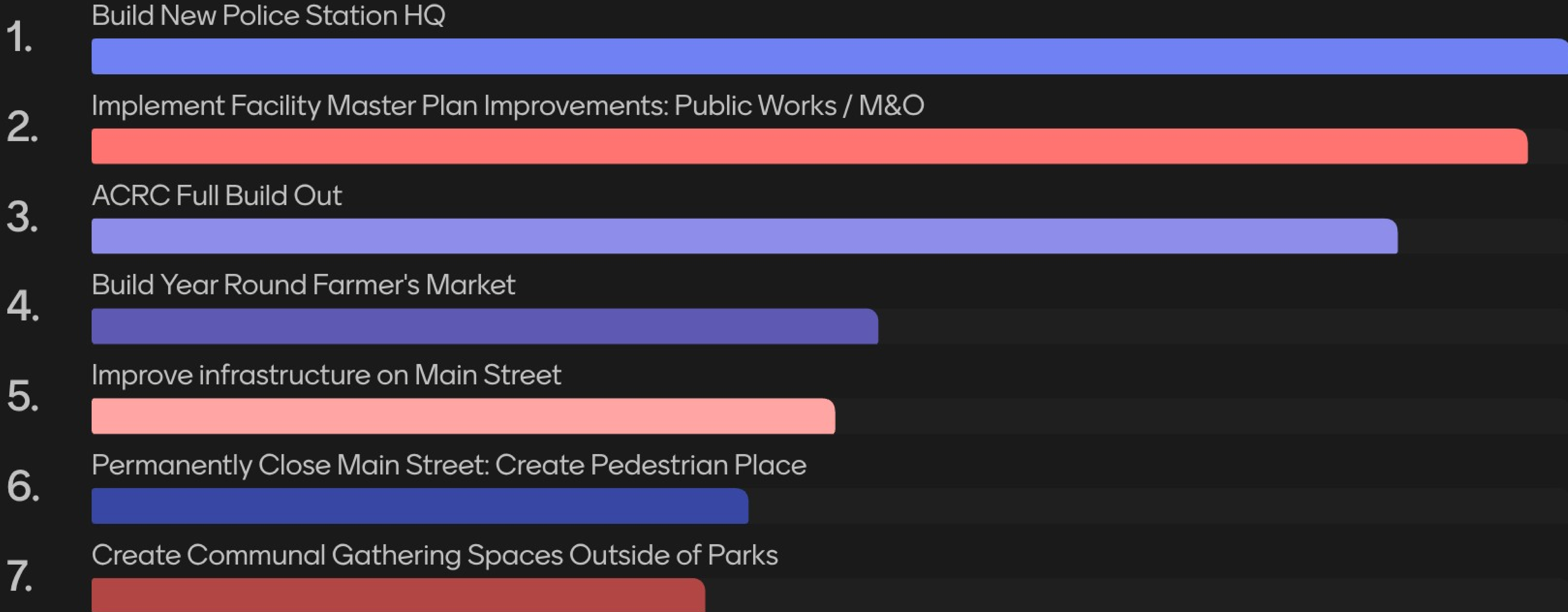
# Timeline: When should City-Controlled be worked on?



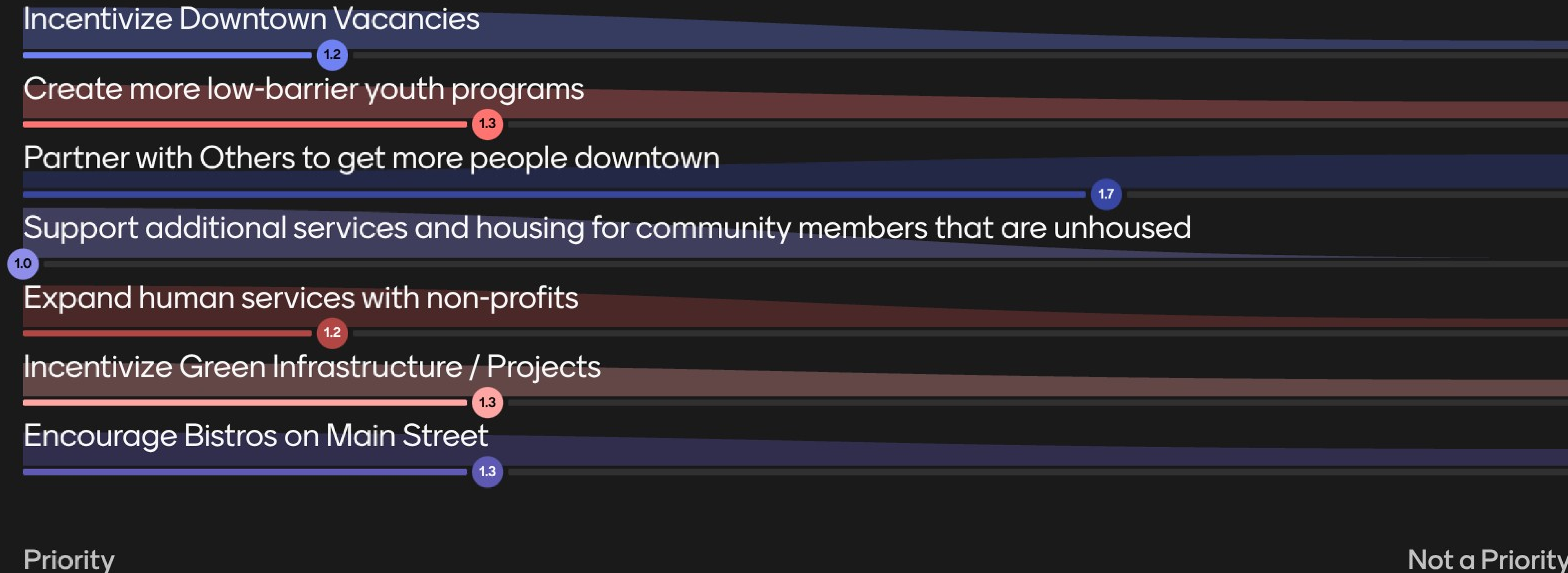
Next 2 Years

Not a Priority for 10+ years

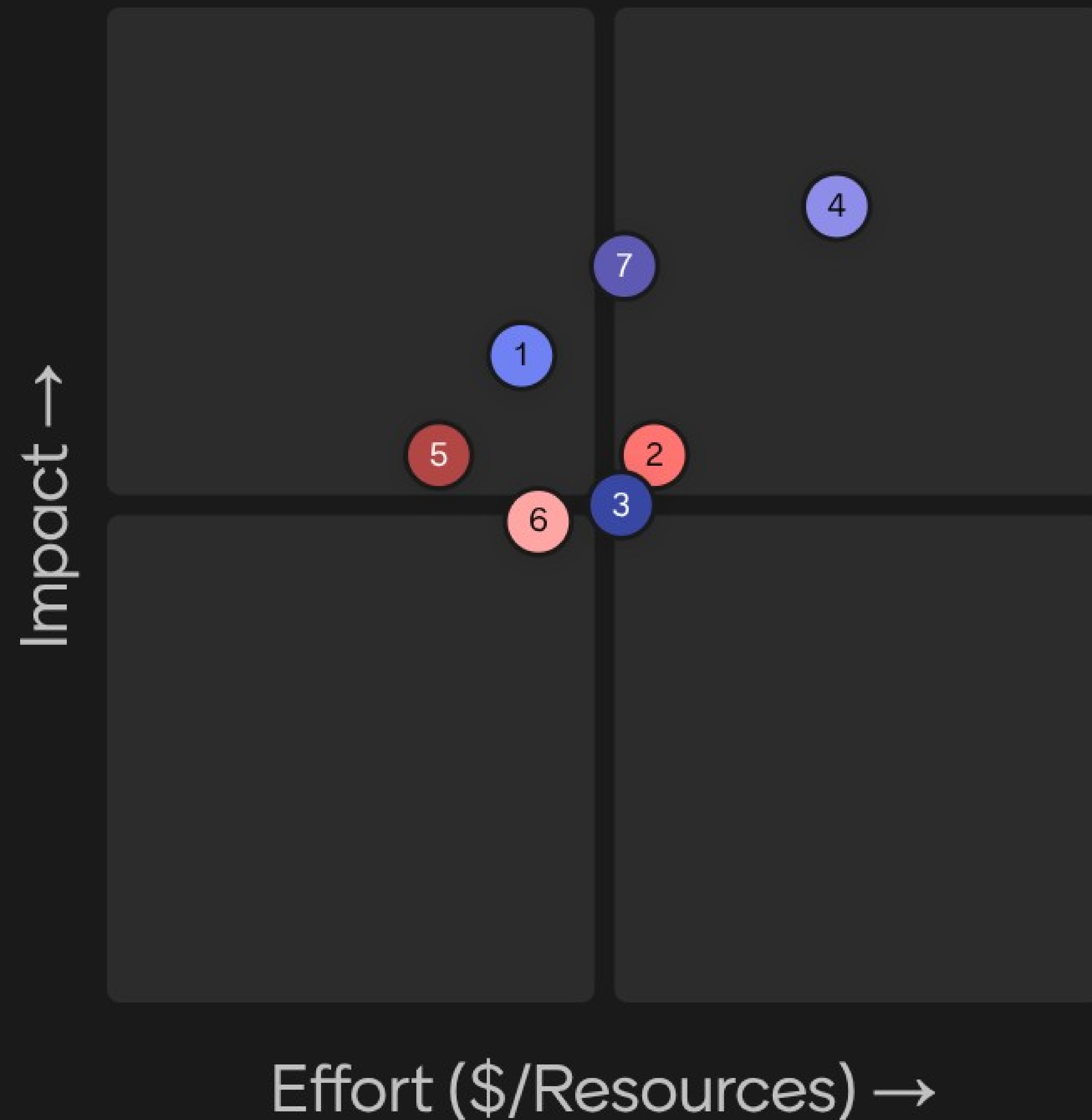
# Ranking: City Controlled Items



# Priority: How would you rate the Partial or Limited City Controlled Items?

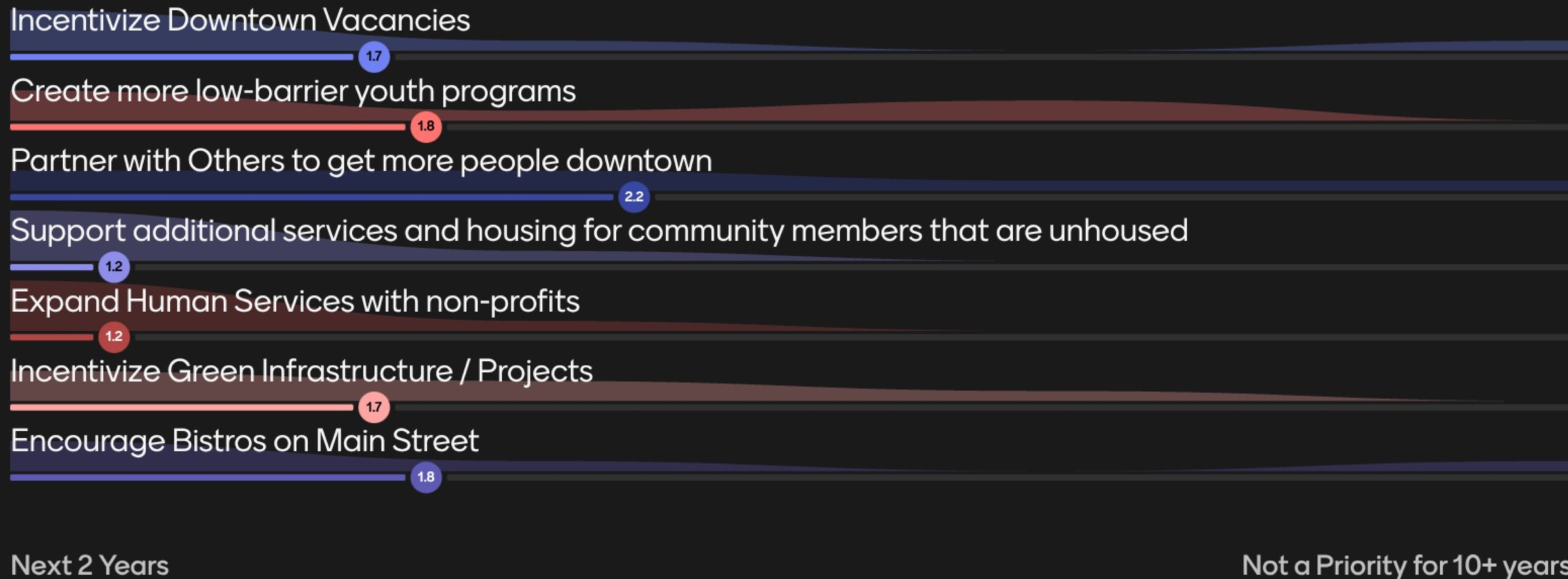


# Impact: How do you see impact & resource needs of **Partial or Limited City Controlled Items**?



- 1 Incentivize Downtown Vacancies
- 2 Create more low-barrier youth programs
- 3 Partner with Others to get more people downtown
- 4 Support additional services and housing for community members that are unhoused
- 5 Expand Human Services with non-profits
- 6 Incentivize Green Infrastructure / Projects
- 7 Encourage Bistros on Main Street

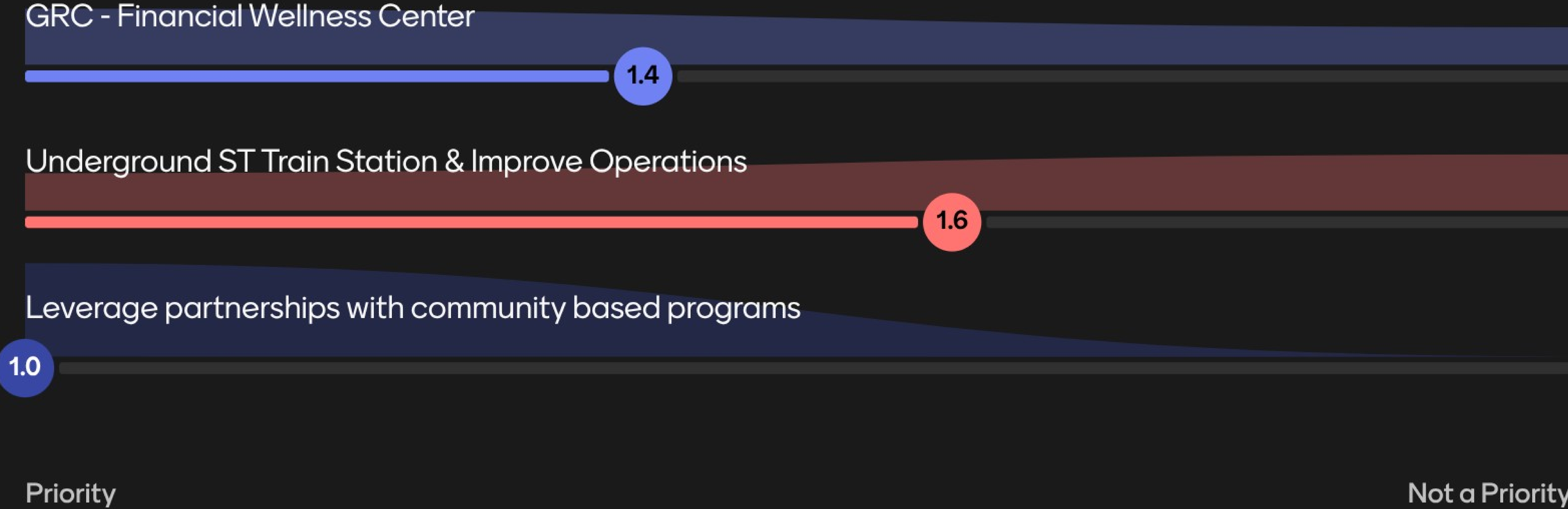
# Timeline: Partial or Limited City Control When should this be worked on?



