

CITY OF SAMMAMISH, WASHINGTON

2027-2028 Budget in Brief

A plain-language guide to the Proposed Biennial Budget

\$220.3M to be spent on City services and projects over two years	\$204.0M in revenue expected over the same two years	56 programs, each with its own cost, reported for the first time	\$0 new debt: no borrowing is planned in this budget
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About this guide

Every two years the City of Sammamish adopts a budget that sets out how it will pay for City services, from public safety and parks to roads and permits. The full budget document is detailed and technical. This guide summarizes it in plain language for residents, businesses and anyone interested in how the City plans to use public money in 2027 and 2028.

This is the City Manager's proposed budget. The City Council will review it, hold public hearings to gain community feedback and adopt a final budget before January 1, 2027, as state law requires. Amounts may change before the budget is adopted. Figures are rounded, so totals may not add exactly.

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Budget highlights

- Spending of \$220.3 million over two years is 1.2 percent less than the 2025-2026 amended budget.
- Public Safety is the largest ongoing service: contracted police, fire and related services make up about 44 percent of General Fund spending.
- \$64.7 million is invested in parks, roads, drainage and City buildings, including the Fire Station 83 remodel, with no borrowing.
- A new 6 percent utility tax, in place since January 2026, helps pay for rising costs while property tax growth is limited to about 1 percent a year.

City Council: Mayor Josh Amato · Deputy Mayor Debbie Treen · Amy Lam · Roisin O'Farrell · Kent Treen · Michael Boyer · Pam Stuart
Interim City Manager: Andy Parks

The budget at a glance

What is a budget, and why two years?

A budget is the City's spending plan. It matches the money the City expects to receive with the services and projects the Council wants to deliver, and it gives the City legal authority to spend. Sammamish adopts a biennial (two-year) budget covering 2027 and 2028. Planning two years at a time gives departments a stable plan and lets the Council focus on longer-term decisions, with a mid-biennium review to adjust, if needed.

How big is the budget?

The total 2027-2028 budget is \$255.4 million. Some of that money is counted twice:

- **About \$45.8 million moves between the City's own funds:** transfers, plus payments for internal services such as technology and fleet, and the surface water utility's share of City overhead costs. It appears twice, once when one fund pays and again when another fund receives it. The General Fund pays \$42.7 million of this amount, and the Surface Water Management Fund pays \$3.1 million, as shown in the table below.
- **About \$209.4 million is left** for services and projects outside the City's own funds once that and the Risk Management Fund's \$0.25 million closing transfer are removed. (The \$220.3 million of spending used in this guide leaves out transfers but includes \$10.9 million of internal service payments.)

Paid by	Paid to	Purpose	2027	2028	2027-2028
Surface Water Management Fund	General Fund	Share of overhead costs	975,550	975,550	1,951,100
General Fund	Street Special Revenue Fund	Street preservation	600,500	625,000	1,225,500
General Fund	Facilities Capital Improvement Fund	Facilities projects	21,800,000	1,854,000	23,654,000
General Fund	Transportation Capital Improvement Fund	Transportation projects	10,000,000	-	10,000,000
General Fund	Equipment Rental and Replacement Fund	Fleet services	530,300	530,300	1,060,600
Surface Water Management Fund	Equipment Rental and Replacement Fund	Fleet services	132,800	132,800	265,600
General Fund	Technology Services Fund	Technology services	3,400,000	3,400,000	6,800,000
Surface Water Management Fund	Technology Services Fund	Technology services	426,418	426,418	852,836
Total			\$37,865,568	\$7,944,068	\$45,809,636

Interfund transfers and payments, 2027-2028, in dollars. Payments to the Street, Facilities and Transportation funds are transfers; the others are payments for internal services and shared costs. Excludes the one-time \$250,000 closing transfer from the Risk Management Fund to the General Fund.

Spending of \$220.3 million is 1.2 percent less than the 2025-2026 amended budget of \$222.9 million. Spending is \$16.3 million more than the revenue expected over the two years. The difference is paid from savings built up in earlier years, mostly for one-time capital projects in the parks, transportation, facilities and surface water funds. The General Fund's day-to-day operations run a surplus.

Budget by fund

The City keeps its money in separate funds, much like separate bank accounts. Many funds can be used only for certain purposes. For example, surface water fees can pay only for surface water work, and real estate excise tax is dedicated to capital projects. The General Fund is the main operating fund for everyday services.

