



**Regular Meeting of the Library Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, June 20, 2023 – Central Library Lecture Room  
3:30 p.m.**

Minutes of Actions and Decisions of the Library Board of Trustees of the Bellingham Public Library as authorized by RCW 27.12.210 and SEC. 7.02 Charter of the City of Bellingham.

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**Board Members Present:** Rick Osen, Jim McCabe, Rebecca Craven, Kristy Van Ness and Melissa Morin

**Library Staff:** Rebecca Judd, Annette Bagley, Bethany Hoglund, Jon McConnel, Jennifer Vander Ploeg and Wendy Jenkins

**Others Present:** Kristina Michele Martens, City Council Liaison; Carol Comeau, Friends of BPL Board Liaison; Ady Hughes, City Council intern; Scott Blume, member of the public

**Call to order and introductions:** Regular session was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair, Rick Osen. Kristina introduced Ady Hughes as a new intern for City Council.

**Approve/modify agenda:** Rebecca Craven moved to approve the agenda. Jim McCabe seconded. Motion carried.

**Public comment:** no comments.

**Consent agenda:** Rick complimented Bethany on the good interview she gave for the Cascadia Daily News article. Rebecca Craven asked about the unusually high number of physical copies withdrawn from collection. Jon responded that the number is reported at the end of the withdrawing process and often a large number of items gather before they are all completed in a single process, creating a spike in the reported number. Wendy mentioned an adjustment to the performance & activity measures: the Bibliocommons Visits under Website Visits is 17,540 rather than 39,434. Melissa Morin moved to approve the May 16, 2023 Regular meeting minutes and the May 2023 performance and activity measures and financial reports. Kristy Van Ness seconded. Motion carried.

Melissa announced that she has accepted the position of Assistant Director for Communications for the City and will be working with Janice Keller. Because of this, she needs to resign from the Library Board of Directors; this will be her last meeting. Rick thanked Melissa for her service to the Board.

**Board Chair report:**

- Rick said that the Trustee recruitment process to replace Melissa will begin in July.
- Rick attended the first monthly virtual training arranged by State Librarian Sara Jones. Coincidentally, Tom Fay, Seattle Public Library Executive Director and Chief Librarian, provided guidance on recruiting board members.

**Board member reports:**

- Trustees expressed their appreciation of the new email and text notifications.
- Kristy thanked everyone involved in Library Card Night at the Bellingham Bells game. Attendance at the game was high and many Summer Reading cards and free books were handed out.

**City Council liaison report:**

- Kristina reported Council has been quiet so far this summer.
- Pride IN Bellingham is coming up on July 8 and 9.
- Janice Keller has been named as Interim Deputy Administer to fill the position vacated by Brian Heinrich.
- Kristina requested Trustees or library staff let her know if there is anything that Council needs to be aware of.
- She invited Annette to give details about the All Hands Whatcom Opioid Summit. Annette responded that it is a 2-day hybrid in-person/virtual summit to be held June 27 and 28 at Bellingham High School.

**Friends of BPL report:**

- Carol reported sales of \$16,911 for the May book sale. Many new volunteers helped with the sale. The next 4-day sales will occur in September and January. Wander Brewery will be hosting a pop-up sale on August 5 from 12-5 p.m.
- The Friends are eager to work with the Library on the remodel.
- Carol said that she had recently visited with Julie Guy, who is in the hospital. Julie mentioned again how thrilled she is about the Bellis Fair Branch. Julie sees the branch and the two Cordata area parks as true accomplishments of the Cordata Neighborhood Association.

**Library Director report:**

- Rebecca reported that, as Kristina mentioned, Brian Heinrich has taken a position as a Public Analyst for Puget Sound Energy, and Janice Keller has stepped into his vacated position.
- The mid-biennium budget adjustment process has begun. Department operating budget modification requests are due to the Mayor on July 21. Capital requests are due August 4. Rebecca will share library requests at the July board meeting.
- As mentioned earlier, the Opioid Summit is June 27 and 28, and *An Evening with Sam Quinones*, author of *The Least of Us: True Tales of America and Hope in the Time of Fentanyl and Meth*, will be held on August 1.