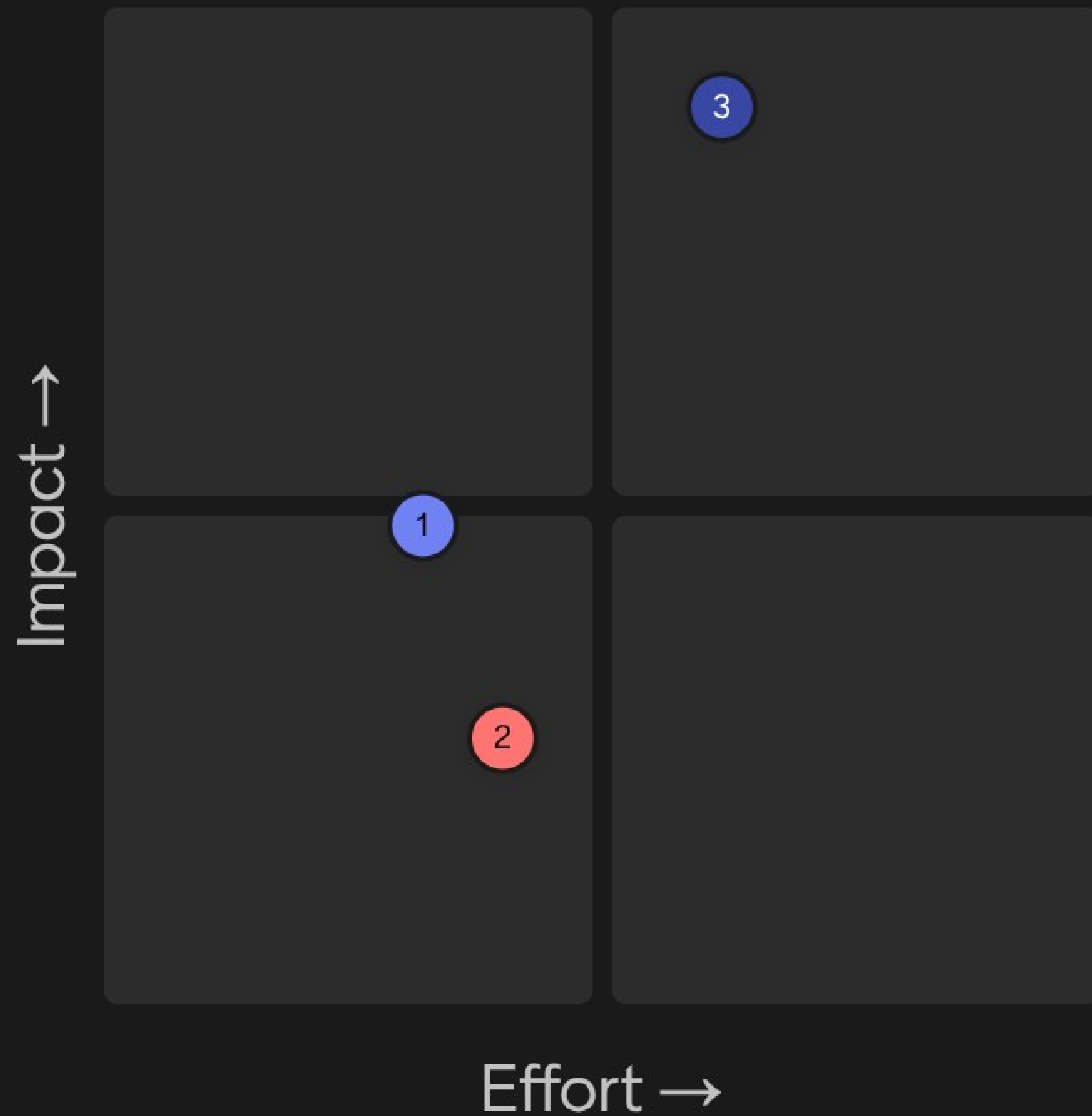
# Ranking: Partial or Limited City Control Items



# Priority: How would you rate the Limited or No City Controlled Items?



# Impact: How do you see impact & resource needs of **Limited or No City Controlled** Items?



- 1 GRC - Financial Wellness Center
- 2 Underground ST Train Station & Improve Operations
- 3 Leverage partnerships with community based programs



# City of Auburn Leadership Retreat

## Day 1

Relationships → VMG alignment →

Prioritization → Budget implications

PURPOSE

# Why We're Here

1

## Relationships

Strengthen bonds between City leaders: legislative, executive, and admin

2

## Alignment

Align around shared vision, mission, and goals

3

## Prioritization

Establish clear priorities for budget development

4

## Budget

Inform next Zero-Based Biennial Budget

# Ground Rules

## Lead with Respect & Grace

Treat everyone with dignity

## One Speaker, Listen Fully

No interruptions; seek to fully understand first

## Speak for Yourself

Focus on I statements  
Focus on the issues

## Support Participation

Create space for all voices  
Facilitated discussions

## Stay Focused on the Purpose of the day

Engage in good faith  
Lean into productive discomfort  
Lean on shared goals as north star

## Facilitator is going to facilitate

Time management  
Stay on topic  
Stay engaged

# Disagree Well Exercise

## State Perspectives

Share views without interruption

## Clarify First

No interruptions  
Ask questions before challenging points

## Pair Up

2-3 minutes on a position

## Disagree Constructively

Focus on ideas with calm curiosity

## Key Principles

- Focus on ideas, not people
- Summarize what you heard first
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## Topics

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- Chocolate / Vanilla Ice Cream

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- Expanding / Reducing Public Comment time

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- Expanding / Reducing Public Comment time
- Expanding Youth Services or Senior Services

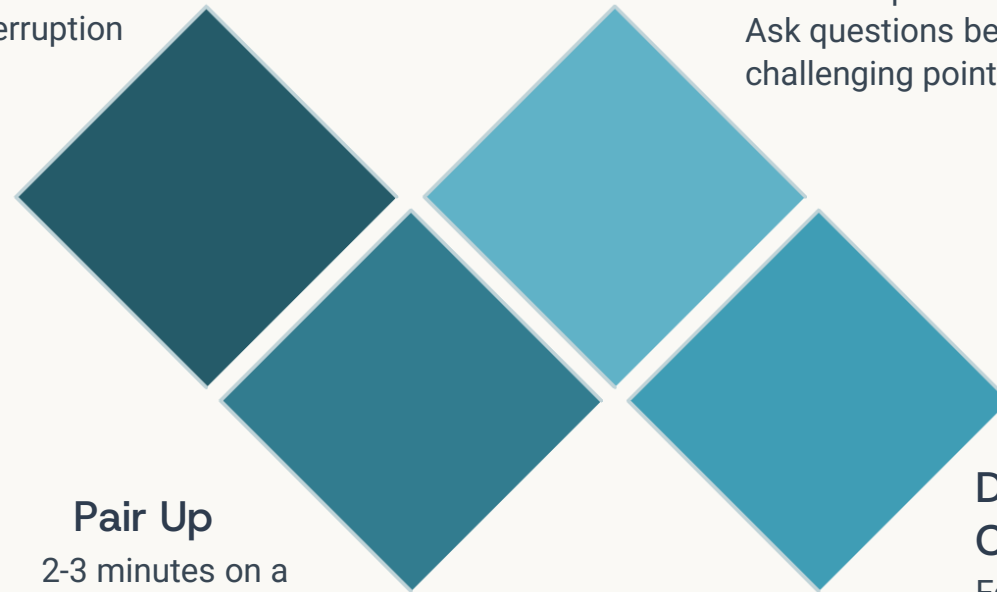
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- Chocolate / Vanilla Ice Cream
- Expanding / Reducing Public Comment time
- Expanding Youth Services or Senior Services
- Build new parks vs. upgrade existing parks

# Interview Feedback

Councilmember + Mayor + Limited Staff

Questions:

1. Relationship & Trust
2. City Vision
3. City Goals
- 4. Retreat Goals (focus on this now)**
5. Anything else



# Interview Feedback – Retreat Goals

## Collaboration & Teamwork

- Learn to more effectively work together and build trust
- Show up to collaborate
- Listen to consensus
- Build ability to respect each other
- Have empathy and curiosity

## Disagreement & Communication

- Disagree productively
- Be respectful

## Council Retreats

- **Host future Council retreat**
- Create time for Council-led discussions

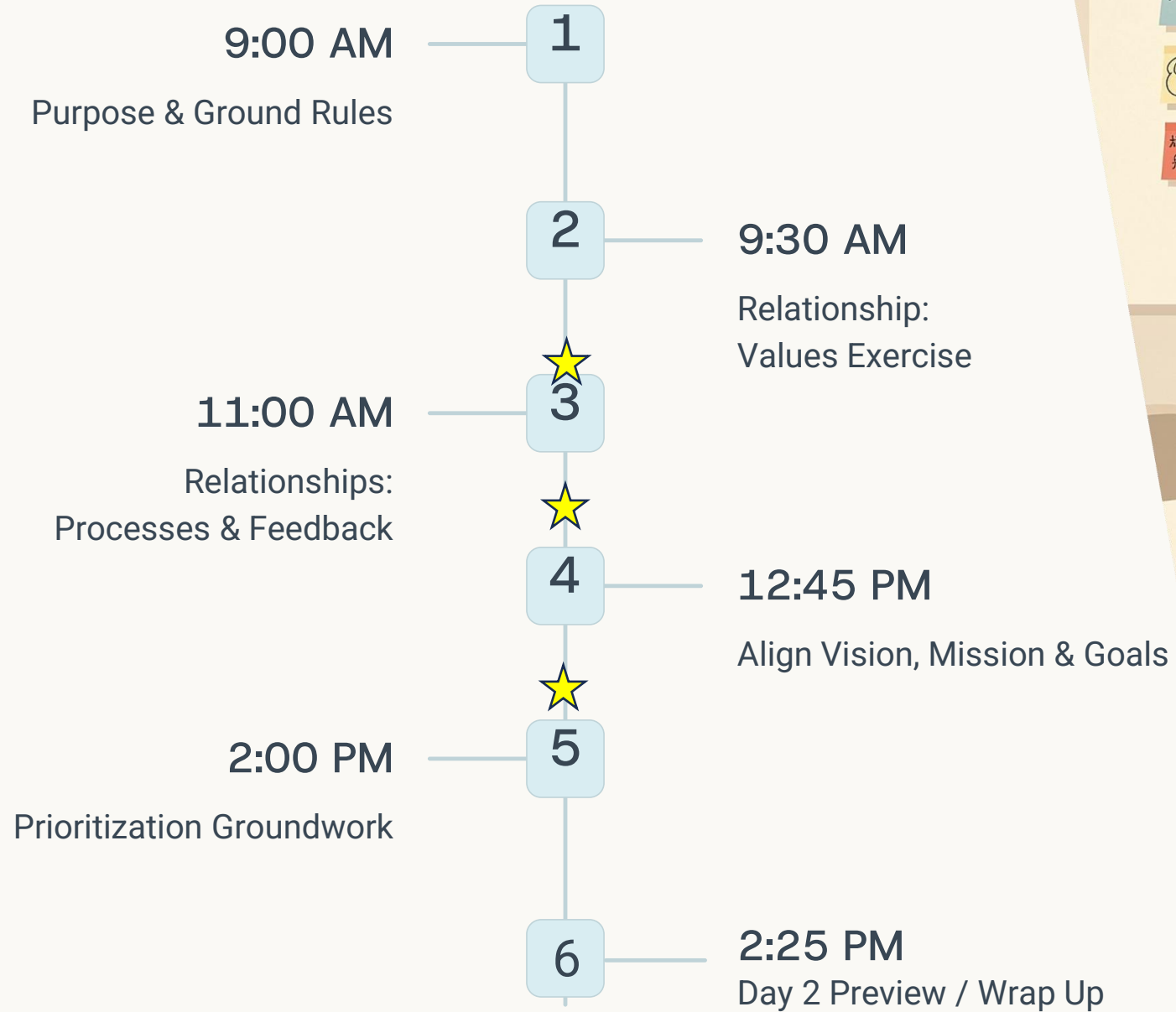
## Content & Outcomes

- Refine / Define vision, mission, goals
- Make accessible & memorable
- Zero-based budget: clarify what this looks like

## Retreat Design / Experience

- Team-building should be meaningful
- Avoid personality assessments
- Be open to multiple approaches
- Balance new ideas with long-standing practices
- Ensure meaningful feedback is possible
- Get information out in advance

# Relationship Building & Vision



# Values Exercise: Understanding Each Other



## Purpose:

- Increase understanding
- Strengthen Collaboration
- Identify shared themes on working

# Values Exercise: Understanding Each Other



Why I Serve



# Values Exercise: Understanding Each Other



Why I Serve



What I Need From You



# Values Exercise: Understanding Each Other



Why I Serve



What I Need From You



What Helps Me



# Values Exercise: Understanding Each Other



Why I Serve



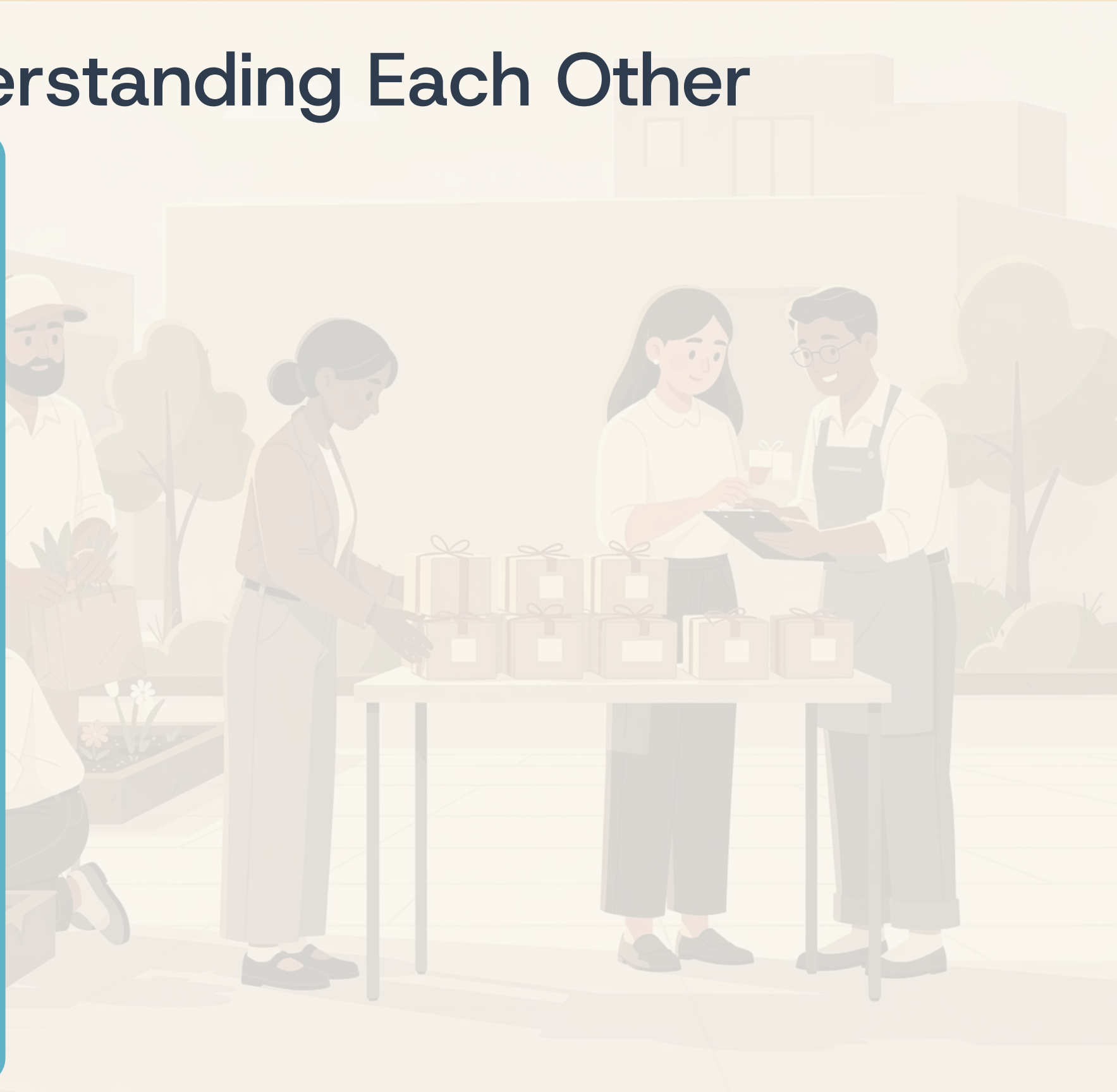
What I Need From You



What Helps Me



When You Get the Best of Me



# Values Exercise: Understanding Each Other



Why I Serve



What I Need From You



What Helps Me



When You Get the Best of Me



When We Work Best



**BREAK**

# Start / Stop / Continue Exercise

## Start

What new actions, behaviors, or practices should we begin doing?

## Stop

What actions, behaviors, or processes are unhelpful or should be stopped?

## Continue

What is working well that we should keep doing?

Identify practices to keep, improve, or eliminate to strengthen team effectiveness and collaboration.

**LUNCH BREAK – 12:50**

# Interview Feedback – Vision & Direction

## Common Ground

Many Councilmembers share vision; differences in approaches, not goals

## Need Clarity

Vision not clearly defined; mission, vision, values need refinement

## Accessibility Gap

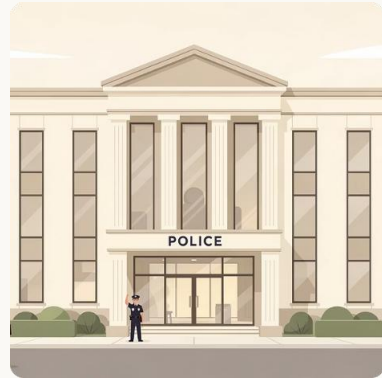
Comprehensive Plan is great 20+ year planning doc, need short-term

## Identity Question

Define what Auburn is known for and long-term direction

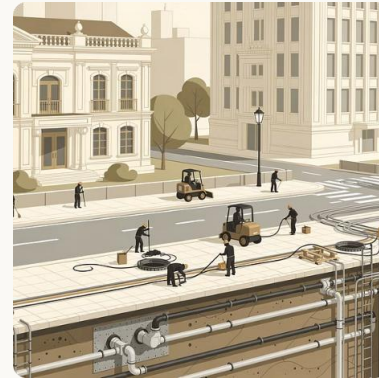


# Interview Feedback – Vision



## Public Safety

New police station, hire officers



## Infrastructure

Flood planning, climate adaptation, maintain facilities



## Housing & Programs

Affordable housing, parks, childcare, social programs, healthy neighborhoods



## Operational Excellence

Create KPIs, demonstrate value, continuous improvement



## Downtown Development

Theater Park, fill retail spaces, improve permitting

# Vision, Mission, Goals Framework

Term	Focus	Timeframe	Example
<b>Vision</b>	Where we want to go	Long-term	Thriving, inclusive city
<b>Mission</b>	Why we exist	Ongoing	Provide quality services
<b>Goal Areas</b>	What do we focus on	Ongoing	Provide community-centered, proactive, and preventative public safety
<b>Priorities</b>	How we do to get there	Short- to medium-term	Build a New police station

## CORE COMMITMENTS

# Foundation for Success

### DEI & Language Access

Ensuring equitable access and inclusion for all community members through diverse language support and inclusive practices.

### Recruitment & Retention

Building and maintaining high-performing teams to deliver exceptional service to the community.

### Data-Driven Decisions

Leveraging analytics and insights to guide strategic planning and resource allocation.

These commitments live within all strategic priorities, ensuring consistency and accountability across every initiative.

# Priority Summaries

**Community Safety.** All residents, visitors, and employees of Auburn are entitled to a secure and healthy environment.

**Focuses:**

- cultivating strong community connections and partnerships, outreach and education programs
- investments in neighborhood improvements to prevent crime
- prioritizing the importance of an accessible and secure downtown core
- high quality response to community via appropriate staffing of a highly trained safety network
- ensuring safe and appropriate places for people in crisis
- providing accountability.

A safer community provides a higher quality of life for residents.

# Priority Summaries

**Fiscal Sustainability.** Auburn is a full-service City providing a wide range of services to its residents and the City has a responsibility to ensure delivery of these services long-term.

**Focuses:**

Increased efficiency and productivity  
building high performing teams,  
reprioritizing and investing in programs that provide the highest-value returns  
leveraging new revenue sources.

# Priority Summaries

**Community Wellness.** All residents of Auburn are entitled to a secure, healthy, and humane quality of life with equitable access to services, programs, activities, and benefits offered by the City.

**Focuses:**

ability to access healthy food

engage in physical activity

participate in social and cultural experiences

access needed community services

to feel free of fear and hate.

Achieving a positive state of community wellness means that residents are not worried about their safety, have access to affordable housing or shelter, and feel welcome and included in their neighborhood and community.

# Priority Summaries

**Infrastructure.** Infrastructure is the backbone of a well-functioning community.

**Focuses:**

Mobility: streets, sidewalks, trails, electric vehicle charging stations, streetlights, traffic lights

Health: clean drinking water, proper management of sanitary waste and storm water, electricity, and solid waste disposal

Communication ??