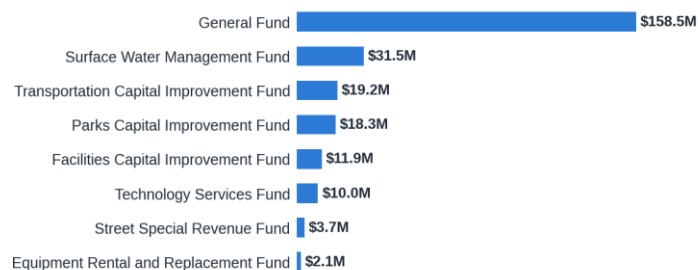


Figure 1. 2027-2028 budget by fund, including transfers between funds. Amounts are in millions. Total: \$255.4 million, including the Risk Management Fund's \$0.25 million closing transfer to the General Fund (not shown).

Sammamish at a glance

Sammamish is a residential city on the Sammamish Plateau in east King County, between Lake Sammamish and the Cascade foothills.

Community fact	Sammamish
Population (Washington State Office of Financial Management, April 1, 2026)	68,500
Rank among Washington cities by population	19th largest
Incorporated	August 31, 1999
Land area	20.4 square miles
Occupied households	22,144
Average household size	3.00 people (King County: 2.39)
Residents under 18	28.6%
Median household income (Census Bureau, 2020-2024 estimate)	\$239,690
Assessed value of taxable property, 2026 (King County Assessor)	\$35.8 billion

How the City is governed

Sammamish uses the council-manager form of government. Seven Councilmembers are elected at large for four-year terms and choose the Mayor and Deputy Mayor from among themselves. The Council sets policy and adopts the budget. It appoints a City Manager, who runs day-to-day operations and prepares the proposed budget.

How services are delivered

Much of what the City provides is delivered through contracts rather than by City employees:

- **Police:** the King County Sheriff's Office provides police services under contract.
- **Fire and emergency medical services:** Eastside Fire & Rescue, a regional partnership of cities and fire districts.
- **Legal services:** a contracted law firm serves as City Attorney.
- **Water and sewer:** provided by two independent districts. They are not part of the City or its budget.

Because the City employs no police officers or firefighters, a large share of its budget pays for contracts rather than salaries.

New in this budget

- **Program budgeting.** For the first time, the budget shows the cost of each of 56 City programs, such as Building Services or Parks Resource Management, not only the cost of each department.
- **Built from zero.** Departments rebuilt their budgets line by line instead of starting from the previous budget.
- **A full two years of the utility tax.** The 6 percent utility tax that began January 1, 2026 is in place for both years of the budget.

Where the money comes from

The City expects **\$204.0 million** in revenue across all funds in 2027-2028, up 9.0 percent from the 2025-2026 estimate (audited 2025 actual results plus the City's projection for 2026). Taxes provide about 63 cents of every revenue dollar.

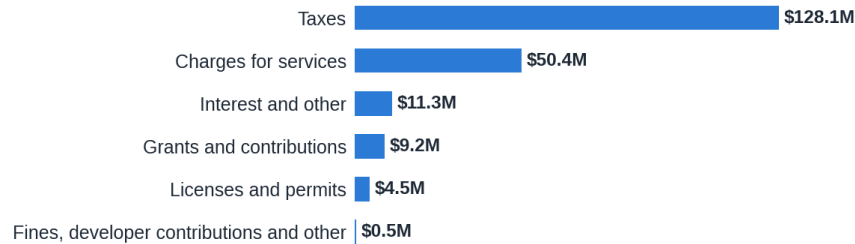


Figure 2. 2027-2028 revenue by type, all funds. Amounts are in millions. Total: \$204.0 million.

City taxes

Tax	2027-2028	What it is and how it can be used
Property tax	\$73.4M	The City's largest source. Paid by property owners; can be used for any City purpose.
Utility tax	\$22.1M	A 6% tax on electricity, gas, water, sewer, surface water, garbage, cable and phone service, in effect since January 1, 2026. Can be used for any City purpose.
Retail sales tax	\$16.6M	The City's share of sales tax on purchases. Can be used for any City purpose.
Real estate excise tax	\$10.9M	Paid when property is sold. Dedicated to capital projects such as parks and roads.
Criminal justice sales tax	\$4.9M	A countywide sales tax shared with cities. Restricted to criminal justice costs.
Other taxes	\$0.1M	Affordable housing sales tax and leasehold excise tax.
Total taxes	\$128.1M	

Other revenue

- **Charges for services (\$50.4 million).** The largest part is the surface water fee on property (\$25.2 million), which pays for drainage and water quality work. It also includes fees for services such as development review and recreation programs, and payments the City's funds make to each other for shared services.
- **Grants, interest and other sources (\$25.6 million).** Includes state and federal grants, interest earned on City balances, licenses, permits and fines.

