

This report includes 2024 accomplishments and projects to be completed in 2025.

Ellensburg INSIDER

City Annual Report 2024

Working Toward A Strategic Vision

The City Council's Strategic Vision 2024-2029 represents the most important emerging issues facing the City of Ellensburg and establishes precedence for expenditure of staff and other City resources. In addition to providing essential public services, the vision includes:

- Dedicated Parks and Recreation Resources
- Sustainable Economic Development
- Affordable Housing and Living
- Infrastructure and Energy
- Safety, Civic Engagement, and Cultural Inclusion

Learn more at www.ellensburgwa.gov/strategicvision

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Dedicated Parks & Recreation Resources

Parks and recreation services compete with other general government services (police, library, etc.) for funding. Aging facilities coupled with demand for increasing programs and family activities will require creative solutions and new revenue to expand services. 2024 highlights:

- Grand opening to celebrate construction of Unity Park. The project was fully funded by federal American Rescue Plan Act dollars. The City Arts Commission facilitated public art sculpture project selection for Unity Park which will be installed in July 2025. Contracted with Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce to operate a seasonal Visitor Information Center in 2025.



Unity Park Grand Opening Ceremony on October 5, 2024

- Adopted new master plan for Reed Park. Negotiated resolution of parcel assignment, property lines, and ongoing monitoring, maintenance, and mitigation for Craig's Hill and Reed Park with County partners.



- Maintained Bicycle Friendly Community Silver status, since 2015, and celebrated Bike Month with community rides.

- Initiated alternative project delivery for Fieldhouse to replace Ellensburg Racquet & Recreation Center, lost to arson fire in 2022. Negotiated early insurance settlement and secured \$572,000 grant funding for replacement. Completed early design, validation, and operating studies. Currently exploring public/private partnership alternatives for facility.

- Partnered with Ellensburg Morning Rotary Club to build a Pollinator Garden at Wippel Park. Enhanced community garden program with accessible garden beds through Parks Partnership Grant.



Wippel Park community garden beds

Get involved! Participate in the upcoming community-informed Parks and Open Space Plan Update and Sustainable Funding Plan development in 2025.

Ellensburg City Council

The Ellensburg City Council meets twice each month, at 7 p.m., on the first and third Monday in the Council Chambers at Ellensburg City Hall.

All City Council, board, and commission meetings are hybrid. Attendance is welcome in person and remotely. Accommodations available upon request.

Learn more about the City Council at www.ellensburgwa.gov/citycouncil

2025/2026 City Budget and General Fund

The adopted 2025/2026 Biennial Budget totals \$127,649,660 for 2025 and \$127,561,329 for 2026, excluding ending fund balance. The projected operating revenue for fiscal years 2025 and 2026 are \$21,638,617 and \$22,235,461 respectively. Combined with the projected carryover from 2024 the total available resources in the General Fund operations are \$26,653,209 for 2025 and \$24,574,902 for 2026.

The Budget includes 39 separate funds which each carry revenue and expenditure restrictions and requirements.

The General Fund is the principal operating fund of the City, including expenditures for police, parks and recreation, engineering, library, planning and development, finance, general City administration, and funding for the transportation system.

Principle sources of General Fund revenues are taxes (property tax, sales tax, business & occupation (B&O) tax and others) 59%; charges for services (shared cost for administrative services) 28%; licenses and permits 3%; state/federal-shared revenues (grants) 3%; and fines/penalties 1%. The City's combined General Fund revenues are projected to be \$42 million for the biennium, an increase of \$2 million more than the previous biennium (see graph).

Other major fund types are Special Revenue (including transit), Capital Projects, Debt Service, Enterprise (Utilities), and Internal Service Funds (fleet, facilities, and technology). City utilities—water, wastewater, electric, natural gas, stormwater, and telecom/fiber—operate as their own business entities and are supported primarily by customers fees, not by tax revenues.