Maintenance and advancement of facilities, technology and cyber security, and fleets

A robust and well-maintained infrastructure system allows people and goods to move efficiently and reliably throughout the community.



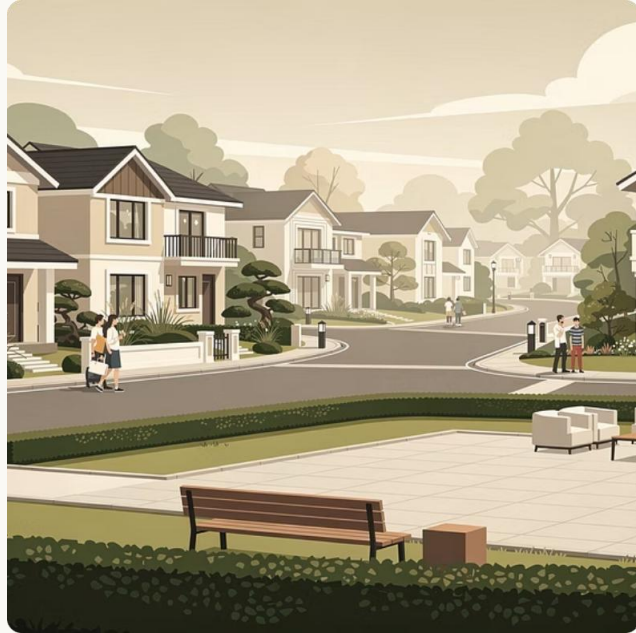
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

# Seven Core Value Statements

Auburn's Comprehensive Plan is organized around seven main value statements that provide a foundation for implementation, including capital facilities, transportation, and parks plans.

These values establish a basis for evaluating future City policies, regulations, actions, investment, and budget priorities.

# Our Values: Character, Wellness, Service



## Character

Developing and preserving attractive and interesting places where people want to be. We will create and maintain high quality neighborhoods, places, and spaces.



## Wellness

The promotion of community-wide health and safety. We will build and maintain an environment that promotes public safety and healthy lifestyle options.



## Service

Providing transparent government service. We will be an efficient, approachable, and responsive City government.

# Our Values: Economy, Celebration, Environment, Sustainability



## Economy

Encouraging a diverse and thriving marketplace. We will provide a vibrant local economy with employment, retail, and entertainment opportunities.



## Celebration

Celebrating our cultures, heritage, and community. We will celebrate diversity and creativity and come together to teach, learn, and have fun.



## Environment

Stewarding our environment. We will protect the natural environment, preserve open space, and create appropriate access.



## Sustainability

Creating a sustainable future. We will balance natural resource protection, economic prosperity, and cultural vibrancy to build a thriving community.

# Aligning Priorities with Values

The City's Strategic Priorities are deeply connected to the Comprehensive Plan values, ensuring cohesive and purposeful community development.

Priority Area	Character	Wellness	Service	Economy	Environment
Community Safety	X	X			
Fiscal Sustainability			X	X	X
Community Wellness	X	X		X	X
Infrastructure	X		X		X

**BREAK**



# Achieved!

## Headline Exercise: Our Future

**10 years from now:** What does the regional publication say about Auburn?

- Headlines only, no paragraphs
- Outcomes, not aspirations
- Ex: Downtown Sees Record New Business Growth

Term	Focus	Timeframe	Example
<b>Vision</b>	Where we want to go	Long-term	Thriving, inclusive city

# Prioritization Matrix Overview

## Tomorrow's Exercise

Use Mentimeter to evaluate each project across multiple dimensions

**Bring internet-connected device**

- **Past Prioritization Exercise as Springboard**
  - 3+ votes or weight of 10 or more
- Priority?
- Impact
- Timeline
- Ranking

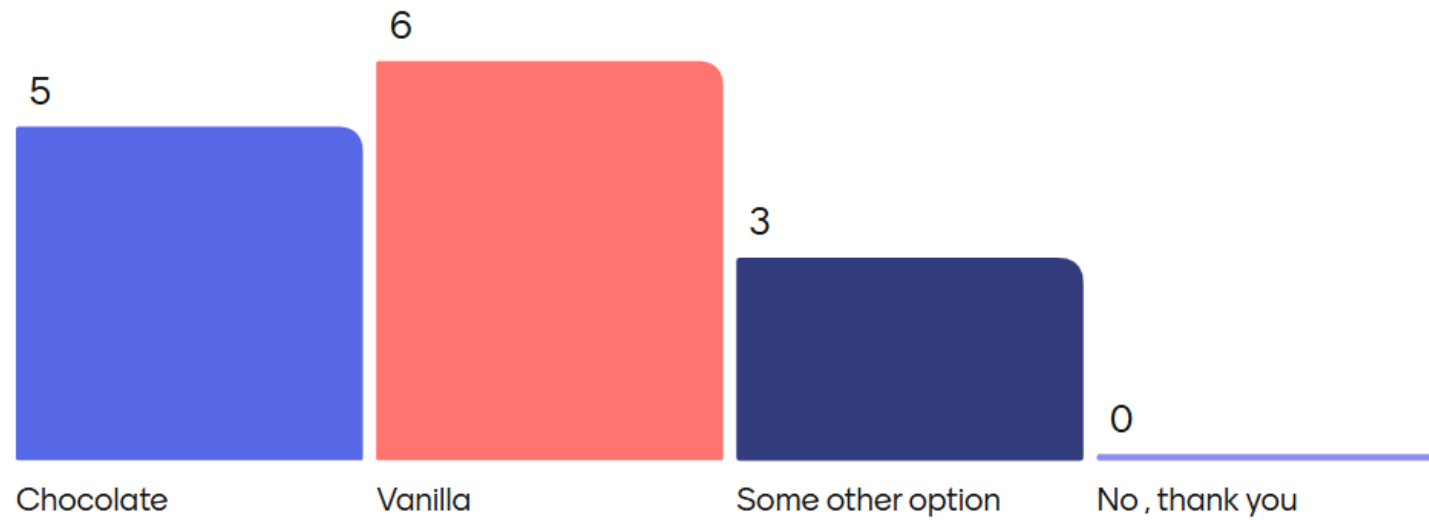
You have results from 14 participants.

[View results](#) [Clear results](#)

Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code ●●●●●●

Mentimeter

### Chocolate or Vanilla Ice Cream?



[Click to download as image](#)

Draft Goal Area	Title	Description	Lead	City Role	Potential Cost Indicator	Potential Resources Indicator	Time Frame Indicator	Included in 2025/2026 budget	Votes	Ranked Order by Votes	Weighted Total
Community Safety	Police Expansion	Build the New Police Headquarters - located at either the Justice Center or at the 12th Street Property on Auburn Way South.	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	10 to 20 years	Portion	4	1	36
Fiscal Sustainability	Incentivize Downtown Businesses in Vacant Spaces	Find Opportunities to incentivize business to move into the vacant store fronts in the Downtown Core	City/Others	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	1 to 5 years	N	4	2	23
Infrastructure	Facility Master Plan	Facility Master Plan improvements for PW and Parks M&O expansions	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	Y	3	3	28
Community Wellness	ACRC Full Build Out	Complete the full build out of the ACRC (now ARC) building for the community use	City	Direct	> 5M	500 to 1000 hours	1 to 5 years	Portions	3	4	16
Community Wellness	Communal Gathering Spots	Create communal gathering spots outside of our parks in neighborhoods that include fire pits and chairs	City	Direct	< \$100,000	500 to 1000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	5	13
Fiscal Sustainability	Main Street Closure to Traffic	Close Main Street between Auburn Ave and Auburn Way permanently and create outdoor seating and food truck areas, enhance pedestrian experience	City	Direct	> 5M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	6	23
Community Wellness	Financial Wellness Center	Create a Financial Wellness Center through GRC partnership with SBA	GRC	Limited to No	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	7	16
Infrastructure	Expand Sounder Services	Modify the Auburn Station to be underground. Increase the Sounder Service to operate 24 hours	Sound Transit	Limited to No	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	N	3	8	12
Community Wellness	Downtown Events	Partner with Others to get more people downtown and bring back events downtown	City/DAC/ Chamber	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	<1 year	Y	3	9	8
Community Wellness	More Youth Programs	Support the creation of more youth programs for sports and activities with a low cost barrier.	Private Organizations/ City	Partial to Limited	500,000 to 2M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	10	16
Community Wellness	Year-Round Farmers Market In-door Facility	Build an in-door location to hold the Farmer's Market Year Round. Potential sites include Les Gove and IRG Properties	City	Direct	500,000 to 2M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	11	12
Infrastructure	Main Infrastructure Improvements	Do additional Main Street Improvements from Auburn Way to the Justice Center and from the Sounder Station to the West.	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	N	2	13	13
Community Wellness	CO2 Reduction	More planting, Less Transportation. <i>Incentivize green infrastructure through development code updates and sustainability ordinances (e.g., green roofs, tree canopy requirements). Added: Electric Vehicle Charging</i>	Developers/City	Partial to Limited	> 5M	>2000 hours	> 20 years	Portions	2	16	14
Community Wellness	Dress Up Main Street	Encourage Bistros along Main Street. <i>Amend Zoning, Land Use, and Street Use Regulations to support pedestrian-only areas on Main street and remove barriers for sidewalk cafes and pop-up retail.</i>	Private businesses or property owners/City	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	500 to 1000 hours	<1 year	N	2	17	13
Community Wellness	Housing for Homeless/ More Affordable Housing/ Housing Ladder	Support development of housing for homeless populations./ Support development of more affordable housing options. / Support a mixture of housing types, opportunities for partnerships with GRC for dorms (foster care aging out), temp housing for work force development partnership with Orion, Veteran's village.	Partner Agencies/ Developers/ Partner Agencies/ City	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	18	17
Community Wellness	Leverage Community Partnerships	Leverage partnerships with community based programs.	Community organizations/ City	Limited to No	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	20	10
Community Wellness	Non-Profit Services	Are there other non-profit services or city services that we can identify for human services needs in Auburn	City/Non-Profits	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	Portions	2	22	15

Direct	7
Partial to Limited	7
Limited to No Control	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

A word cloud is displayed on a whiteboard in a room with a desk and chair. The words are arranged in a cluster, with 'teamwork', 'engagement', and 'collaboration' being the most prominent. Other words include 'communication', 'productivity', 'innovation', 'ideas', 'renration', 'production', 'memory', 'collaboration', 'ideas', 'innovation', 'ideas', 'innovation', 'ideas', 'communication', 'rdettice', 'inbers', and 'paquairoj'.

teamwork  
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# Wrap-Up: Three Words for the Day



# City of Auburn Leadership Retreat

## Day 2

Relationships → VMG alignment →  
Prioritization → Budget implications

PURPOSE

# Why We're Here

1

## Relationships

Strengthen bonds between legislative, executive, and admin

2

## Alignment

Affirm shared vision, mission, and goals

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## Prioritization

Establish clear priorities for budget development

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## Budget

Inform next Zero-Based Biennial Budget

# Ground Rules

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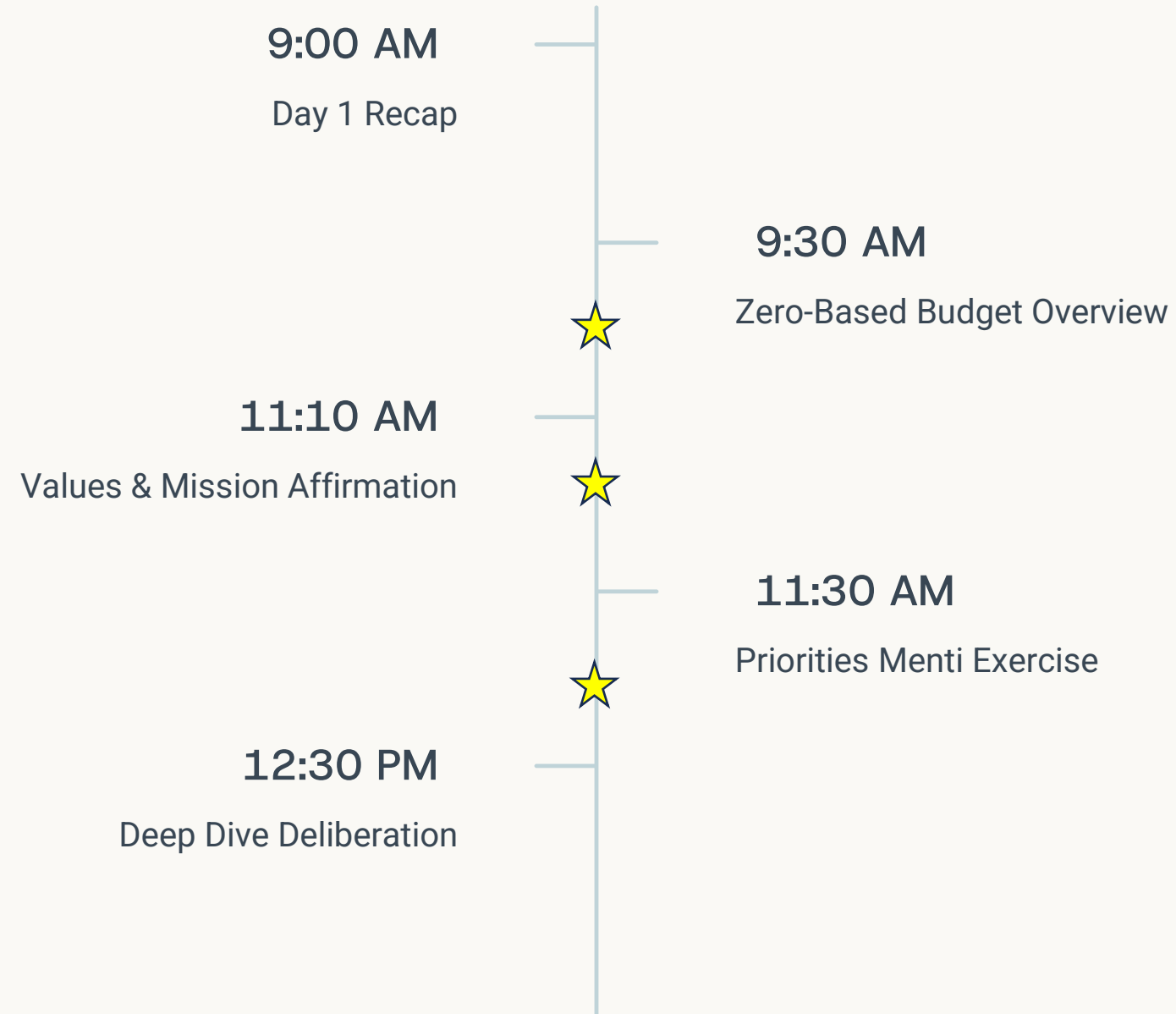
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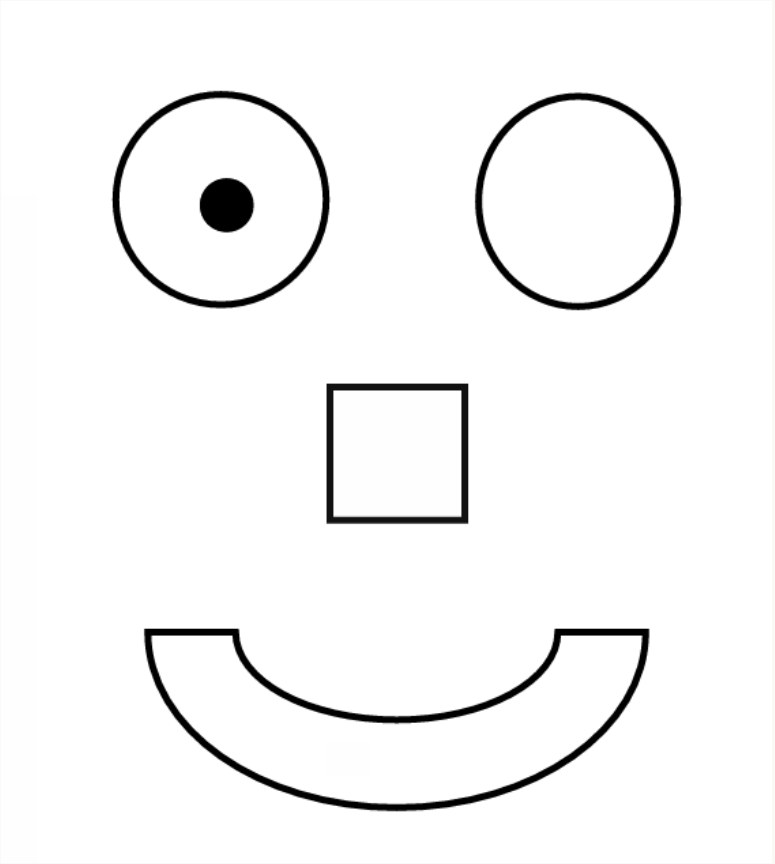
# Communications Warm-Up Exercise

## **Artist / Speaker:**

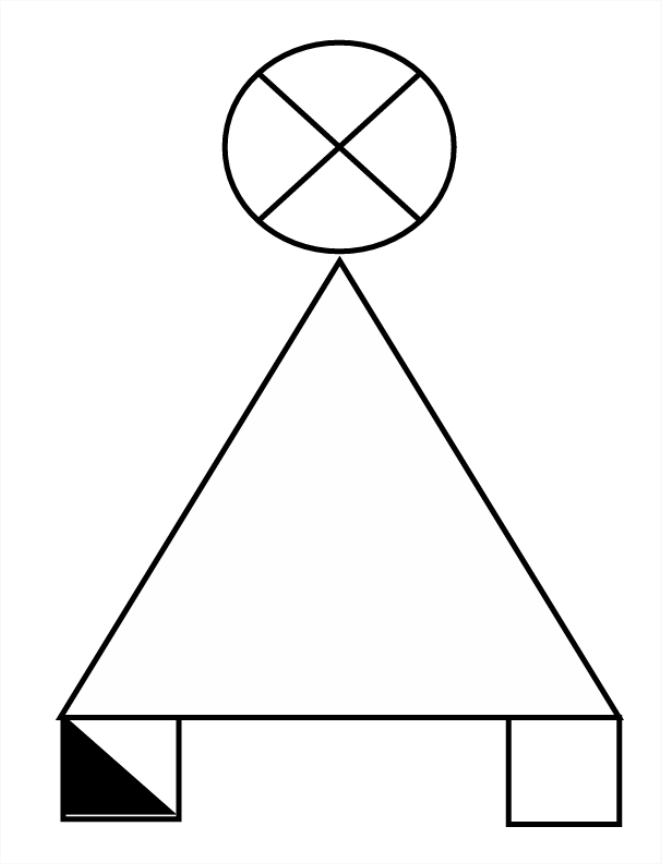
- Artist draws
- Speaker picks 1 drawing
- Speaker can only use verbal instructions
- No gestures
- No “it looks like...” comparisons (e.g., “like a house”), use shapes
- No showing the image