Five sources provide about 75 percent of all revenue: property tax, surface water fees, the utility tax, sales taxes and real estate excise tax. Some revenue, such as surface water fees, real estate excise tax and impact fees paid by new development, can be used only for specific purposes.

Your property taxes

Property tax is the City's largest source of money for everyday services, providing about 52 percent of General Fund revenue. The City expects \$73.4 million over the two years: about \$36.4 million in 2027 and \$37.1 million in 2028.

Where your property tax dollars go

Your property tax bill pays for many governments, not just the City. The City receives about 11 to 12 cents of each property tax dollar, depending on location. Schools receive the largest share.

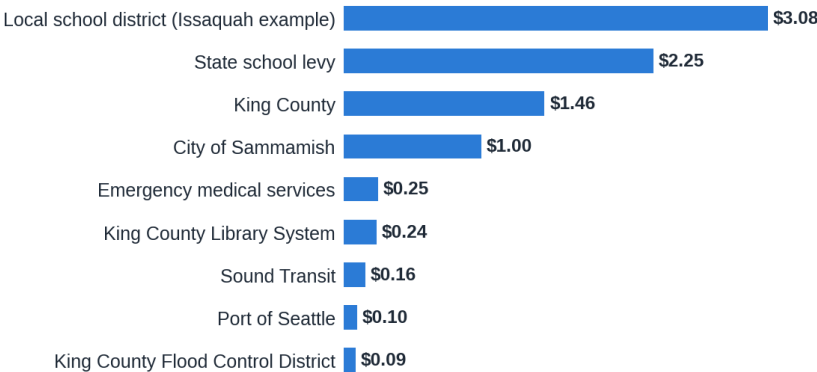


Figure 3. 2026 property tax rates per \$1,000 of assessed value for one Sammamish location (Issaquah School District, inside the Sound Transit area): \$8.63 in total. Total rates across Sammamish range from \$8.44 to \$9.10 per \$1,000, with differences driven primarily by the applicable school district and other taxing districts. The City rate is the same everywhere in Sammamish.

How the City's property tax is limited

State law limits how much property tax the City can collect, not how much your home is worth. Each year the City may increase its total property tax collection by no more than 1 percent, plus the taxes on new construction, plus any unused capacity from earlier years. Increases beyond that require a vote of the people.

Because the total the City collects is fixed this way, the tax rate moves in the opposite direction to property values. When values rise, the rate falls. When values fall, the rate rises so that the same total is spread over a smaller base.

What this means for 2027

The King County Assessor's preliminary figures show total assessed value in Sammamish falling from \$35.8 billion for 2026 taxes to \$33.9 billion for 2027, a drop of 5.3 percent. As a result, the City's estimated tax rate rises from \$1.00168 to \$1.07148 per \$1,000 of assessed value, even though the City's total collection grows only by what state law allows: the 1 percent limit, new construction and capacity the City did not use in earlier years.

At the 2026 rate, the City's portion of the tax is about \$100 a year for every \$100,000 of a home's assessed value.

Questions about your property's assessed value, exemptions or deferrals are handled by the King County Assessor, not the City.

Sales and utility taxes

Where your sales tax dollars go

The total sales tax rate in most of Sammamish is 10.30 percent. Most of it goes to the State and to regional transit. Of every \$10 of sales tax paid in Sammamish, the City keeps about 83 cents.

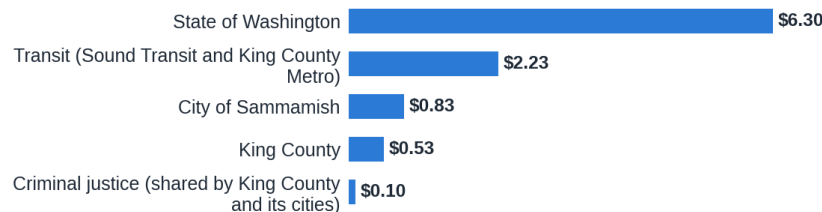


Figure 4. Distribution of every \$10.00 of sales tax paid in most of Sammamish, where the total rate is 10.30 percent (Washington State Department of Revenue). The State share is net of the affordable housing credit the City receives, which is included in the City share. Amounts are rounded, so they total \$9.99.