Sustainable Economic Development

Successful economic development promotes and expands the diversity of jobs and quality of life in the community and amplifies our central location. Goals focus on collaboration, economic resilience, balanced growth, community investment, and preservation of the legacy and history. 2024 highlights:

- Partnered with Kittitas County, Central Washington University, Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, Ellensburg Downtown Association, and others to advance economic development initiatives.
- Continued partnerships with Kittitas County, including interlocal agreements to inspect bridges, chip seal nearly 10 miles of City streets, stripe roadways, and coordinate flood response.
- Merged the Ellensburg Business Development Authority (EBDA), dba CenterFuse, functions with the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce to break down historic silos, remove barriers to information sharing, and offer efficiencies for countywide coordination of economic development services.
- Completed a parking lot swap which provides more public parking spaces at 7th Avenue and Pearl Street.
- Worked with owners and agents of prospective developments to consider projects in the City, including the 1 million sq. ft. WinCo Distribution Center project, and many others.
- City received a grant from DNR to continue Urban Forestry Program to develop a park tree inventory, create an Urban Forestry Management Plan, complete a tree ordinance update with standards for street trees, and develop public outreach materials. The project will be completed in 2026.

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Rich Elliott
Mayor



Sarah
Beauchamp



Nancy
Goodloe



Nancy Lillquist
Mayor Pro Tem



David
Miller

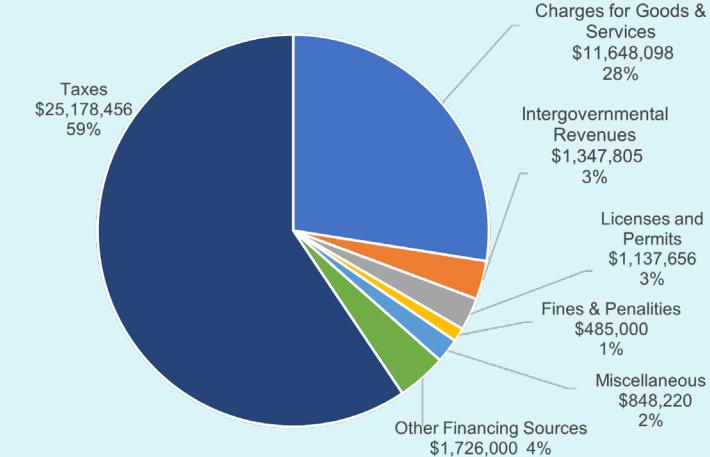


Delano
Palmer



Joshua
Thompson

2025/2026 Biennial Budget - General Fund Revenues



General government and transportation Capital construction and maintenance projects are funded through a combination of local revenues (impact fees and sales tax) leveraged to attract state and federal grants.

High inflation rates over the past few years drove up the cost of General governmental services, including maintaining transportation infrastructure, while tax revenues—the primary source of revenues—remained flat. Despite the increasing value of property, property tax revenues can only increase 1% per year, and sales tax revenue growth has slowed. The Ellensburg City Council will be exploring options to continue funding general services, at current levels this year.

Learn more on the City website.



Ellensburg Postcard Mural on Fourth Avenue

Achieved designation as Washington State's newest Creative District, the first of its kind to represent two quadrants, including a university (Central Washington University). Awarded start-up funding for media and wayfinding projects.

Ellensburg Central Transit



Ellensburg Central Transit is a public transit system serving the general public within the City limits. Operations include an accessible fixed route system, a complimentary door-to-door ADA paratransit service for riders who are unable to access the fixed route bus system due to a disability, and a 24-7 non-emergency medical transportation service called Cabulance for individuals who need an accessible vehicle to access specific medical facilities.