# Communications Warm-Up Exercise

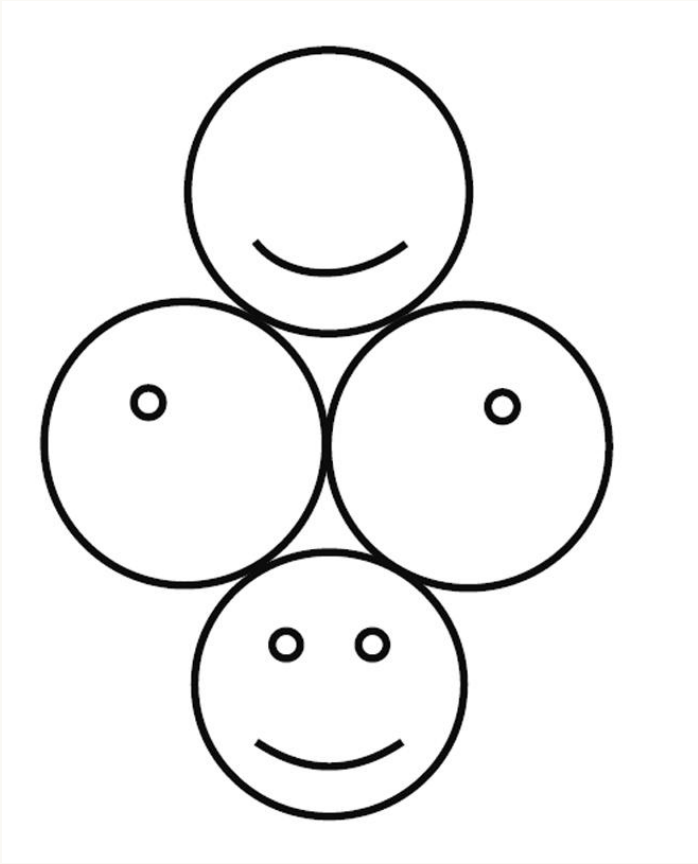
#1



#2



#3



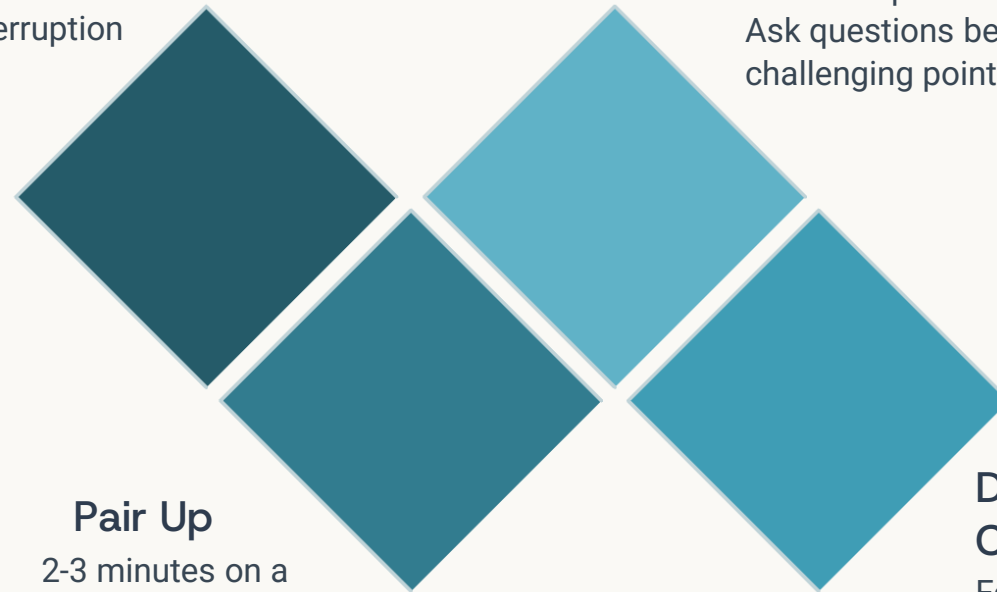
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- Expanding Youth Services or Senior Services
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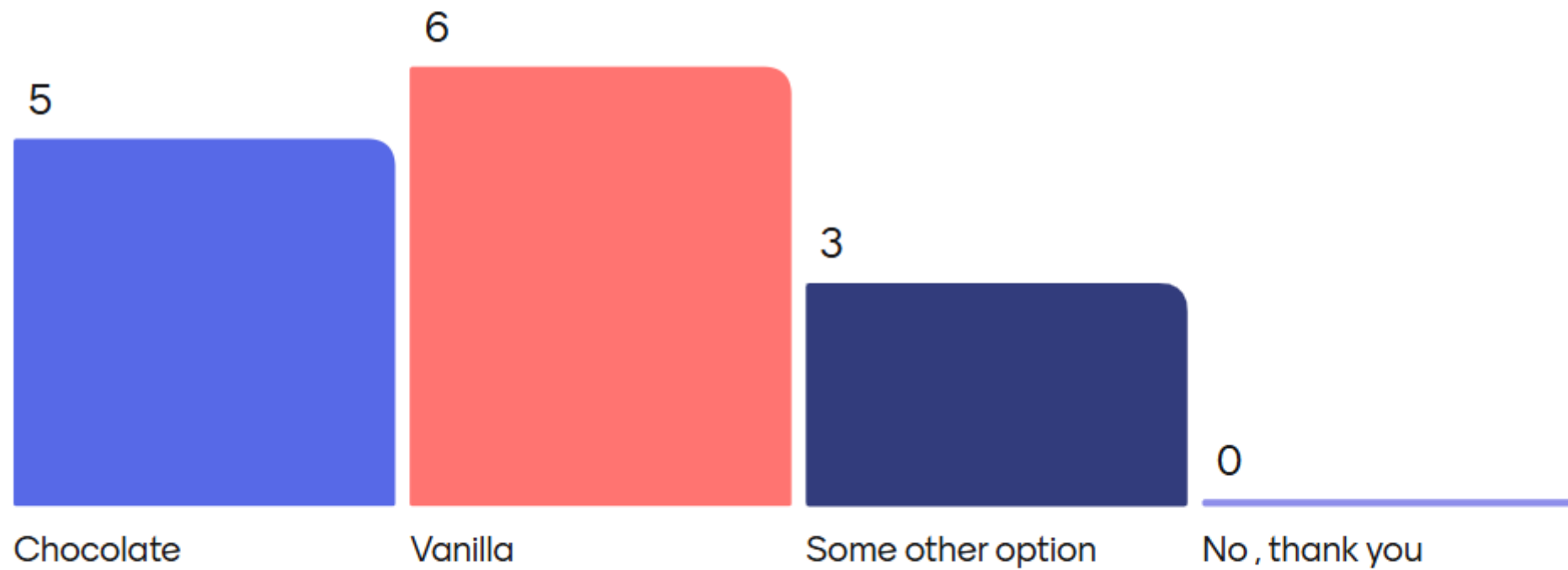
[View results](#)

[Clear results](#)

Join at menti.com | use code .....

Mentimeter

## Chocolate or Vanilla Ice Cream?



# Why I Serve

Values Driven | Future Oriented | Care for People & Place

Compassion: Love & Helping	Community: Stewards of place	The Team: Supporting one another	Impact: Transformational services	The People: Human-centered governance	History and the Future: Community Legacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love</li> <li>• Helping</li> <li>• Privilege to give back</li> <li>• To help</li> <li>• If not me, who?</li> <li>• I love people</li> <li>• Empower others</li> <li>• Serve</li> <li>• Care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community pride</li> <li>• Serve community</li> <li>• Build community</li> <li>• Improve the community</li> <li>• Advocate</li> <li>• Help businesses</li> <li>• The children</li> <li>• Gratitude</li> <li>• Lived experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community pride</li> <li>• Serve community</li> <li>• Build community</li> <li>• Improve the community</li> <li>• Advocate</li> <li>• Help businesses</li> <li>• The children</li> <li>• Gratitude</li> <li>• Lived experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact</li> <li>• Long-term impact</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Make a difference</li> <li>• To make a difference</li> <li>• History &amp; future</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Change</li> <li>• Continuous improvement</li> <li>• Movement really</li> <li>• Justice</li> <li>• Transparency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The homeless</li> <li>• The elderly</li> <li>• Help people</li> <li>• Prevent pain</li> <li>• Everyone deserves to be heard</li> <li>• Pay it forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History &amp; future</li> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Change</li> <li>• Continuous improvement</li> <li>• Movement really</li> <li>• Justice</li> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Long-term impact</li> <li>• Problem solving</li> <li>• Make a difference</li> </ul>

# What I need

We care deeply. To serve well, we need clarity, trust, structure, and consistent communication

<b>Consistency / Standards:</b> Defined and shared expectations, accountability	<b>Communication Enhancements:</b> Consistency, Flow, Pe Proactive, Assume Good Intent	<b>Teamwork &amp; Collaboration:</b> Solution-focused  Continue to Build Relationships	<b>Trust / Respect:</b> Enhanced relational safety	<b>Community Input:</b> Keep listening to the people	<b>Operational Needs:</b> Time, Structure, Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistency</li> <li>• Set standards</li> <li>• Clear direction</li> <li>• Full story</li> <li>• Do your job</li> <li>• Engagement</li> <li>• Clear roles</li> <li>• Timeliness</li> <li>• Follow on proper change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity</li> <li>• Transparency</li> <li>• Proactive communication</li> <li>• No surprises</li> <li>• Ongoing updates</li> <li>• Focus alignment</li> <li>• Constructive feedback</li> <li>• Direct feedback on what's helpful or hurtful</li> <li>• Community communication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation</li> <li>• Understanding</li> <li>• Focus on solutions</li> <li>• No defensiveness</li> <li>• Open mind</li> <li>• No pre-set agendas</li> <li>• Respect decisions</li> <li>• Support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Grace</li> <li>• Assume positive intent</li> <li>• Listen</li> <li>• Hear me without judgement</li> <li>• Healthy conflict</li> <li>• Disagree without emotion</li> <li>• Validate thoughts/opinions</li> <li>• Patience</li> <li>• Truth</li> <li>• Constructive feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community needs to continue to be involved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More time in process</li> <li>• Meeting notes</li> <li>• Clear next steps</li> <li>• Additional staff</li> <li>• More proactive engagement</li> <li>• Prioritization</li> <li>• Resources</li> <li>• Realistic expectations</li> </ul>

# Start / Stop / Continue

## Start

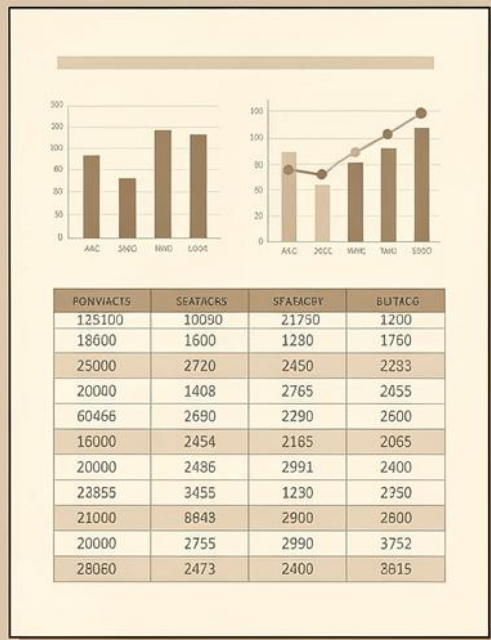
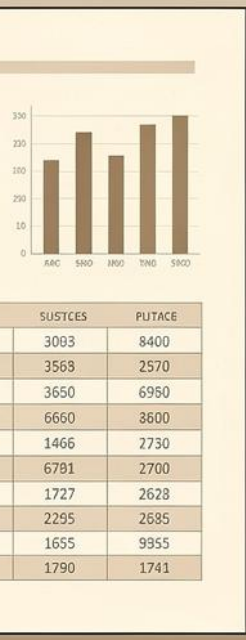
- **Improving Public Meetings with proactive, pre-meeting communication**
  - Share materials in advance
  - Consider improving agenda bills
  - Share background context for extensive projects and initiatives
  - Ask questions before meetings to reduce reactive discussions
  - Allow necessary time for staff responses
  - Seek Clarification Sooner (SCS)
- **Clarifying priorities and goals**
  - Align work to vision and long-term impacts
  - Reduce unclear asks or asks with insufficient resources
- **Strengthening team culture** with meaningful team building

## Stop

- **Assuming -> Seek Clarification Sooner (SCS):**
  - **Follow and strengthen established processes** to ensure consistency, transparency, and fairness.
- **Raise concerns early** to support productive dialogue and resolution (pre-public meeting, if possible).
- **Lead with curiosity and good intent**, seeking clarification rather than assuming or engaging in what feels like “gotcha” type interactions.

## Continue

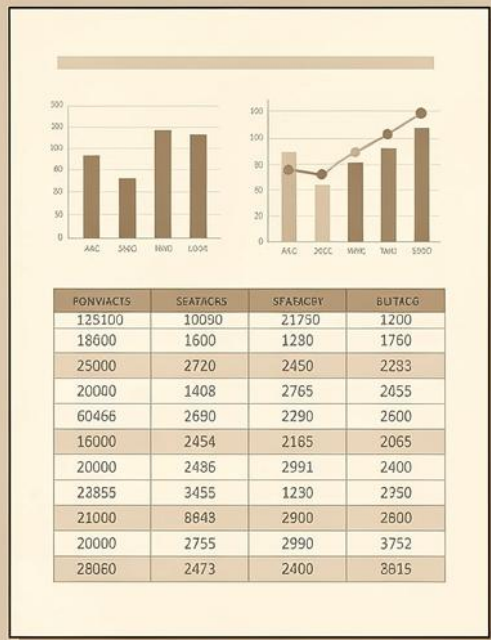
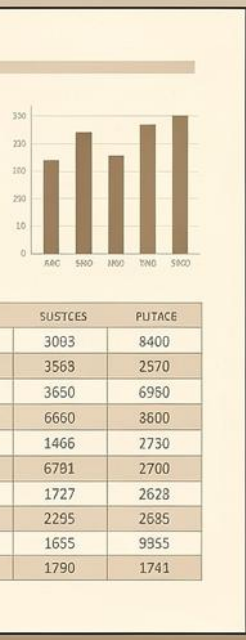
- **On-board and Trainings practices:** Continue communication efforts focused on onboarding and shared learning.
- **Support → Priorities:** Provide resources that allow for implementation of organizational priorities.
- **External Relationships: Continue to lead at National / State:** Continue engagement at national and state levels.
- **Build Community: SFAs / Outreach:** Continue community-building efforts, Examples “SFAs” and Police Community Academy



DATE	NACE	MAX	970020
1	8000	7540	
2	2000	7577	
3	5000	6750	
4	5000	8000	
5	4000	8000	
6	6700	30000	
7	4550	2840	
8	6900	116000	
9	1500	170000	
10	117100	16330	
10	6000	38608	
11	6500	117000	
11	1200	118800	
12	8980	8000	
13	6450	119150	
14	6350	6000	
15	6600	23000	
15	6480	18000	
15	8000	24200	
12	1600	28000	
15	1600	10000	
15	8400	22735	

# Zero-Based Budgeting Session

**BREAK**



DATE	NACE	MAX	970020
1	8000	7540	
2	2000	7577	
3	5000	6750	
4	5000	8000	
5	4000	8000	
6	6700	30000	
7	4550	2840	
8	6900	116000	
9	1500	170000	
10	117100	16330	
10	6000	38608	
11	6500	117000	
11	1200	118800	
12	8980	8000	
13	6450	119150	
14	6350	6000	
15	6600	23000	
15	6480	18000	
15	8000	24200	
12	1600	28000	
15	1600	10000	
15	8400	22735	

# Zero-Based Budgeting Session

# The Priority Question

A priority-based budget doesn't ask 'What do we want?' It asks 'What are we willing to fund first when money and resources are finite?'





# Achieved!

## Headline Exercise: Our Future

**10 years from now:** What does the regional publication say about Auburn?

- Headlines only, no paragraphs
- Outcomes, not aspirations
- Ex: Downtown Sees Record New Business Growth

Term	Focus	Timeframe	Example
<b>Vision</b>	Where we want to go	Long-term	Thriving, inclusive city

# Achieved!



## Headlines:

- A vibrant, town-friendly downtown with rich cultural amenities.
- City of Auburn leading the way in creating the most livable city in the USA.
- Jackson Street Farm Park wins national award as neighborhood transformation.
- Auburn stronger, safer, united.
- Downtown sees arts and culture on Main Street.
- Auburn has an active and vibrant community.
- Auburn's court system is a model for the state.
- Model city leading the way forward!
- Auburn celebrates 10 years of innovation; resilience in face of adversity; new energy and sustainability initiatives.
- Auburn sees record waterfront activity in the era of AI and robotic advancement.
- Downtown Auburn celebrates a decade of renewal; once vacant spaces now thrive; Main Street reimaged.
- Auburn! Best city to own and run a business!
- Auburn: Washington's cleanest, litter-free city!
- Auburn joins global ranks as newest Blue Zone.
- Auburn leads South King County in livability and opportunity.
- Auburn — a new hub for mobility and innovation in South King County.
- Governor Clinton Taylor announces Auburn: Most Sought-Out City for Living, Working and Playing.



# Achieved!

## **Headline Themes:**

- Economically vibrant and business growth
- Safe and livable
- Quality of Life
- Downtown and Placemaking
- Environmentally responsible and clean
- Innovative and forward-thinking, leveraging technology
- Model & Leader: Regionally and nationally recognized



# Achieved!

## Using Headlines: Drafts for future discussion

### VISION

Auburn is a vibrant, safe, and forward-thinking community where people thrive and opportunities abound. We are a model city recognized for **innovation, economic vitality, welcoming neighborhoods, a dynamic downtown, high-quality services that meet the needs of our community, environmental stewardship, and strong connections.**

### MISSION

We deliver **responsive, innovative, and fiscally responsible** public services that keep our **community safe, healthy, and connected, foster economic vitality, build trust and connection, and create opportunities for today and tomorrow.**

# Priority Summaries

**Community Safety.** All residents, visitors, and employees of Auburn are entitled to a secure and healthy environment.

**Focuses:**

- cultivating strong community connections and partnerships, outreach and education programs
- investments in neighborhood improvements to prevent crime
- prioritizing the importance of an accessible and secure downtown core
- high quality response to community via appropriate staffing of a highly trained safety network
- ensuring safe and appropriate places for people in crisis
- providing accountability.