**Facilities Committee update:**

- Rick reported the architect contract is still being worked on. A meeting is scheduled for June 21.

**Planned Giving project update:**

- Kristy reported she has been working with Rachel Myers on this project. Rachel is reaching out to Whatcom Community Foundation and Wendy to find out where the gaps are.
- Kristy requested thoughts and ideas for naming the legacy society:
  - Jim commented that Western has an 1893 Society and suggested we name ours 1903 which is when the original Bellingham Bay Library became a free library. This is also the year that Bellingham was incorporated.
  - Bellingham Library Legacy society, to clearly link an association with our library (rather than Whatcom County Library System).
  - A legacy society that is named after a person requires too much time spent explaining why it is named after that person.
  - Consider Bellingham Public Library Legacy Society to be consistent.
  - Bellingham Library Champions.
  - Bellingham Library Giving Society rather than Legacy.
  - Simple, clear name.
  - Reference to historical events can be exclusive, keep it simple.
  - Kristy invited everyone to email her any other thoughts or ideas.

**Policy retirement:**

- Rebecca Judd explained that she has been working on policy clean-up. There are a few things we have as policy that are not actually policies and she is suggesting they be retired. Included in the packet is the Library's Mission Statement. The Statement is posted on our website but does not need to be a policy. Kristy Van Ness moved to retire the Mission Statement as a policy. Rebecca Craven seconded. Motion carried.

**Meet & Greet with Police Chief Rebecca Mertzig:**

- Chief Mertzig talked briefly about her background: she grew up in Ferndale and attended Western, then went to Eastern Washington University for a Criminal Justice degree. She worked in Snohomish for 18 years before coming to Bellingham about a year ago.
- A primary challenge of the past year has been staffing up the Police Department. This is challenging because there are so many steps to onboarding new staff: first, 18 weeks in the academy followed by 3 months of on-the-job training. Initially the department made some retention adjustments to encourage current staff to stay on the job until new staff were onboarded. Academy wait times have been decreasing, which has helped. They are working toward an ideal time split of 50% responding to incidents and 50% being a presence in the community. Hiring has been improved due to many factors including more people willing to do the job, our positive reputation, a shift in public safety priorities, double the number of recruiters, and developed relationships. Bellingham's police department is unique and small enough, like a family, and not so big it can feel anonymous.

- Another improvement is budgeting for four Community Safety officers (3 of the 4 positions have been filled) who do not have a badge or gun.
- Technology is increasing, not only with body cameras (which Bellingham has had since 2016) but also drones and cell phone technology. Chief Mertzig is proud of the fact that she has seen every use-of-force incident since she took over due to body cameras – they provide accountability at all times. In Snohomish, Chief Mertzig pushed for the use of jujutsu (Japanese martial art) which helps keep everyone safe. Snohomish wasn't responsive to this idea, but in Bellingham, it was already in use.

**2023 City Revenue & Budget Outlook:**

Andy Asbjornsen, Finance Director, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the Board *(for full presentation see Attachment #1 for Finance Update 2022 Expenses & Revenue; all attachments are located at the end of the minutes)*.

Andy added that he provides more detailed monthly reports which can be found on the City website.

Rick asked if there is the possibility of going back to a yearly budget rather than a biennial budget. Andy responded there are good and bad qualities to both systems – it's difficult to project 2 years of budget, 2½ years in advance, but it's good to only need to build the document every 2 years.

**New Business:**

- No new business.

**Agenda items for next meeting:**

- Visit from Sara Jones, State Librarian
- Policy retirements continued

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:57 p.m.