The City expects \$16.6 million of retail sales tax over the two years, about \$8.3 million a year, which is nearly unchanged from the 2025-2026 estimate of \$16.6 million. Construction activity produces a large share of sales tax, so this revenue rises and falls with the building cycle. Online purchases delivered to Sammamish addresses also generate sales tax for the City.

The utility tax

After the Council approved it, the City began collecting a 6 percent utility tax on January 1, 2026. The tax applies to electricity, natural gas, water, sewer, surface water, solid waste, cable television, telephone and cellular service. It is expected to raise about \$11.0 million a year, or \$22.1 million over the two years. Electricity and natural gas make up more than half of the total. Unlike property and sales tax, all of the utility tax paid stays with the City and pays for City services.

The utility tax is now the General Fund's second-largest source of revenue after property tax. It helps close the gap between property tax revenue, which is limited to about 1 percent growth a year, and the rising cost of services.

How the City's main taxes compare

- **Property tax:** about 52 percent of General Fund revenue; growth limited by state law.
- **Utility tax:** about 16 percent of General Fund revenue; new in 2026.
- **Sales taxes (all three):** about 15 percent of General Fund revenue; rises and falls with the economy.

Where the money goes

The City will spend \$220.3 million across all funds in 2027-2028. The chart groups the City's 56 programs into service areas.



Figure 5. 2027-2028 spending by service area, all funds. Amounts are in millions. Total: \$220.3 million.

What the service areas include

- **Capital investment:** building and repairing parks, roads, sidewalks, drainage systems, City buildings and Fire Station 83.
- **Public safety and emergency management:** police, fire and emergency medical services, courts, storm and emergency response, and emergency preparedness.
- **Citywide support services:** technology, facilities, finance, human resources and other services that support all departments.
- **General government:** the City Council, City Manager, legal services, communications, public records and sustainability.
- **Surface water:** drainage and water quality work, code and surface water compliance, and solid waste and recycling, paid for mainly by the surface water fee.
- **Transportation and streets; parks, recreation and culture; community development and permitting; human services and housing:** the day-to-day services residents see most, from road maintenance and park upkeep to building permits and support for human services agencies.
- **Not assigned to a program:** citywide costs that are not tied to a single service.

Most spending pays for services and contracts, especially police and fire. Capital construction is the next largest category. The City has no debt payments because it has no debt.

Public safety and the General Fund

Public Safety is the largest ongoing service

The Public Safety program (contracted police and fire services, jail, animal control and court costs) totals \$53.7 million over two years. That is about 35 percent of all City spending outside the capital program, and it is the largest single operating program.

\$28.7M

Eastside Fire & Rescue fire and emergency medical services for 2027-2028, as adopted by its Board on October 8, 2026, including equipment and facility replacement contributions and a one-time public safety consultant

\$23.7M

King County Sheriff police contract for 2027-2028

\$54.5M

total Public Safety department budget: the \$53.7 million program, plus prosecution and public defense (\$0.5 million) and contract oversight staff (\$0.4 million), less \$0.1 million of the program budgeted in other departments

Public Safety has the largest dollar increase of any General Fund department in this budget, \$10.8 million or 24.7 percent more than the 2025-2026 estimate, and makes up about 44 percent of General Fund spending.

The General Fund

The General Fund pays for most everyday City services: public safety, parks and recreation, permitting, street and traffic operations, and administration. It is paid for mainly by property, utility and sales taxes.

General Fund, 2027-2028	Amount
Revenue	\$139.9 million
Operating spending, including ongoing capital maintenance transfers	\$128.5 million
Operating surplus before one-time transfers	\$11.4 million
One-time transfers to other City funds (\$20.0 million to the Facilities Capital Improvement Fund and \$10.0 million to the Transportation Capital Improvement Fund)	\$30.0 million
Closing transfer from the Risk Management Fund	\$0.25 million
Fund balance, end of 2026 (estimated)	\$59.7 million
Fund balance, end of 2028 (projected)	\$41.3 million

Day-to-day operations run an \$11.4 million surplus after \$4.9 million of ongoing capital maintenance transfers to the facilities and street funds. Revenue of \$139.9 million and the \$0.25 million closing transfer together total \$140.1 million, the General Fund total revenues and transfers in shown in the full budget. The General Fund balance falls over the two years because the General Fund transfers savings built up in earlier years to other City funds, including one-time transfers of \$20.0 million held for future facilities needs and \$10.0 million for future transportation projects.