A safer community provides a higher quality of life for residents.



# Achieved!

## **Community Safety - Feedback:**

- Add new municipal court
- Effective diversion programs
- Continuous Improving and learning
- Share successes, building engagement, community trust
- Add Human Services
- Continue to be regional leaders

# Achieved!

## **Community Safety - Feedback:**

- Add new municipal court
- Effective diversion programs
- Continuous Improving and learning
- Share successes, building engagement, community trust
- Add Human Services
- Continue to be regional leaders

**Community Safety:** All community members are entitled to a secure and healthy environment. A safer community enhances quality of life, strengthens trust in government, and promotes long-term community stability.

### **Focus Areas:**

- Cultivating strong partnerships, outreach, education programs
- Investing in continuous **public safety enhancements**
- Prioritizing an accessible, vibrant, and secure downtown core
- Offering high-quality emergency and non-emergency responses from trained safety professional
- Supporting a modern, accessible **municipal court** and justice system that focuses on effective **diversion programs**
- Ensuring safe and appropriate **human services**
- Sharing successes to build and strengthen **community trust**
- Continuing to serve as **regional leaders** in public safety innovation

# Priority Summaries

**Fiscal Sustainability.** Auburn is a full-service City providing a wide range of services to its residents and the City has a responsibility to ensure delivery of these services long-term.

**Focuses:**

Increased efficiency and productivity  
building high performing teams,  
reprioritizing and investing in programs that provide the highest-value returns  
leveraging new revenue sources.

# Achieved!

## **Fiscal Sustainability - Feedback:**

- Continuously evaluate structures and processes, leveraging new tools and technologies to gain efficiencies
- Invest in people: Balance new programs and efficiencies pushes with adequate resources
- Leverage Public- Private Partnerships
- KC rates (Infrastructure)

# Achieved!

## **Fiscal Sustainability - Feedback:**

- Continuously evaluate structures and processes, leveraging new tools and technologies to gain efficiencies
- Invest in people: Balance new programs and efficiencies pushes with adequate resources
- Leverage Public- Private Partnerships
- KC rates (Infrastructure)

**Fiscal Sustainability:** As a full-service city, Auburn is responsible for ensuring the long-term financial health and resilience necessary to deliver high-quality services to the community now and in the future.

### **Focus Areas:**

- **Continuously evaluating priorities**, structures, and processes to align with **community needs** and value outcomes
- Leveraging innovative **processes, tools, and technologies** to improve service delivery
- Building and supporting high-performing teams by **investing in people and resources**
- Identifying and responsibly **pursuing diversified and sustainable revenue sources**, including leveraging public-private partnerships and strategic collaborations
- Advocating for equitable and sustainable regional cost structures

# Priority Summaries

**Community Wellness.** All residents of Auburn are entitled to a secure, healthy, and humane quality of life with equitable access to services, programs, activities, and benefits offered by the City.

**Focuses:**

- ability to access healthy food
- engage in physical activity
- participate in social and cultural experiences
- access needed community services
- to feel free of fear and hate.

Achieving a positive state of community wellness means that residents are not worried about their safety, have access to affordable housing or shelter, and feel welcome and included in their neighborhood and community.

# Achieved!

The background features a stylized newspaper layout with various text blocks, columns, and a large headline that reads "Achieved!". The design is in shades of brown and beige, with a clean, modern aesthetic.

## **Community Wellness - Feedback:**

- Clarify what the City directly provides, what it can facilitate, and what it can advocate for
- Holistic approach to community wellness, recognize that different community members may have different needs (ex. community members that are undocumented)
- Accountability for community to use resources and communicate needs
- Communication needs to go both ways, between the community and the city, the city and the community
- Leverage partnerships
- Add "healthy access to services, programs, etc.."

## Community Wellness - Feedback:

- Clarify what the City directly provides, what it can facilitate, and what it can advocate for
- Holistic approach to community wellness, recognize that different community members may have different needs (ex. community members that are undocumented)
- Accountability for community to use resources and communicate needs
- Communication needs to go both ways, between the community and the city, the city and the community
- Leverage partnerships
- Add “healthy access to services, programs, etc..”

**Community Wellness:** All community members of Auburn are entitled to a healthy, inclusive, and equitable quality of life with accessible services, programs, and opportunities that meet diverse needs. The City recognizes its role in directly providing services, facilitating partnerships, and advocating for resources that strengthen community well-being.

## Focus Areas:

- **Facilitate or support** access to services, programs, activities that benefit the community, including healthy food, housing, shelter, and essential services
- Providing opportunities for physical activity, recreation, and cultural engagement
- Fostering welcoming and inclusive spaces where all community members feel safe and valued
- Offering a **holistic approach** that recognizes varying needs across community members
- **Strengthening two-way communication** between the City and the community
- Encouraging **shared accountability** through clear communication of resources and expectations
- **Leveraging partnerships** with community-based organizations and service providers

# Priority Summaries

**Infrastructure.** Infrastructure is the backbone of a well-functioning community.

**Focuses:**

Mobility: streets, sidewalks, trails, electric vehicle charging stations, streetlights, traffic lights

Health: clean drinking water, proper management of sanitary waste and storm water, electricity, and solid waste disposal

Communication ??

Maintenance and advancement of facilities, technology and cyber security, and fleets

A robust and well-maintained infrastructure system allows people and goods to move efficiently and reliably throughout the community.

## Infrastructure - Feedback:

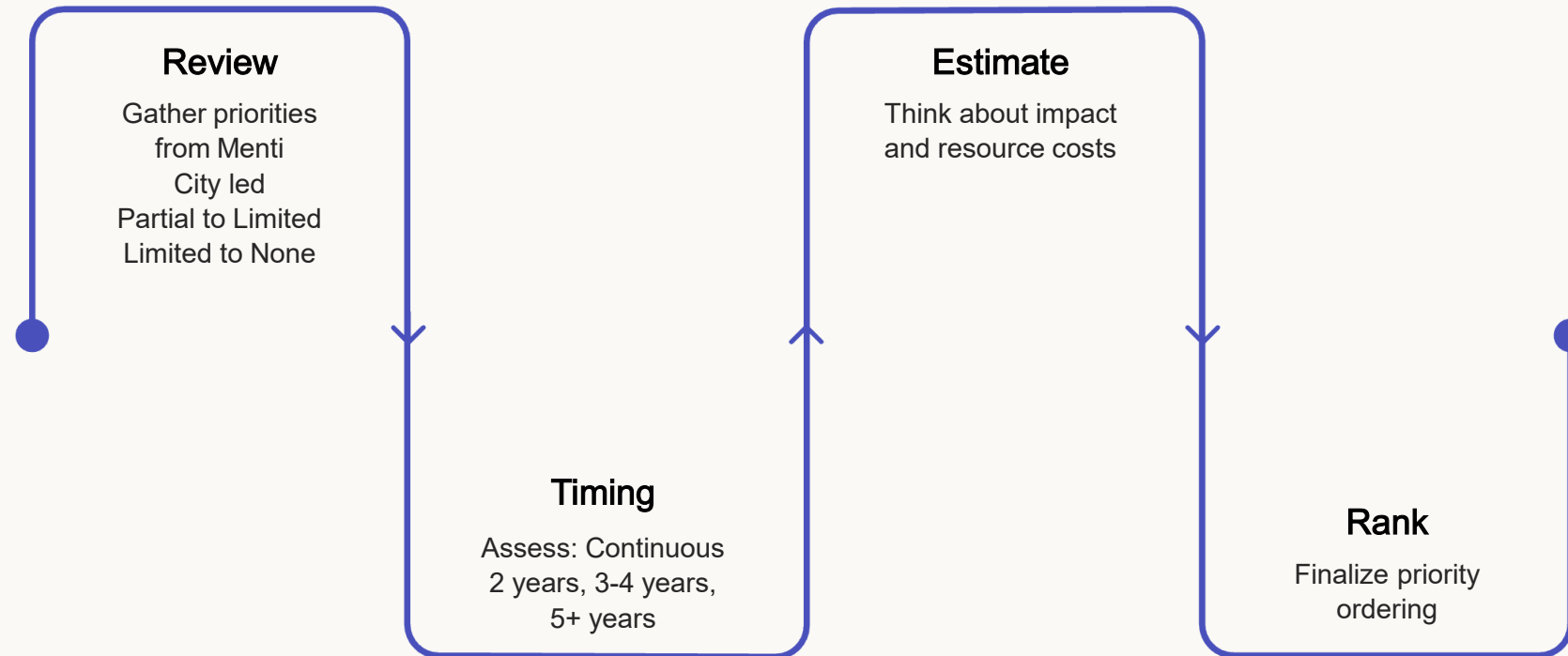
- Asset management, track needs, maintain and future
- Add Airport
- Add Golf course
- Add Parks
- Support fiber needs for public, businesses, and city
- Adequate support for extreme weather events
- Work with King County on rates (see fiscal sustainability)

**Infrastructure:** Infrastructure is the backbone of a well-functioning, resilient, and forward-looking community. Auburn is committed to maintaining, modernizing, and strategically investing in its public assets to support growth, mobility, and sustainability.

### Focus Areas:

- **Enhancing Mobility:** Providing streets, sidewalks, trails, traffic signals, street lighting, **airport services**, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and multimodal transportation options
- **Parks and Recreation:** Maintaining and improving **parks**, open spaces, recreation facilities, and **golf course**
- **Utilities and Environmental Health:** Ensuring clean drinking water, sewer, stormwater management, and solid waste systems
- **Facilities and Fleet:** Maintaining, modernizing, and efficiently operating City facilities, equipment, and fleet
- **Technology and Communications:** Securing cybersecurity, supporting internal systems, and providing **fiber connectivity** for residents, businesses, and City operations
- **Asset Management:** Proactively planning, tracking, maintaining, and investing in long-term capital needs
- **Resilience:** Planning and upgrading infrastructure to withstand and **respond to extreme weather** events and other emergencies

# Priorities Deep Dive



## Key Questions




- Is it a priority?
- What's the time schedule?
- What are impact and resource costs?
- How does it rank against others?

Draft Goal Area	Title	Description	Lead	City Role	Potential Cost Indicator	Potential Resources Indicator	Time Frame Indicator	Included in 2025/2026 budget	Votes	Ranked Order by Votes	Weighted Total
Community Safety	Police Expansion	Build the New Police Headquarters - located at either the Justice Center or at the 12th Street Property on Auburn Way South.	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	10 to 20 years	Portion	4	1	36
Fiscal Sustainability	Incentivize Downtown Businesses in Vacant Spaces	Find Opportunities to incentivize business to move into the vacant store fronts in the Downtown Core	City/Others	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	1 to 5 years	N	4	2	23
Infrastructure	Facility Master Plan	Facility Master Plan improvements for PW and Parks M&O expansions	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	Y	3	3	28
Community Wellness	ACRC Full Build Out	Complete the full build out of the ACRC (now ARC) building for the community use	City	Direct	> 5M	500 to 1000 hours	1 to 5 years	Portions	3	4	16
Community Wellness	Communal Gathering Spots	Create communal gathering spots outside of our parks in neighborhoods that include fire pits and chairs	City	Direct	< \$100,000	500 to 1000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	5	13
Fiscal Sustainability	Main Street Closure to Traffic	Close Main Street between Auburn Ave and Auburn Way permanently and create outdoor seating and food truck areas, enhance pedestrian experience	City	Direct	> 5M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	6	23
Community Wellness	Financial Wellness Center	Create a Financial Wellness Center through GRC partnership with SBA	GRC	Limited to No	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	7	16
Infrastructure	Expand Sounder Services	Modify the Auburn Station to be underground. Increase the Sounder Service to operate 24 hours	Sound Transit	Limited to No	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	N	3	8	12
Community Wellness	Downtown Events	Partner with Others to get more people downtown and bring back events downtown	City/DAC/ Chamber	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	<1 year	Y	3	9	8
Community Wellness	More Youth Programs	Support the creation of more youth programs for sports and activities with a low cost barrier.	Private Organizations/ City	Partial to Limited	500,000 to 2M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	10	16
Community Wellness	Year-Round Farmers Market In-door Facility	Build an in-door location to hold the Farmer's Market Year Round. Potential sites include Les Gove and IRG Properties	City	Direct	500,000 to 2M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	11	12
Infrastructure	Main Infrastructure Improvements	Do additional Main Street Improvements from Auburn Way to the Justice Center and from the Sounder Station to the West.	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	N	2	13	13
Community Wellness	CO2 Reduction	More planting, Less Transportation. <i>Incentivize green infrastructure through development code updates and sustainability ordinances (e.g., green roofs, tree canopy requirements). Added: Electric Vehicle Charging</i>	Developers/City	Partial to Limited	> 5M	>2000 hours	> 20 years	Portions	2	16	14
Community Wellness	Dress Up Main Street	Encourage Bistros along Main Street. <i>Amend Zoning, Land Use, and Street Use Regulations to support pedestrian-only areas on Main street and remove barriers for sidewalk cafes and pop-up retail.</i>	Private businesses or property owners/City	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	500 to 1000 hours	<1 year	N	2	17	13
Community Wellness	Housing for Homeless/ More Affordable Housing/ Housing Ladder	Support development of housing for homeless populations./ Support development of more affordable housing options. / Support a mixture of housing types, opportunities for partnerships with GRC for dorms (foster care aging out), temp housing for work force development partnership with Orion, Veteran's village.	Partner Agencies/ Developers/ Partner Agencies/ City	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	18	17
Community Wellness	Leverage Community Partnerships	Leverage partnerships with community based programs.	Community organizations/ City	Limited to No	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	20	10
Community Wellness	Non-Profit Services	Are there other non-profit services or city services that we can identify for human services needs in Auburn	City/Non-Profits	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	Portions	2	22	15

Direct	7
Partial to Limited	7
Limited to No Control	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

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 <b>City-Controlled</b>	 <b>Partial / Limited Control</b>	 <b>Limited to No City Control</b>
<b>Full municipal authority</b>	<b>Shared jurisdictions / Partnerships</b>	<b>No formal authority</b>
City budget & regulations	Incentivize Businesses in Downtown	Transit (e.g., Sound Transit)
City infrastructure	Low-barrier Youth Programming	GRC – Financial Wellness Center
<b>Council Role:</b>	<b>Council Role:</b>	<b>Council Role:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set policy &amp; funding priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate with other government entities partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen regional partnerships</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust service levels</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate to decision makers or on regional boards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt formal statements on</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update codes &amp; plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control what you can Control (e.g., Zoning, Park programs, grants)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public communication on limits</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track measurable outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen regional partnerships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigation &amp; contingency planning</li> </ul>

Draft Goal Area	Title	Description	Lead	City Role	Potential Cost Indicator	Potential Resources Indicator	Time Frame Indicator	Included in 2025/2026 budget	Votes	Ranked Order by Votes	Weighted Total
Community Safety	Police Expansion	Build the New Police Headquarters - located at either the Justice Center or at the 12th Street Property on Auburn Way South.	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	10 to 20 years	Portion	4	1	36
Fiscal Sustainability	Incentivize Downtown Businesses in Vacant Spaces	Find Opportunities to incentivize business to move into the vacant store fronts in the Downtown Core	City/Others	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	1 to 5 years	N	4	2	23
Infrastructure	Facility Master Plan	Facility Master Plan improvements for PW and Parks M&O expansions	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	Y	3	3	28
Community Wellness	ACRC Full Build Out	Complete the full build out of the ACRC (now ARC) building for the community use	City	Direct	> 5M	500 to 1000 hours	1 to 5 years	Portions	3	4	16
Community Wellness	Communal Gathering Spots	Create communal gathering spots outside of our parks in neighborhoods that include fire pits and chairs	City	Direct	< \$100,000	500 to 1000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	5	13
Fiscal Sustainability	Main Street Closure to Traffic	Close Main Street between Auburn Ave and Auburn Way permanently and create outdoor seating and food truck areas, enhance pedestrian experience	City	Direct	> 5M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	6	23
Community Wellness	Financial Wellness Center	Create a Financial Wellness Center through GRC partnership with SBA	GRC	Limited to No	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	7	16
Infrastructure	Expand Sounder Services	Modify the Auburn Station to be underground. Increase the Sounder Service to operate 24 hours	Sound Transit	Limited to No	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	N	3	8	12
Community Wellness	Downtown Events	Partner with Others to get more people downtown and bring back events downtown	City/DAC/ Chamber	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	< 500 hours	<1 year	Y	3	9	8
Community Wellness	More Youth Programs	Support the creation of more youth programs for sports and activities with a low cost barrier.	Private Organizations/ City	Partial to Limited	500,000 to 2M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	3	10	16
Community Wellness	Year-Round Farmers Market In-door Facility	Build an in-door location to hold the Farmer's Market Year Round. Potential sites include Les Gove and IRG Properties	City	Direct	500,000 to 2M	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	11	12
Infrastructure	Main Infrastructure Improvements	Do additional Main Street Improvements from Auburn Way to the Justice Center and from the Sounder Station to the West.	City	Direct	> 5M	>2000 hours	5 to 10 years	N	2	13	13
Community Wellness	CO2 Reduction	More planting, Less Transportation. <i>Incentivize green infrastructure through development code updates and sustainability ordinances (e.g., green roofs, tree canopy requirements). Added: Electric Vehicle Charging</i>	Developers/City	Partial to Limited	> 5M	>2000 hours	> 20 years	Portions	2	16	14
Community Wellness	Dress Up Main Street	Encourage Bistros along Main Street. <i>Amend Zoning, Land Use, and Street Use Regulations to support pedestrian-only areas on Main street and remove barriers for sidewalk cafes and pop-up retail.</i>	Private businesses or property owners/City	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	500 to 1000 hours	<1 year	N	2	17	13
Community Wellness	Housing for Homeless/ More Affordable Housing/ Housing Ladder	Support development of housing for homeless populations./ Support development of more affordable housing options. / Support a mixture of housing types, opportunities for partnerships with GRC for dorms (foster care aging out), temp housing for work force development partnership with Orion, Veteran's village.	Partner Agencies/ Developers/ Partner Agencies/ City	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	18	17
Community Wellness	Leverage Community Partnerships	Leverage partnerships with community based programs.	Community organizations/ City	Limited to No	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	N	2	20	10
Community Wellness	Non-Profit Services	Are there other non-profit services or city services that we can identify for human services needs in Auburn	City/Non-Profits	Partial to Limited	< \$100,000	1000 to 2000 hours	1 to 5 years	Portions	2	22	15