**Next Regular Library Board Meeting – July 18, 2023 – Central Library Lecture Room – 3:30 p.m.**

Chair, Library Board of Trustees

ATTEST

Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

**Attachments:**

- Attachment #1: Finance Update 2022 Expenses & Revenue

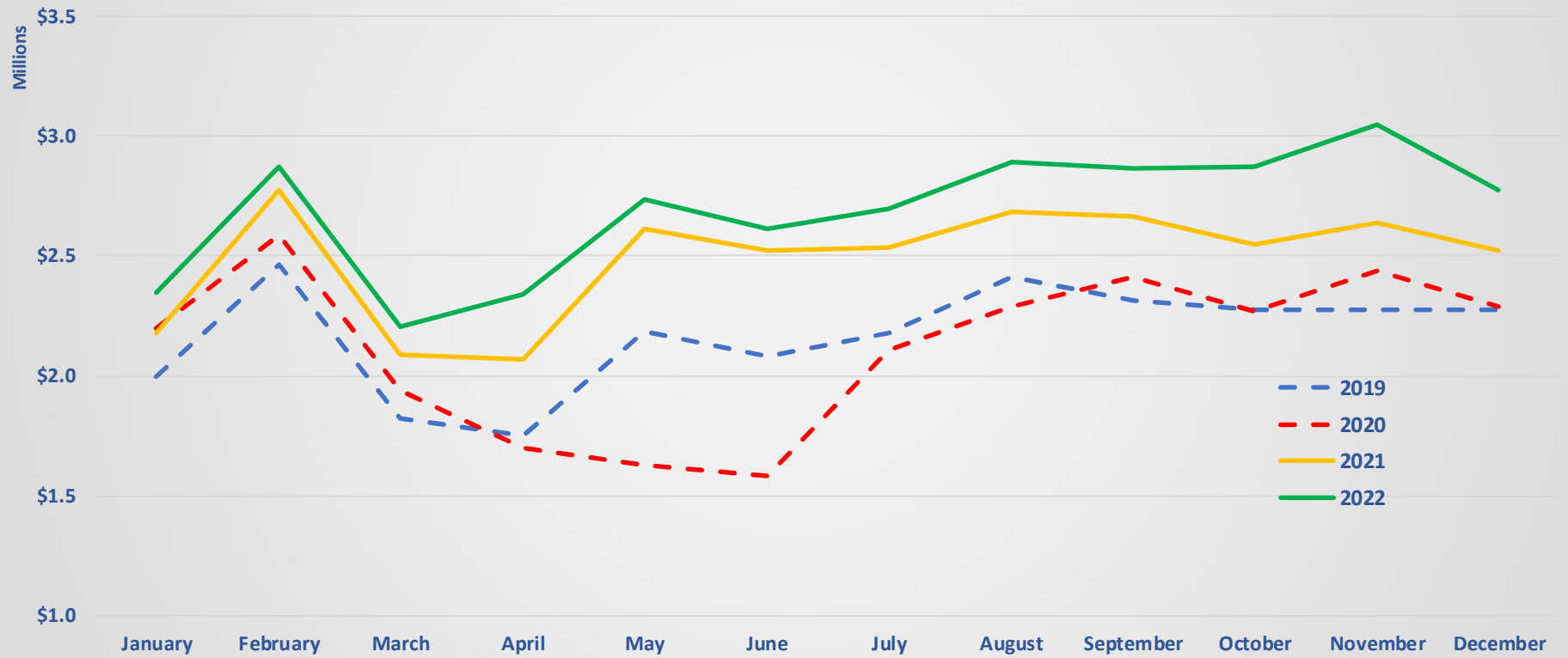


# Finance Update

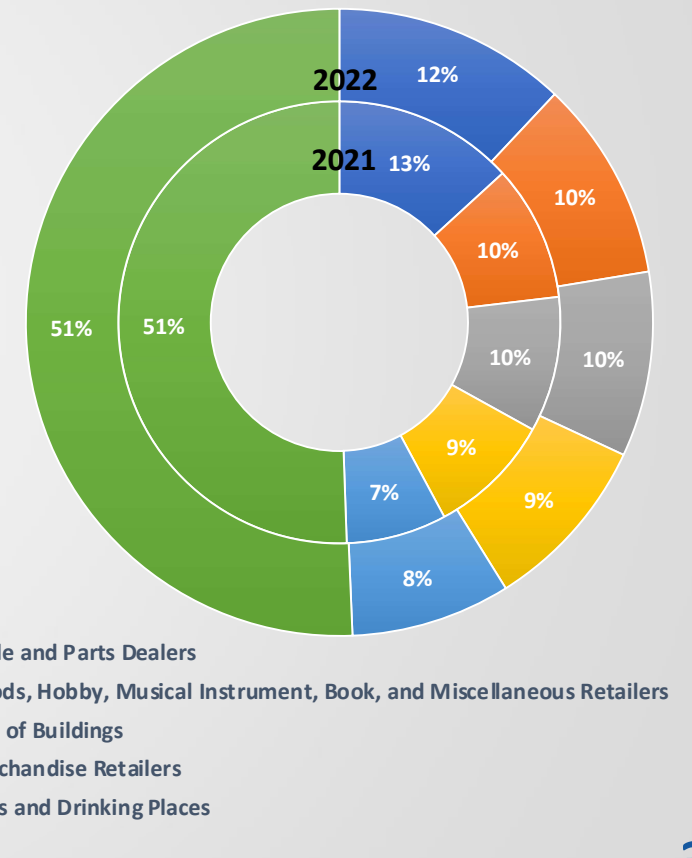
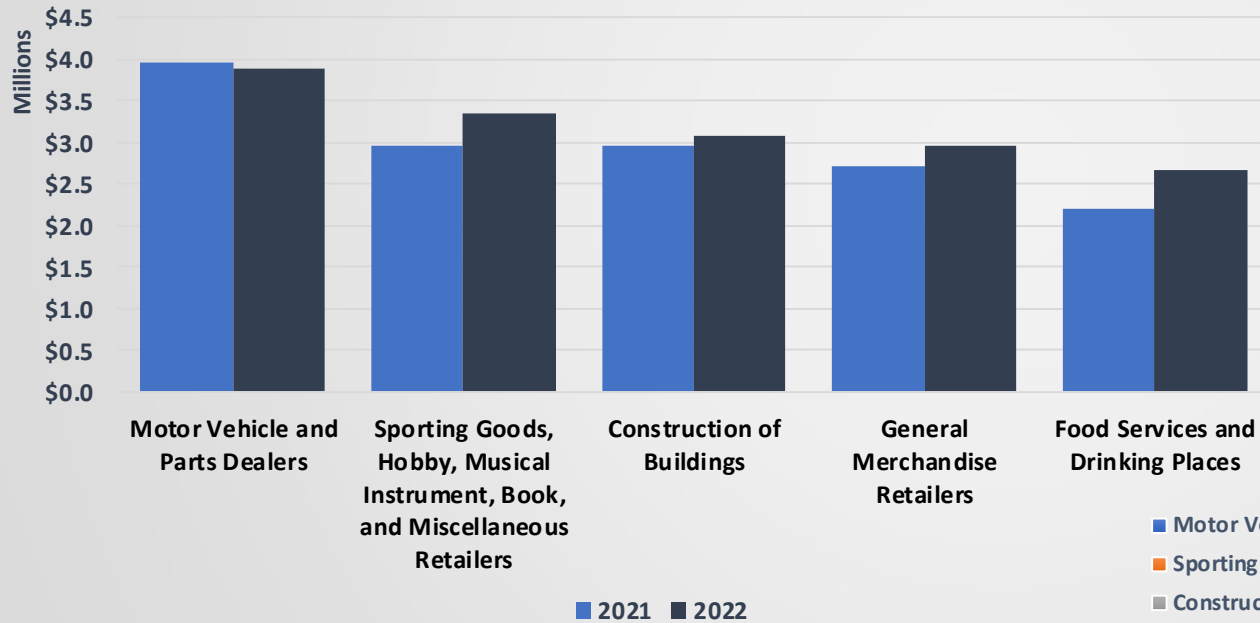
## 2022 Expenses & Revenue