Learn more at www.ellensburgcentraltransit.org



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www.ellensburgwa.gov/newsletter



Affordable Housing & Living

Housing and living affordability is a statewide challenge. The City has taken several actions to remove barriers and advance affordable housing projects. 2024 highlights:

- Reviewed proposals and selected a 30-unit affordable housing project for First and Pine property, using an innovative model.
- Initiated wetland mitigation project to define buildable land at the former Catherine Park property to prepare for affordable cottage-style housing on site.
- Secured Connecting Housing to Infrastructure Program (CHIP) grants, partnering with nonprofits for new affordable housing initiatives, including Habitat for Humanity, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and HopeSource.
- Initiated property exchange between City, County, and CWU that gives City a parcel of property (approximately 6.2 acres) at Helena and Sycamore for future use as affordable housing. Exchange scheduled to be completed in 2025.
- Participated in Joint Ad Hoc Committee on Homelessness to evaluate potential sites for year-round overnight shelter. Focus changed to siting the seasonal 2024-2025 Cold Weather Shelter at the Kittitas Valley Event Center, in partnership with Kittitas County.

Upcoming Projects

Major projects scheduled for 2025:

- Expanding Solar Grant
- Reecer Creek Levee
- Water Street Overlay
- Annual Residential Sidewalk Repair Program
- Seattle Avenue Utility Extension Project
- Anderson Road Sewer Extension Phase II
- SR97 Main Extension and Crossing



Learn more at www.ellensburgwa.gov/construction

2024 By The Numbers

↑ increase over previous year ↓ decrease over previous year

Utilities

- Water Production: 1.52 billion gallons ↓
- Wastewater Treated: 1.14 billion gallons
- Total Gas Customers: 5,217 | New: 196 ↑
- Total Electric Customers: 10,993 | New: 411 ↑
- New Fiber Installed: 34,530 ft ↑
- Total Utility Bills: 140,458 ↑
- 811 Utility Locate Tickets: 1,667 ↓

Energy Conservation

- Electric Rebates: 54 totaling \$133,147 ↓
- Natural Gas Rebates: 34 totaling \$40,078 ↓
- Energy Saved: 460,038 kWh ↓
- Low-income Electric Rebates: \$50,265 ↑
- Low-income Natural Gas Rebates: \$51,251 ↑
- HEAR Rebates: 39 totaling \$887,044 ↑

Water Quality

- Stormwater: 49.16 miles ↑
- Backflow Prevention Devices: 2,842 ↑
- Stream Quality: 260 tests ↓

Library

- Library Cards: 14,518 active ↓
- Reference Transactions: 4,274 ↑
- Library Programs: 450 programs ↑
- Resources Checked Out (books, etc.): 189,587 ↑
- Hal Holmes Reservations: 700 ↑
- Warming Center: 8 days, served 85 people ↑
- Cooling Center: 6 days, served 22 people ↑

Safety, Civic Engagement, & Cultural Inclusion

Public safety is enhanced when community members are engaged and connected. 2024 highlights:

- City Council and advisory board/commission meetings continued to be held in-person and virtually. Adapted public comment rules to protect meetings from outside influences while allowing remote participation. Expanded agenda management software which indexes meeting videos for better transparency and accessibility of records.
- Ellensburg Police Department passed the Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs accreditation inspection, interviews, and file review. Developed an analytical dashboard to track calls for service, mental health, etc., for year-over-year and trend tracking. Crime Analyst supported the department to advance data driven policing.
- Continued partnership with Ellensburg School District for School Resource Officer program.
- Expanded ADA parking Downtown and made restroom improvements. Continued to provide accessibility and translation services, especially English to Spanish.
- Hosted Touch-A-Truck, Youth Gladiator Dash, Bike Month community rides, Coffee with Council, and flood

Infrastructure & Energy

Continuing to invest in Ellensburg's adequate, reliable energy and infrastructure to meet current and future needs is critical for community resilience. 2024 highlights:

- Awarded \$4.1 million in Home Electrification and Appliance Rebates Program, via Commerce's funding from the State Climate Commitment Act. Delivered \$395,360 in \$200 bill credits via Commerce's Clean Energy Credits for Washington Families program.
- Received the prestigious Public Gas Safety Good Samaritan Award and American Public Gas Association's System Operational Achievement Recognition (SOAR) Silver Award for the fifth year in a row.
- Advanced system plans for Electric utility and Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) that outline 20-year investments to accommodate growth and infrastructure needs. Completed water system projects.
- Implemented grant-funded broadband project to connect City well infrastructure and create middle mile partnership to provide unserved rural area (west of City) with wireless broadband service. Secured right-of-way crossing with BNSF Railroad to serve WWTP facility with fiber.
- Completed technology roadmap to outline strategic investments for the City's technology over the next five years. Began data and systems documentation to prepare for enterprise planning and asset management systems. Completed Cybersecurity State Auditor's Office Cybersecurity Audit activities.
- Successfully changed state policy (SB 6047) to improve transparency in compliance with Climate Commitment Act (CCA).



The WWTP crew received the American Public Works Association Empowering Team Award, which recognized teams making advancements in the Public Works Industry.

- Implemented Flood Control Assistance Account Program (FCAAP) project to model and update flood maps for City land parcels in partnership with Kittitas County Flood Zone Protection Program; advanced investment in Reecer Creek Levee construction, which will be completed in 2025.

2024 Completed Projects

- Gateway I – West University Way
- University Way overlay
- Unity Park
- City-wide crosswalk striping
- Chipsealed 10.2 miles of City streets
- Brick Road improvements
- Reecer Creek Levee Extension design
- Anderson Road sewer line extension, Phase 1
- Sidewalk and bus stop at Kittitas County Courthouse
- Pfenning Road shared use pathway from 3rd Ave. to Vantage



Gateway I - Before



Gateway I - After

Budget & Administration

- Business Licenses: 2,206 active ↑
- New Business Licenses: 618 ↑
- Ordinances: 17 ↓
- Resolutions: 35 ↑
- Public Records Requests: 55 ↑
- Budget: \$145.7 million ↑
- Employees: 216 FTEs
- Payroll Checks Processed: 6,276 ↑
- Survey Responses: 1,220, 5 surveys ↓
- Audit: 0 findings

Housing

- Lots Approved: 49 single family lots ↓
- New Housing Units: 94 ↑
- Residential Permits: 68 ↑
- Affordable Units Planned: 64 ↑
- Certificates of Appropriateness: 21 ↑
- Residential Inspections: 1,752 ↑
- Commercial Inspections: 1,540 ↑
- Annexations: 10 (79 acres) ↑

Public Safety

- Total Calls: EPD Calls For Service: 16,018 ↓
- Public Records Requests: 1,384 ↑
- Criminal Referrals: 857 ↓
- Detectives Investigated: 232 cases ↓
- Mental Health Referrals: 497 ↑



Touch-A-Truck is scheduled for June 18, 2025

mapping open house events. Hosted one Belonging in the Burg World Café style community discussion in partnership with Central Washington University and Ellensburg School District with interpreters.

- Community Safety Survey results used for new juvenile services program development.
- Held a multicultural event for Unity Park Grand Opening and Creative District launch. Partnered with community organizations for Juneteenth event. Celebrated 25th Anniversary of Arts Walk in Ellensburg.
- Held the Ellensburg Academy with City 101, budget workshop, and tips from EPD on personal safety. More workshops to come in 2025!

Learn more at www.ellensburgwa.gov/academy

City Directory

Emergency Services 9-1-1

Police Department	509-962-7280 non-emergency
KVFR (Fire & EMS)	509-933-7231 non-emergency
General Information	509-962-7204
City Manager	509-962-7221
Building Permits	509-962-7231
Hal Holmes	509-962-7240
Library	509-962-7250
Electric Division	509-962-7124
Natural Gas Division	509-962-7124
Parks & Recreation	509-962-7210
Public Works	509-962-7230
Utility Billing	509-962-7201

City of Ellensburg
501 N. Anderson St.
Ellensburg, WA 98926
www.ellensburgwa.gov



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