Direct	7
Partial to Limited	7
Limited to No Control	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>

## Priority: How would you rate the City Controlled items?

Build New Police Station HQ

Implement Facility Master Plan Improvements: Public Works / M&O

Permanently Close Main Street: Create Pedestrian Place

ACRC Full Build Out

Create Communal Gathering Spaces Outside of Parks

Improve infrastructure on Main Street

Build Year Round Farmer's Market

Priority

Not a Priority



## Impact: How do you see impact & resource needs of City Controlled?



- 1 Build New Police Station HQ
- 2 Implement Facility Master Plan Improvements: Public Works / M&O
- 3 Permanently Close Main Street: Create Pedestrian Place
- 4 ACRC Full Build Out
- 5 Create Communal Gathering Spaces Outside of Parks
- 6 Improve infrastructure on Main Street
- 7 Build Year Round Farmer's Market



## Timeline: When should City-Controlled be worked on?

Build New Police Station HQ

Implement Facility Master Plan Improvements: Public Works / M&O

Permanently Close Main Street: Create Pedestrian Place

ACRC Full Build Out

Create Communal Gathering Spaces Outside of Parks

Improve infrastructure on Main Street

Build Year Round Farmer's Market

Next 2 Years

Not a Priority for 10+ years



## Ranking: City Controlled Item

Build New Police Station HQ



Implement Facility Master Plan Improvements: Public Works / M&O



Permanently Close Main Street: Create Pedestrian Place



ACRC Full Build Out



Create Communal Gathering Spaces Outside of Parks



Improve infrastructure on Main Street



Build Year Round Farmer's Market



# Council Prioritization Menti Exercise

● City-Controlled

● Partial / Limited Control

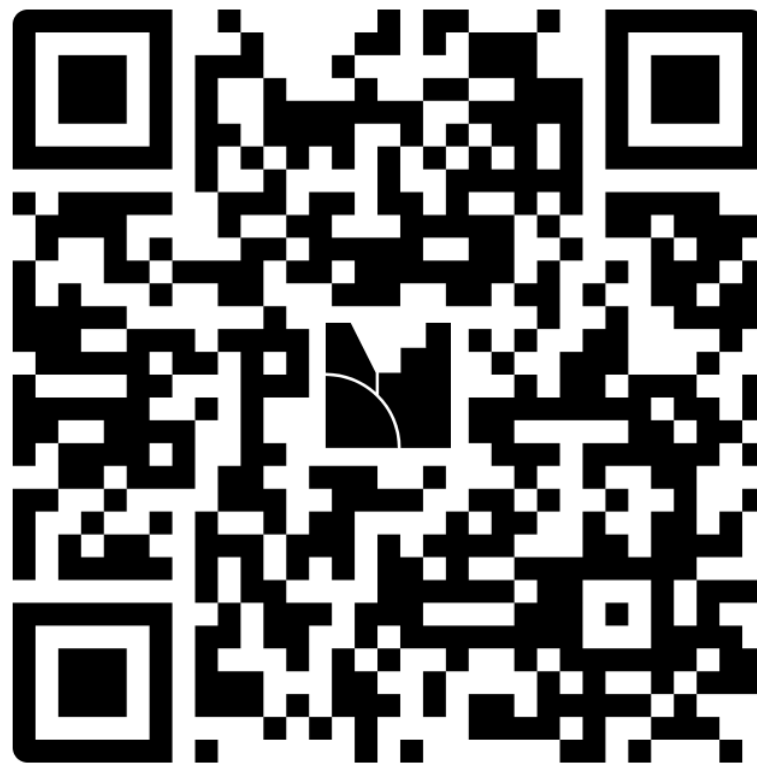
● Limited to No City Control

Full municipal authority

Shared jurisdictions / Partnerships

No formal authority

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[Click to download as image](#)

## Key Questions




- Is it a priority?
- What's the time schedule?
- What are impact and resource costs?
- How does it rank against others?

## Brain Bank (Parking Lot)

- Missing items for future considerations

**LUNCH BREAK 12:45pm**

# REVIEW: Council Prioritization Menti Exercise

 City-Controlled	 Partial / Limited Control	 Limited to No City Control
Full municipal authority	Shared jurisdictions / Partnerships	No formal authority

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### Key Questions

- Is it a priority?
- What's the time schedule?
- What are impact and resource costs?
- How does it rank against others?

### Brain Bank (Parking Lot)

- Missing items for future considerations

# Day 2 Wrap-Up



## Affirmations and Gratitude

Celebrate progress and alignment achieved today



## Looking Ahead

Clear priorities and actionable next steps established

### CALCULATING PROPERTY TAX LEVIES

1. King County Assessor completes valuations and distributes to taxing districts

<b>2026 Preliminary Assessed Valuation</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>19,633,373,168</b>
--	-----------	-----------------------

2. City calculates the amount of property tax they intend to levy
  - a. Cannot exceed a 1% increase over prior year amount
  - b. Cannot exceed total statutory limit rate of \$2.77004 (per \$1,000 AV)
3. The City's levy rate is calculated:

2025 Levy	\$	25,587,707
Add: 1%	\$	255,877
Add: Newly Annexed Areas	\$	-
Add: Estimated Refunds	\$	125,519
<b>Add: New Construction</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>179,174</b>

**Total Levy/(Assessed Valuation/\$1,000) = Property Tax Rate**  
 $\$26,145,350/(\$19,633,373,168/\$1,000) = \$1.33$

4. City must file their levy by November 30th to King County (requires public comment and adoption by Council)
5. After the City has determined the total levy needed, individual property taxes can be calculated:

**Property Tax Rate \* Home Value/\$1,000 = Annual Property Tax**  
 $\$1.33 * (\$600,000/\$1,000) = \$798.00$

#### Implications

1. As assessed value increases, the levy rate decreases and vice versa
2. Your individual property may increase in value, but if it increases less than the average property in Auburn, your tax bill will actually decrease, and vice versa

#### Other types of property tax levies (both require voter approval):

1. Bond levies (super majority)
2. Levy lid lift (simple majority)

**Cumulative Reserve Fund Policy**

<b>Minimum</b>			<b>Maximum</b>	
1,085,000	1%	1 yr debt service	1%	1,085,000
5,691,405	5%	econmic conditions/stabilization	15%	17,074,214
-	0%	capital programs/1x programs	5%	5,691,405
5,691,405	5%	catastrophic events	10%	11,382,809
<b>\$ 12,467,809</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>\$ 35,233,428</b>

**2025 Position**

		1 yr debt service	1%	1,085,000
		econmic conditions/stabilization	15%	17,074,214
		capital programs/1x programs	10%	10,893,645
		catastrophic events	5%	5,691,405
		current commitments	6%	6,952,188
		<b>Total</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>\$ 41,696,451</b>

# CITY BUDGETING

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FEBRUARY 20, 2026

LEADERSHIP RETREAT

# BUDGET REVIEW

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1. Budget Overview
2. Understanding Fund Types
3. General Fund Budget
  - Major revenues and constraints
  - Expenditures and pressures
  - Fund Balance and Reserve policies
  - Long-range projections
4. Future Considerations
5. Zero-Based Budgeting (ZBB)

# BUDGET OVERVIEW

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*A balanced* budget is required by law and legally binding

Cannot exceed the legal budget authority

Biennial Budget

- RCW allows for all cities to budget on a biennial basis
- Fiscal period must begin January 1<sup>st</sup> of an odd numbered year (i.e. 2027)
- Must be adopted by Council no later than December 31<sup>st</sup>
- Required mid-biennial review and true-up

# FUND TYPES

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# 3 PRIMARY FUND TYPES

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## Governmental Funds

1. **General Fund**
2. Special Revenue
3. Debt Service
4. Capital Project



To carry out the primary functions of government and subsidized with tax revenue

## Proprietary Funds

1. Enterprise Funds
2. Internal Service Funds



Funds that are “business-like” and supported 100% by user fees

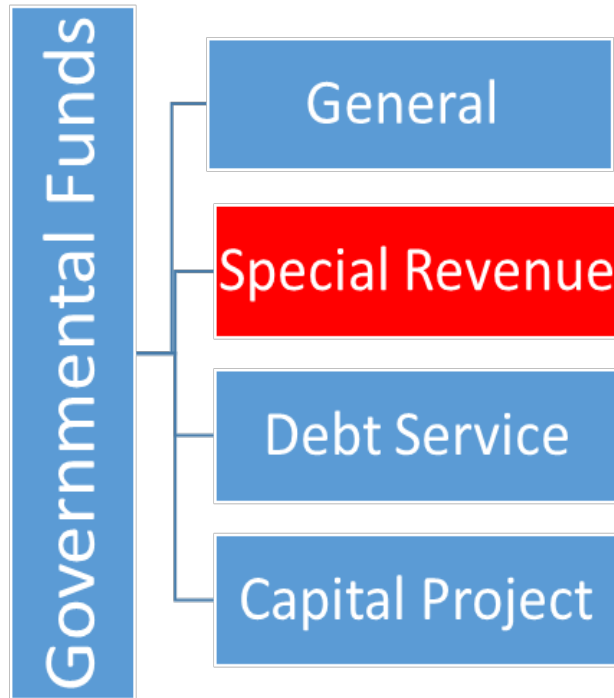
## Fiduciary Funds

1. Agency Funds
2. Permanent Funds



Money held in trust by the City, for non-City activities

# FUND TYPES (GOVERNMENTAL)



## 8 Special Revenue Funds

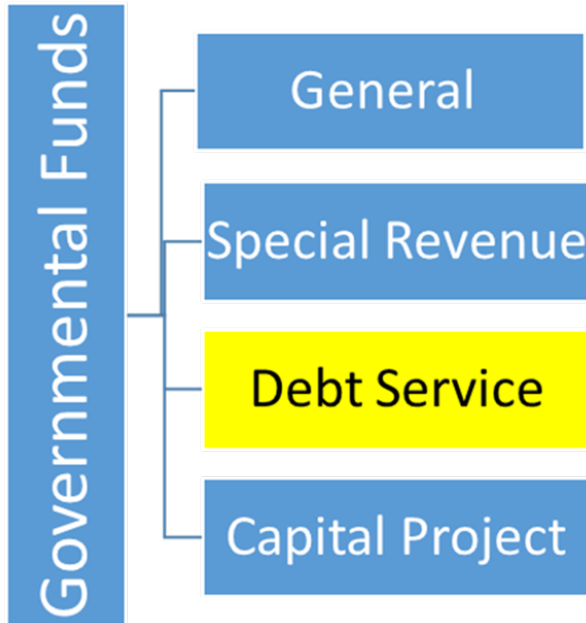
Primary sources into these funds are restricted for specific purposes

- Transportation (state and city restrictions)
- Real Estate Excise Tax (state restrictions)
- Transportation Benefit District (state restrictions)
- Lodging taxes (state restrictions)
- Drug forfeitures (state restricted)
- Mitigation Fees (state restricted)
- Recreational Trails (city restricted)
- Cumulative Reserve (city restricted)

1x and/or capital uses

# FUND TYPES (GOVERNMENTAL)

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## 2 Debt Service Funds

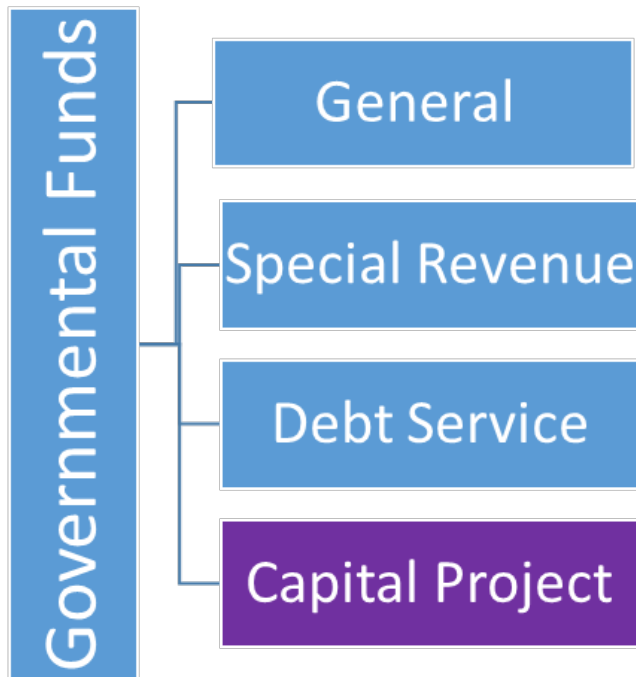
\$1.2 million in annual debt service paid in 2025

\$850,000 in annual debt service in 2026 beyond

Outstanding debt includes:

- City Hall Annex Building - \$11.5 million
- Local Revitalization - \$2.9 million

# FUND TYPES (GOVERNMENTAL)



## 2 Capital Project Funds

For the capital acquisition and construction of major, general government projects

Funded by one-time money:

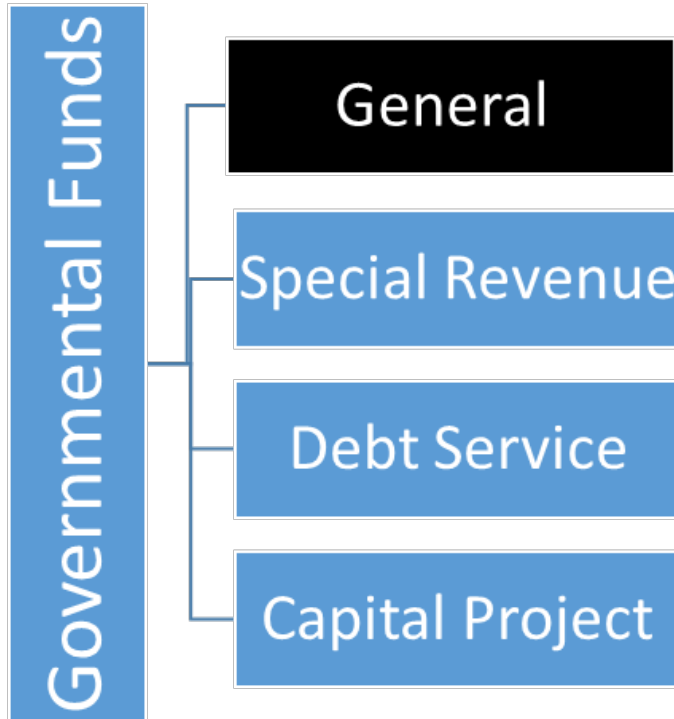
- Transfers from Mitigation fund (SRF)
- Transfers from Real Estate Excise Tax (SRF)
- State, local and federal grants

Capital projects are identified based on the priorities set by Council

A 6-year Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), is created and updated biennially

This plan is incorporated into the biennial budget process

# FUND TYPES (GOVERNMENTAL)



## General Fund - Largest Fund

Primarily funded by taxes (75%)

Operational costs of “everything else”

- Executive Office (Mayor, Council, Emergency Management)
- Office of Equity
- Human Services
- Human Resources
- City Attorney
- Public Safety (PD, SCORE, Valley Com)
- Community Development (Planning, Housing Repair, Economic Development)
- Public Works (Engineering and Street Maintenance)
- Parks, Art, and Recreation
- Finance!!

# FUND TYPES (PROPRIETARY)



## Proprietary Funds

Enterprise

Internal Service

### 7 Enterprise Funds

100% supported by user fees (no General Fund support)

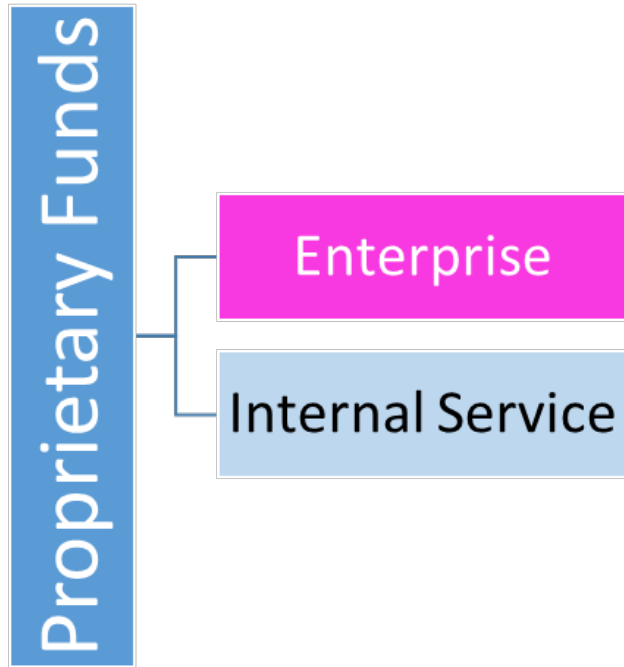
Rate study done every three years

Rates are established to cover the costs of administration, operations, debt service, and capital

Accumulates capital for future major repair, maintenance and replacement projects

Funds include: Water, Sewer, Storm, King County Metro, Solid Waste, Airport, and Cemetery

# FUND TYPES (PROPRIETARY)



## 5 Internal Service Funds

Internal customers are charged fees for goods and services

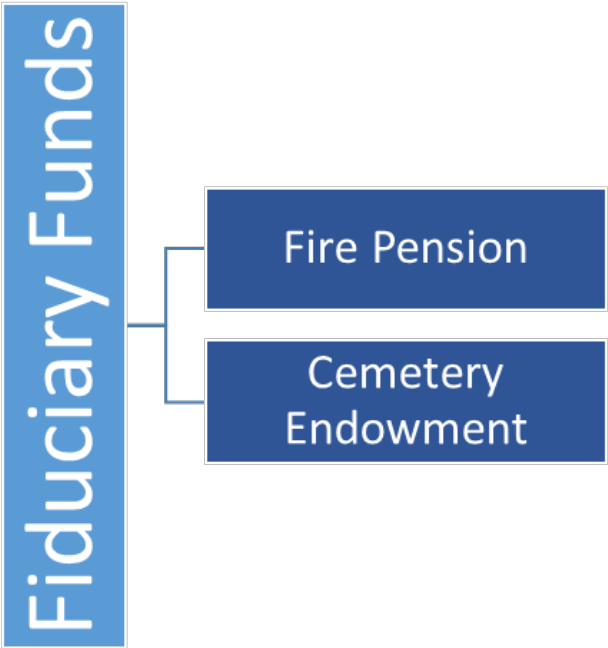
Rates are established every two years during the biennial budget creation

Rates are established to cover the costs of administration, operations, debt service, and capital

Funds Include: Insurance – Unemployment (self funded), Workers Compensation (self funded), Facilities, Innovation and Technology, Communications, and Equipment Replacement