Largest General Fund departments (2027-2028)

Department	Budget	Change from 2025-2026 estimate
Public Safety	\$54.5M	+24.7%
Public Works (including Traffic)	\$13.7M	+12.9%
Parks and Recreation	\$13.1M	+9.7%
Community Development	\$11.6M	+14.2%
All other departments	\$30.8M	-0.3%
General Fund total	\$123.6M	+13.7%

Public Works combines two General Fund budget lines: Public Works, \$11.1M (+8.2%), and Traffic, \$2.6M (+38.6%). Change is measured against the 2025-2026 estimate: audited 2025 actual results plus the City's projection for 2026.

Investing in the community

The budget includes \$64.7 million for capital investment: \$57.9 million for construction and land, and \$6.8 million for the staff who plan, design and manage the projects and related costs. Capital projects build or rebuild long-lasting public assets such as parks, roads and buildings.

Capital projects by fund	2027-2028	Main funding sources
Transportation Capital Improvement Fund	\$18.0M	Real estate excise tax, transportation impact fees, a General Fund transfer
Parks Capital Improvement Fund	\$17.1M	Real estate excise tax, King County parks levy, park impact fees, fund balance
Surface Water Management Fund	\$11.7M	Surface water fees, grants and fund balance
Facilities Capital Improvement Fund	\$11.4M	Fund balance and General Fund transfers
Street Special Revenue Fund	\$0.2M	Motor vehicle fuel tax and General Fund transfers

Project amounts only; each fund also pays for the staff who deliver its projects.

Major projects

Project	2027-2028
Fire Station 83 remodel	\$8.5M
Big Rock Park South, phase 1 improvements	\$7.0M
East Lake Sammamish Parkway stabilization (including surface water share)	\$6.2M
SE 24th Street boardwalk rehabilitation	\$3.2M
Beaver Lake Park athletic field (first phase)	\$2.5M
Eastlake High School community fields 1 and 2 turf replacement	\$1.8M
George Davis Creek fish passage	\$1.8M
Pavement preservation and reconstruction	\$1.6M
City Hall heating, ventilation and air conditioning upgrades	\$1.4M
Pine Lake Park playground	\$1.4M

Looking ahead and getting involved

Challenges ahead

- **Property tax growth is limited.** The City's largest source of general revenue can grow only about 1 percent a year plus new construction without a public vote, while the costs of contracts, wages and materials grow faster.
- **Property values are softening.** Assessed value is expected to fall 5.3 percent for 2027 taxes, and home sales have slowed.
- **The regional economy.** Seattle-area technology employers cut about 7,027 jobs in 2025, and cuts continued in 2026. King County unemployment was 4.9 percent in July 2026. Many Sammamish residents work in these industries.
- **Rising public safety costs.** Contracted police and fire services are the largest and one of the fastest-growing parts of the General Fund budget.

The City keeps a reserve of at least 25 percent of the prior year's ongoing General Fund spending to protect services in an emergency or a downturn. It will also set aside part of its fund balance to help absorb swings in revenue.

How the budget is adopted

- The City Manager presents the proposed budget to the City Council.
- The Council reviews the budget in public meetings and holds a public hearing on the proposed budget.
- The Council must adopt the budget by ordinance before January 1, 2027. A mid-biennium review takes place in late 2027.

Share your views

Residents can comment during the Council's budget review sessions and at the public hearings, or contact the City Council. Meeting dates, the full budget document and financial reports are posted on the City's website.

Sammamish City Council · CityCouncil@Sammamish.us · **City Hall (425) 295-0500**

Key terms

Term	What it means
Biennial budget	A budget that covers two years (here, 2027 and 2028).
Fund	A separate account with its own balanced books, so money restricted to a purpose is spent only on that purpose.
General Fund	The City's main operating fund for everyday services, paid mostly by taxes.
Capital project	Building or rebuilding a long-lasting public asset, such as a park, road or building.
Reserve	Money set aside for emergencies, cash flow or a future purpose.
Levy	The total amount of property tax a government collects.
Transfer	Money moved from one City fund to another; left out of citywide spending totals to avoid double counting.
Program	A specific service the City delivers, with its own cost and staff time.