# Sales Tax

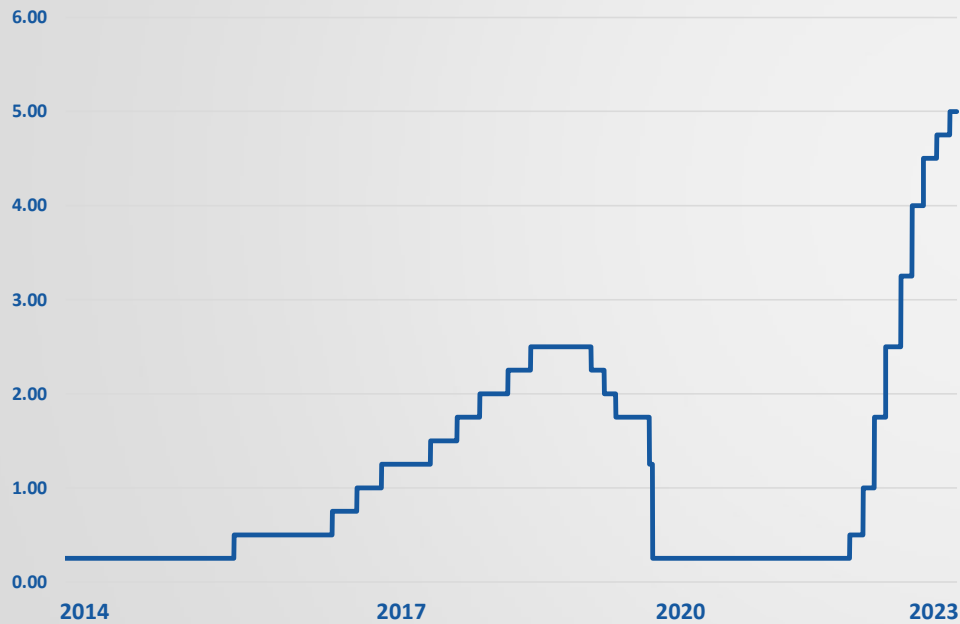


# Sales Tax by NAICS Subsector – Top 5

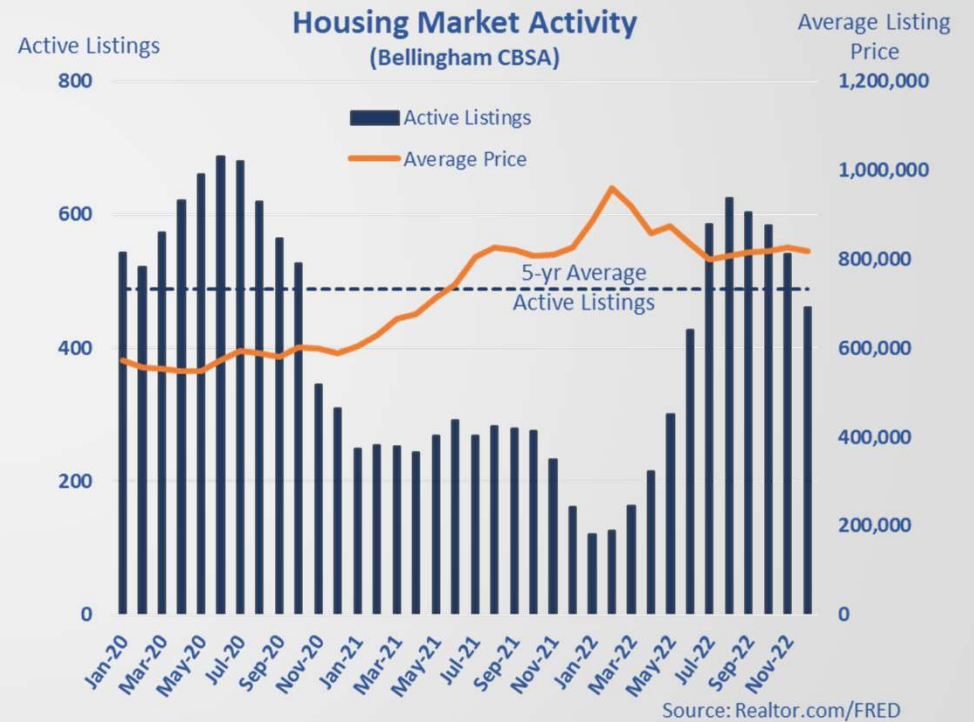