# FUND TYPES (FIDUCIARY)



## Fire Pension (Agency Fund)

- Purpose: pension benefit payments for retired LEOFF1 and pre-LEOFF firefighters
- Funding Source: fire insurance premium tax received annually from the State

## SKHHP (Agency Fund)

- Purpose: South King County jurisdictions sharing resources to increase access to affordable housing
- Funding Source: member contributions

## Cemetery Endowment (Permanent Fund)

- Purpose: to support the maintenance and operations of the cemetery
- Principal sources must remain intact, only the interest earned can be drawn down
- Funding Source: a base amount of certain cemetery sales is transferred into the fund as principal

# GENERAL FUND BUDGET

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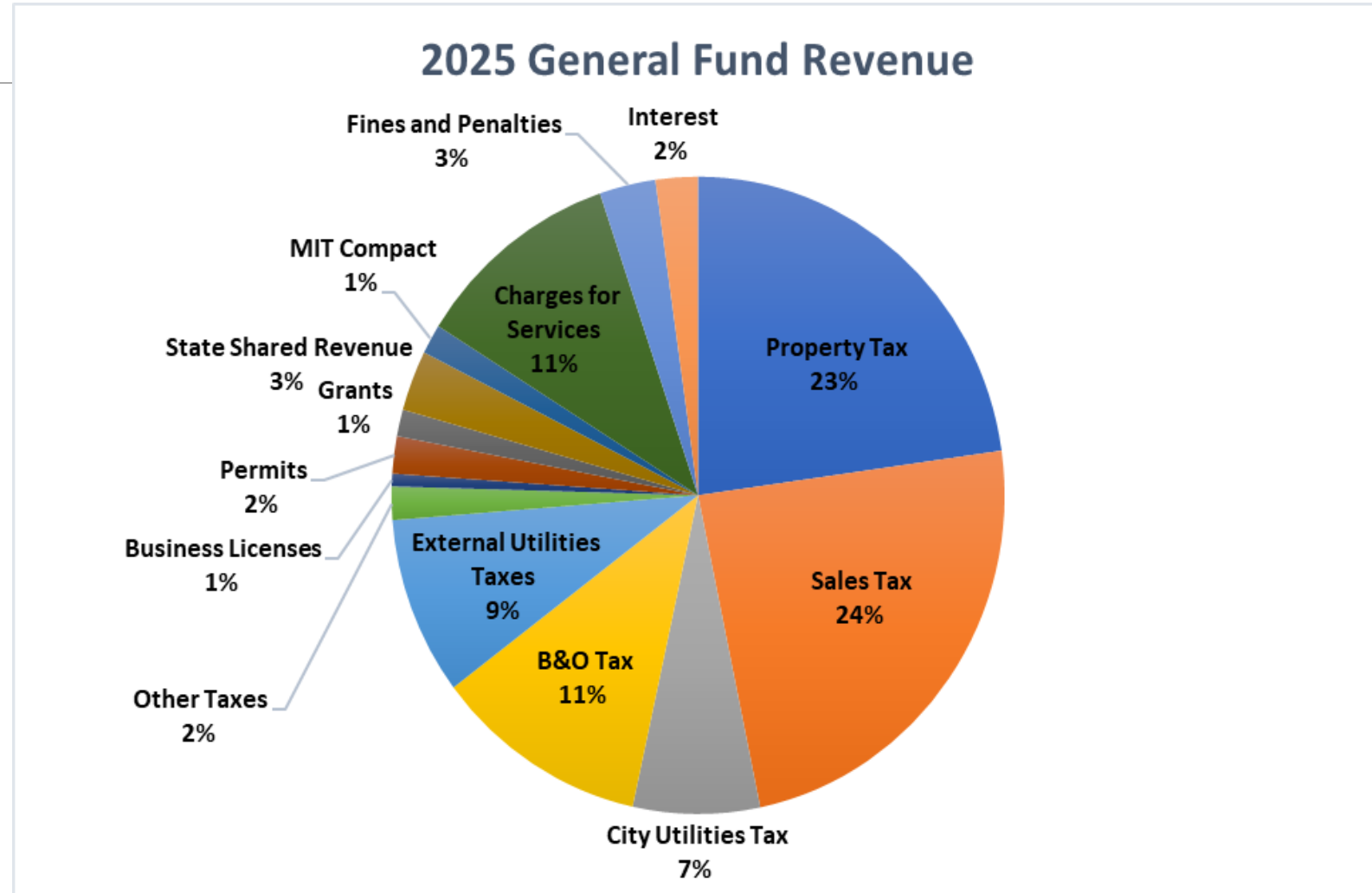
# REVENUE

2025 Actual Revenue:  
**\$113.5 million**

Tax Revenue:  
\$84 million (74%)

Increase in General Fund  
revenue since 2021: 7%  
average per year\*

**Increase over 2024: 3%\***



\* Excludes 1x Transfers In

# CONSTRAINTS ON MAJOR REVENUE

---

**Property tax (\$25.3M):** is limited to 1% growth per year

- Average annual growth since 2021 = 2% (due to new construction and annexation)

**Sales tax and B&O tax (\$26.7M and \$12.5M):** subject to economic fluctuations

- Average annual growth since 2021 is 1%\*\*
- 2025 growth has slowed .8%

**Utility tax (\$10.1M):** is capped at 6% for private utilities

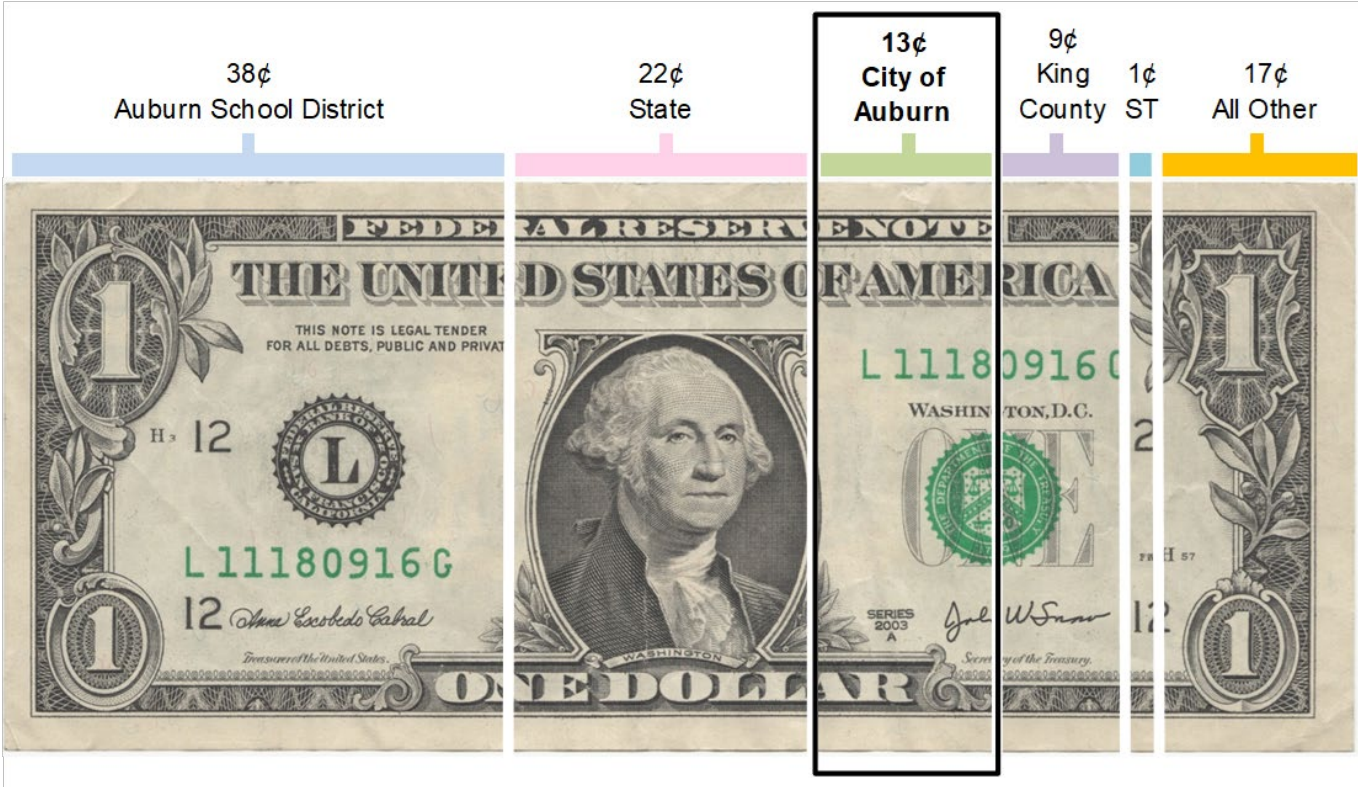
- Average growth since 2021 is 10%
- Electric and natural gas prices increases (annual average 10%)
- Cable TV has *decreased* on average 7% each year
- Bump in 2023 due to new taxpayers being added (water, sewer, and solid waste)

**\*Honorable mention\* Streamlined Sales Tax mitigation:** fully expires July 2026

- A high of \$2 million annually since 2009
- Phased out beginning in 2021

# PROPERTY TAX

For every \$1.00 paid in Property Tax:



# EXPENDITURES

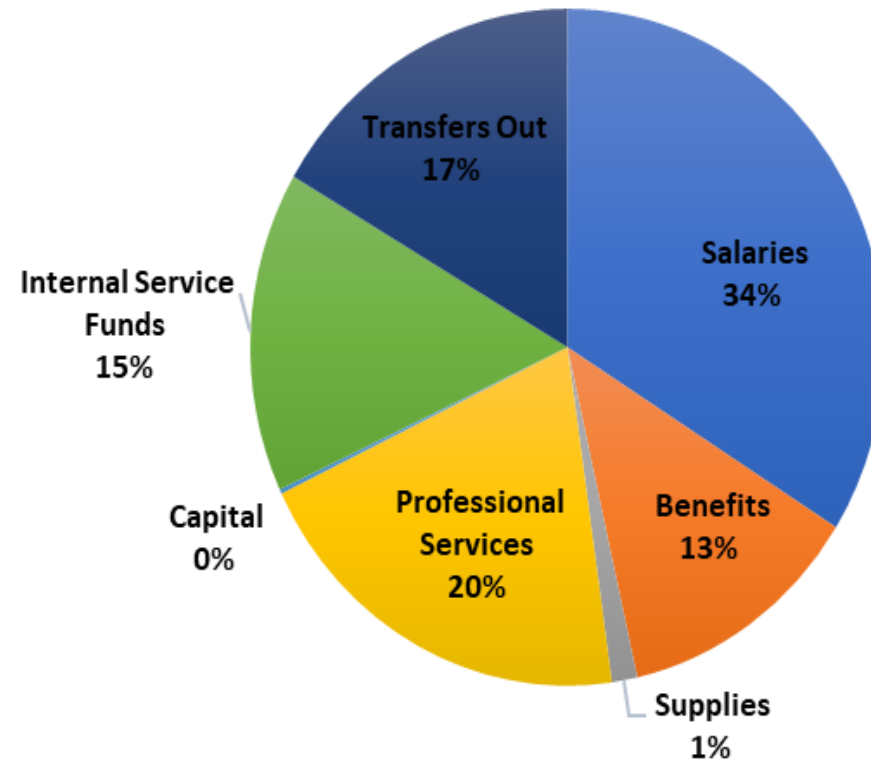
2025 Actual Expenditures:  
**\$124 million**

Salaries and Benefits:  
\$57.6 million (56%\*)

Increase in General Fund expenditures since 2021:  
8.0%\* average per year

**Increase over 2024: 12%\***

2025 General Fund Expenditures



\* Excludes 1x Transfers Out

# EXPENDITURE PRESSURE

---

## **Salaries (\$36.8M) and Benefits (\$14.6M):**

- Wages have increased an average\* of 7% since 2021 (tied to CPI)
- Medical benefits have increased an average of 4% since 2021 (11% in 2023)

## **SCORE, Public Defense, Court Costs (\$10.4M):**

- Increased overhead cost and increased volumes leads to continued contract increases
- A 35% (\$2.7million) increase over 2024

## **Other Public Safety Costs:**

- Critical technology costs (axon): Annual contract expires November 2026
  - Increasing 133% in 2027 (\$575k/year increase)
- Public Safety Building: Debt service costs ~\$1.5million/year

## **Human Services, Sheltering, Housing**

- Continuity (expansion?) of shelter operations
- Expand resource center availability to coordinate with community court, probation services, and shelter

# RESERVE POLICIES

---

Financial policies establish minimum and target requirements

Three types of reserves (SAVINGS):

1. Operating Fund Balance to maintain sufficient cash flow for operations
2. Cumulative Reserve Fund (debt service coverage, economic stabilization, capital programs, catastrophic events)
3. Replacement Reserves (Facilities, Innovation & Technology, and Equipment Rental & Replacement Funds)



# FUND BALANCE

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2025 Est. Ending Fund Balance is \$50.4 million (41% of budgeted expenditures)

What is Fund Balance?



Fund Balance from previous year

+

All revenue

-

All expenditures

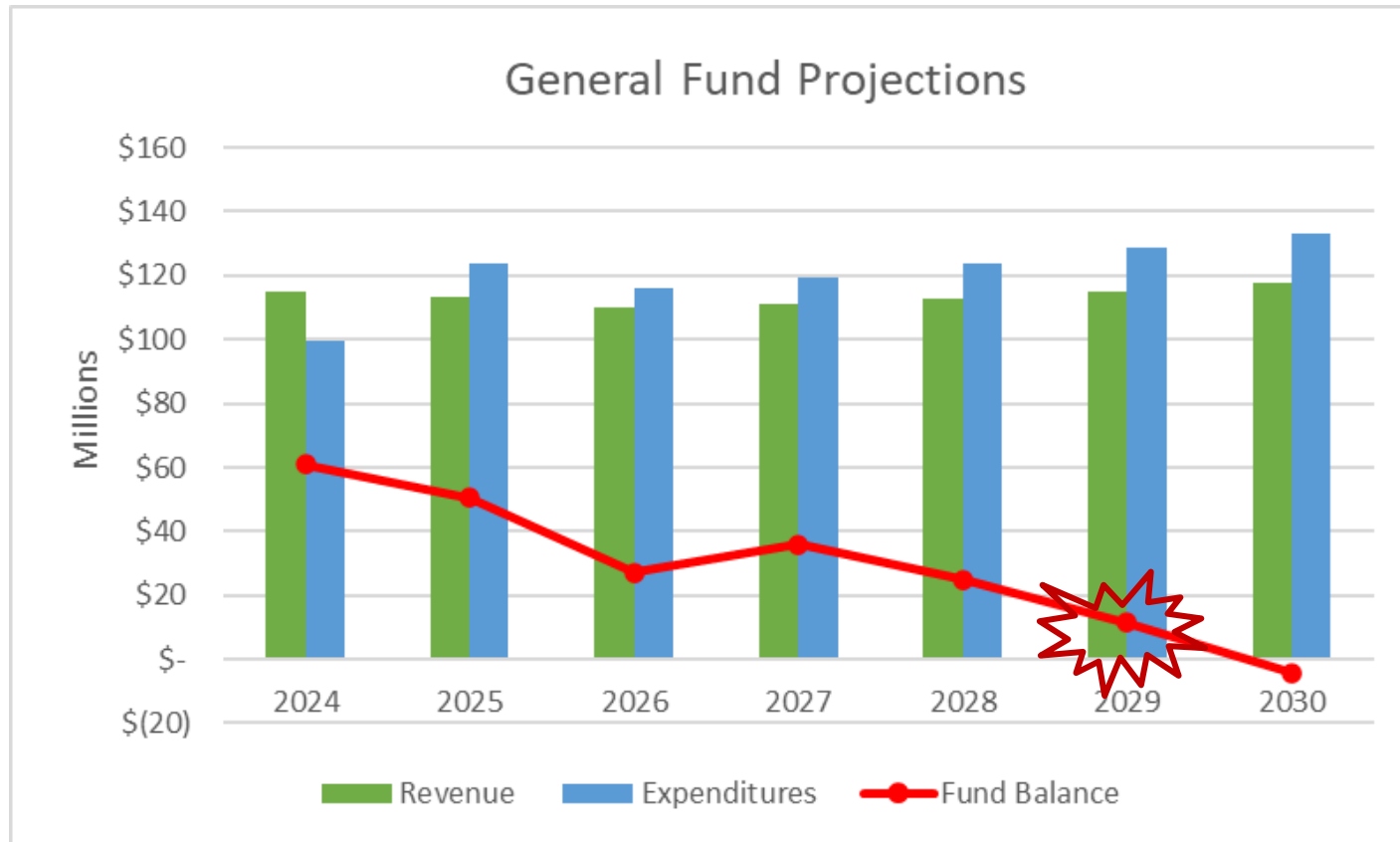
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Ending Fund Balance

Available for appropriation?

Maintaining minimum fund balance and reserve policies

# LONG-RANGE PROJECTION – *scenario #1*

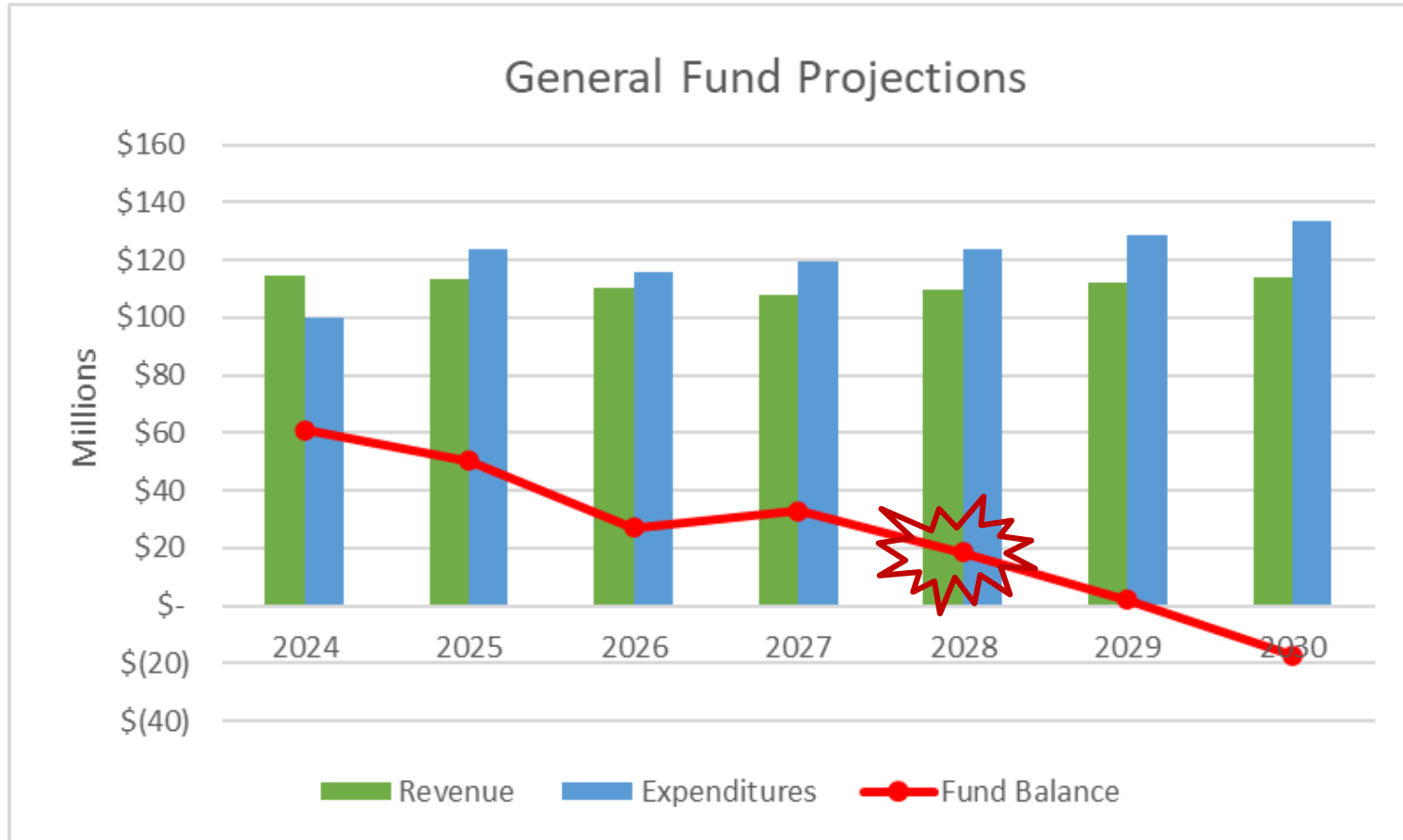


**Revenue ADDED:** \$2.7 million generated from the .1% public safety sales tax

**Expenditures NEUTRAL:** Does not incorporate new public safety costs or increased service

New sales tax would be absorbed to fund EXISTING programs

# LONG-RANGE PROJECTION – *scenario #2*



**Revenue ADDED:** \$2.7 million generated from the .1% public safety sales tax

**Expenditures ADDED:** \$2.7 in new expenditures for public safety

# FUTURE FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

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# HOW DID WE GET HERE?

---

Structural imbalance began in 2020 (required \$4 million transfer from cumulative reserve to stabilize General Fund)

Fund balance was projected to hit a critical point in 2022

To adopt a balanced biennial budget AND maintain service levels, Council agreed a phased in approach was needed:

- Increase the utility tax rate on City Utilities from 7% to 9% in 2021
- Implement a new B&O tax in 2022
- Reassess in four years to consider additional funding sources for 2025 and beyond

Additional Action Since:

- Implement .1% TBD sales tax in 2023 (exclusively for transportation projects)
- Implement .1% Public Safety sales tax in 2026 (exclusively for public safety)

# WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

---

## 1. Closely assess our spending

- What are our city-wide priorities?
- Are we doing the right things?
- Should we be doing more?

## 2. Review revenue options for the third phase

- Adjust B&O tax rates?
- Adjust utility tax rates?
- Levy Lid Lift (property tax)?
- Bond Levy (property tax)?

# LEVY LID LIFT

---

Current property tax increases are restricted to 1% growth per year  
(\$255,000 increase in 2026 over 2025)

A levy lid lift allows cities to exceed the 1% annual levy lid

Voter approval by simple majority

Cannot exceed statutory maximum rate  
(\$2.78/1,000 Assessed Value in 2026)

## Options:

- Single-year or multi-year
- Temporary or permanent

	Single Year	Multi-Year
Temporary	\$13.8M	\$23.2M
Permanent	\$49.5M	\$128.2M

## Assumptions:

Additional revenue over 20 years  
Single Year increase @ 10%  
Multi-Year increase @ 5%

# BOND LEVY

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Unlimited Tax General Obligation (“UTGO”) Bonds

Bonds issued with new, excess property tax and unlimited in amount

Levy rate is established to cover the cost of debt service

Collected annually over the life of the bonds

Requires 60% voter approval and a 40% voter turnout

# ZERO BASED BUDGETING (ZBB)

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# TRADITIONAL BUDGET PROCESS

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1. Each department starts with a baseline budget from the prior year
2. The baseline includes a specific set of account numbers dedicated to each department/division
3. Each director scrutinizes each line item account for the of services and supplies that will be needed
  - Example: make sure there is enough money in the professional services line item from the previous year to cover the finance department's potential professional services contracts for the year
  - Line item budgets slowly expand over time due to: increased costs for goods and services, slow creep in expansion of services, and poor coordination between departments
4. If new or expanded programs, or additional FTE's are needed, the director puts a proposal(decision package) together explaining the need
5. Collaboration between directors, Mayor to determine what are the highest priority/highest impact requests based on Council direction
6. Proposed budget is compiled, by department, and presented to Council accordingly– calling out the significant changes from the previous budget cycle, or baseline

# ZERO BASED BUDGET PROCESS

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1. Each department identifies their own programs and services
  - Example for finance: Financial Planning, Financial Operations, Financial Reporting, Tax, Utility Billing
2. A unique set of account numbers are created specifically for each program
  - This included revenues and expenditures
  - Help analyze high impact/low impact programs, effectiveness of cost recovery models
3. Directors build a line-item budget for each program – in the end the cost for delivering an individual program is quantified
4. Each program must identify: program description, funding sources, service delivered, strategic priority area and metrics to measure success
5. Many programs are cross -departmental
  - Reduce redundancy and duplicity city-wide
  - Increase coordinated effort for a more efficient and effective impact

# ZERO BASED BUDGET – PROS and CONS

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## Transparency:

- Better aligns priorities with programs
- Better describes the city's service delivery
- Cost recovery and value impact

## Alignment:

- Easier to prioritize and rank programs based on city-wide priorities
- Articulates community impact with a direct correlation to budget impact

## Administrative Effort:

- Much more complex – especially in the first year
  - How detailed or combined are each program? How are staffing resources divided across programs?
- Additional time coordination to develop cross-departmental programs is more time consuming
- No existing template or process – we are building the City's entire budget from scratch this year

# ZERO BASED BUDGET

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Most importantly:

ZBB is NOT a cost cutting exercise

Cutting a program does not generate a dollar-for-dollar cost savings

- Due to internal service fund costs, FTEs that work across multiple programs, and there are often mandatory elements or external requirements within programs that can't be eliminated (Annual State Audit or Voter Registration Fees, for example)

Ultimately it helps us decide HOW we want to spend our finite budget

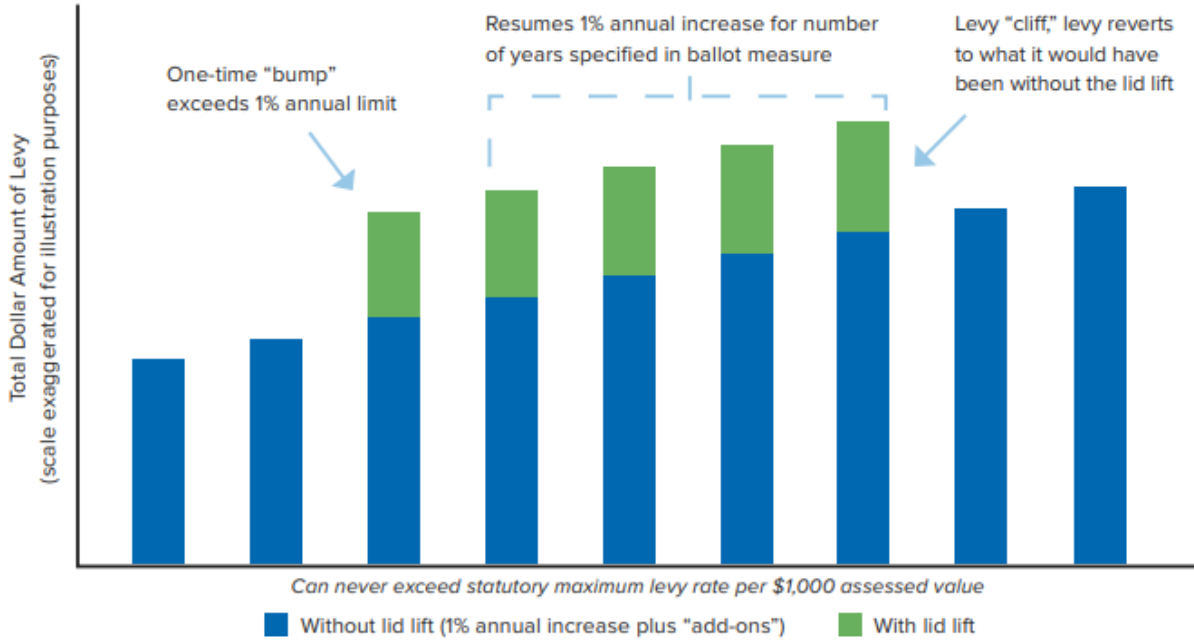
- If we have \$100 million, do we spend that across 100 programs? Or 50?

# DISCUSSION

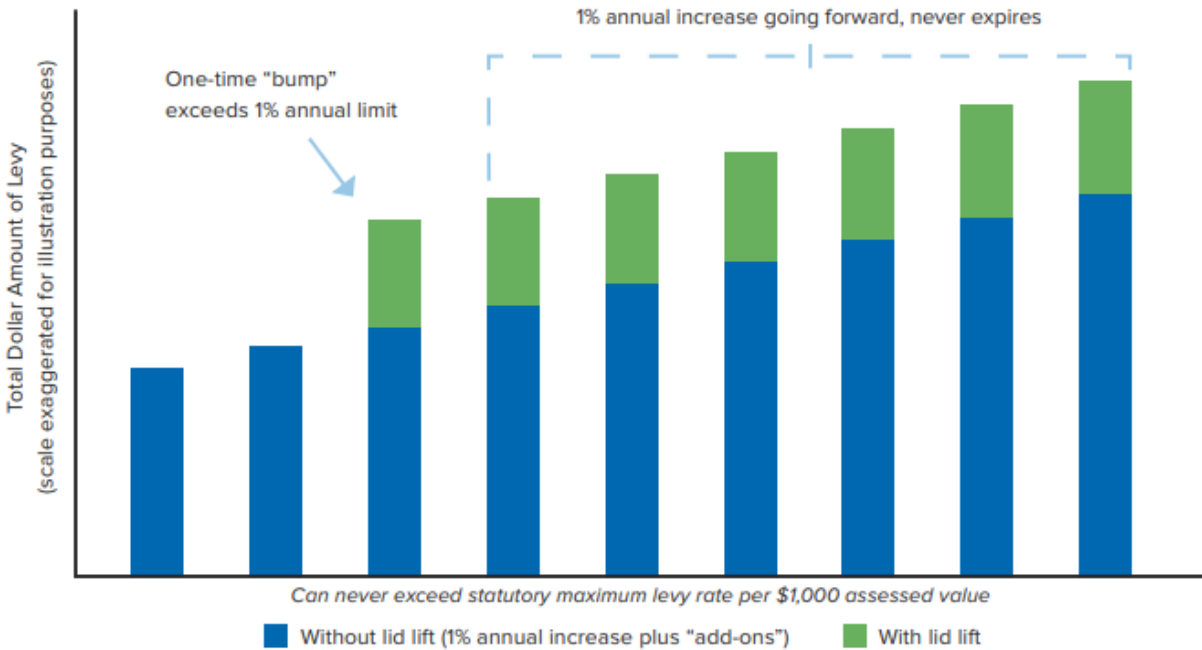
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## LEVY LID LIFT OPTIONS

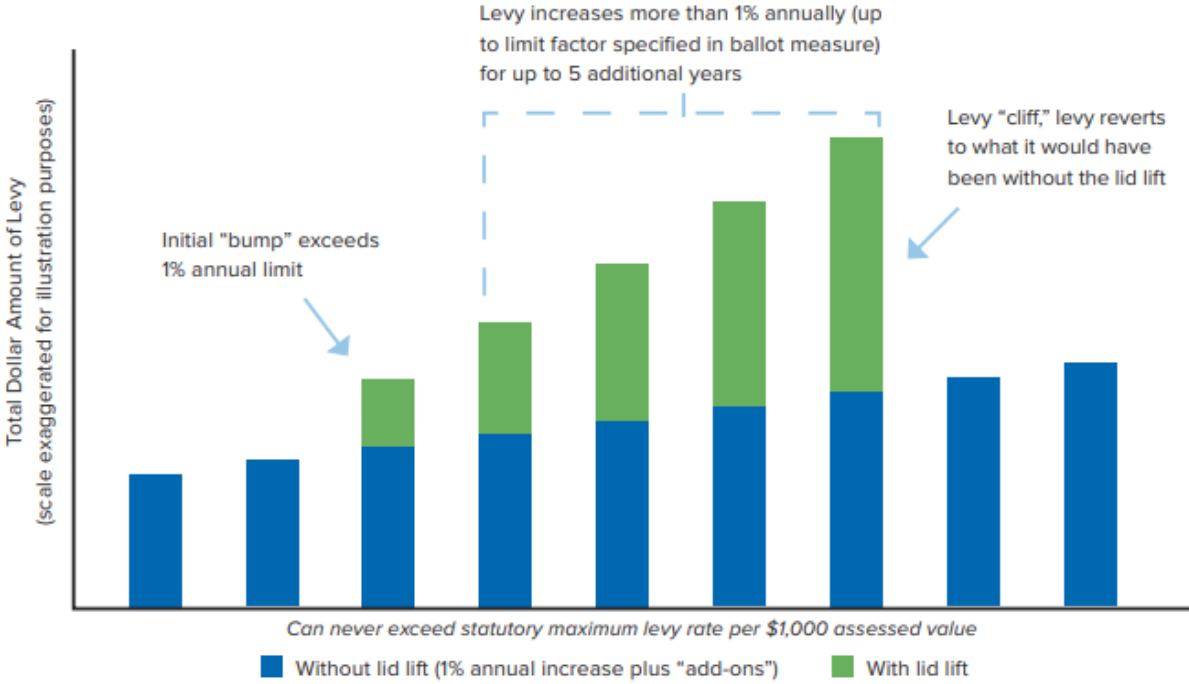
### SINGLE-YEAR TEMPORARY LEVY LID LIFT



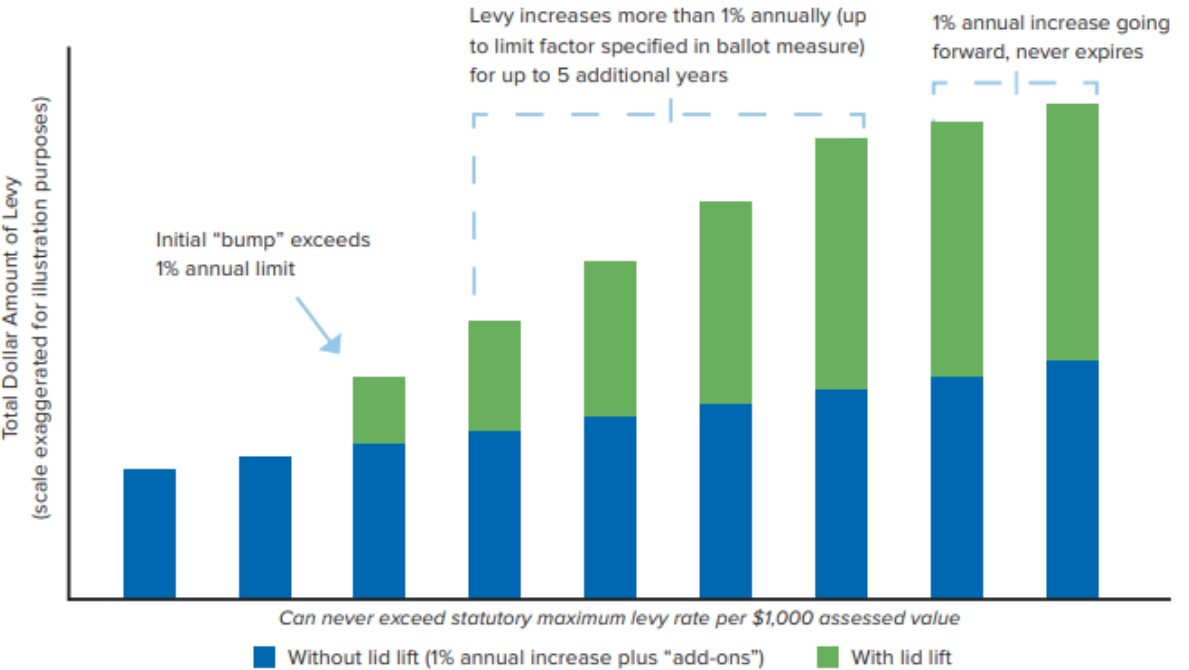
### SINGLE-YEAR PERMANENT LEVY LID LIFT



### MULTI-YEAR TEMPORARY LEVY LID LIFT



### MULTI-YEAR PERMANENT LEVY LID LIFT



**Fund Balance / Working Capital  
Reserve Management Policies**

Fund	Reserve Requirement		Budget	
	Minimum	Target	2025	2026
General Fund	8%	12%	30%	23%
Cumulative Reserve Fund	11%	31%	30%	28%
<b>Enterprise Funds</b>				
Fund	Reserve Requirement		Preliminary Budget	
	Minimum	Target	2025	2026
Water Fund	20%	25%	20%	13%
Sewer Fund	10%	20%	162%	146%
Storm Drainage Fund	10%	20%	74%	62%
Sewer Metro Fund	8%	12%	20%	19%
Solid Waste Fund	8%	12%	7%	9%
Airport Fund	10%	20%	61%	39%
Cemetery Fund	10%	20%	54%	33%
<b>Internal Service Funds</b>				
Fund	Reserve Requirement		Budget	
	Minimum	Target	2025	2026
Facilities Fund	8%	12%	9%	9%
Innovation & Technology Fund (Operations)	8%	12%	28%	31%
Innovation & Technology Fund (Replacement):	\$440K	\$440K	\$440K	\$440K
Equipment Rental & Replacement Fund (Operations)	8%	12%	97%	139%
Equipment Rental & Replacement Fund (Replace)	\$2.9M	\$2.9M	\$2.9M	\$2.9M