# Fed Funds Target Rate and Housing

Fed Funds Target Rate

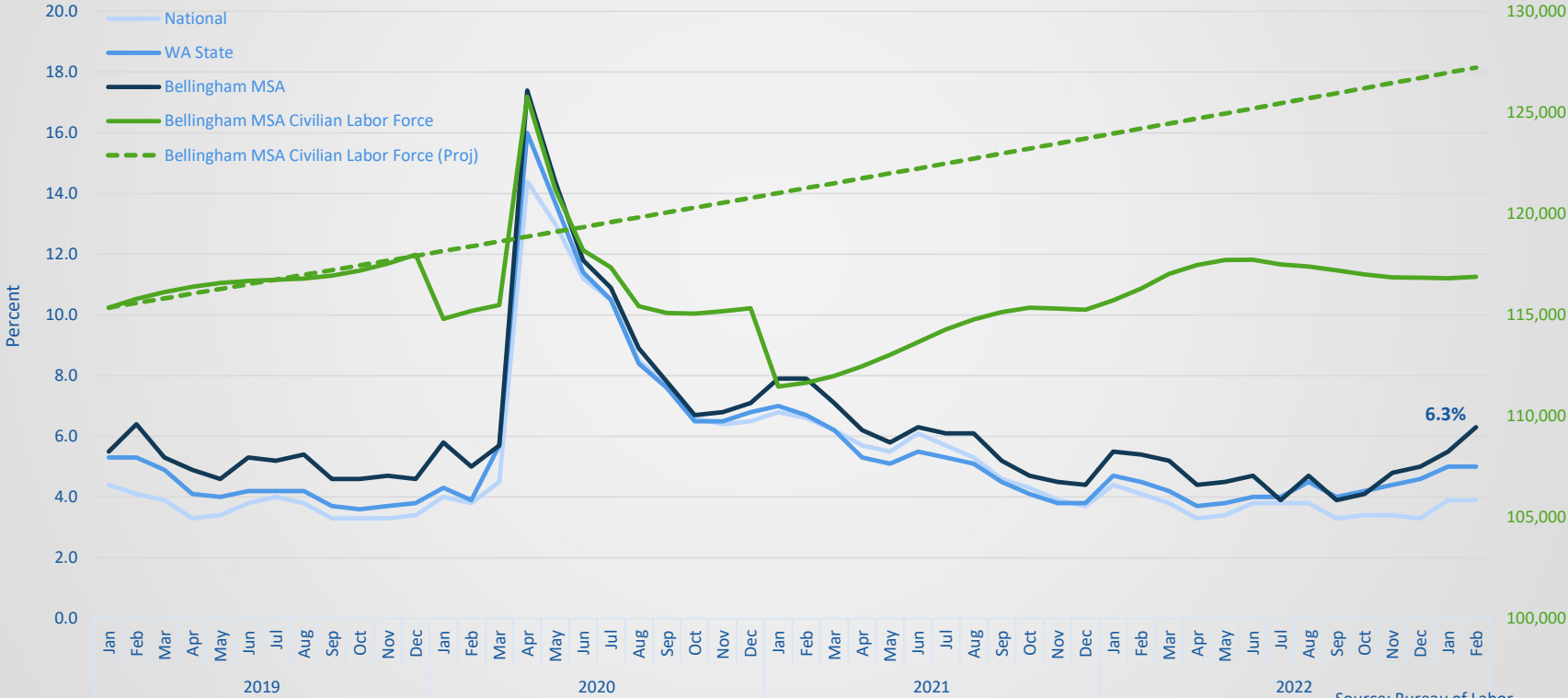


Housing Market Activity (Bellingham CBSA)



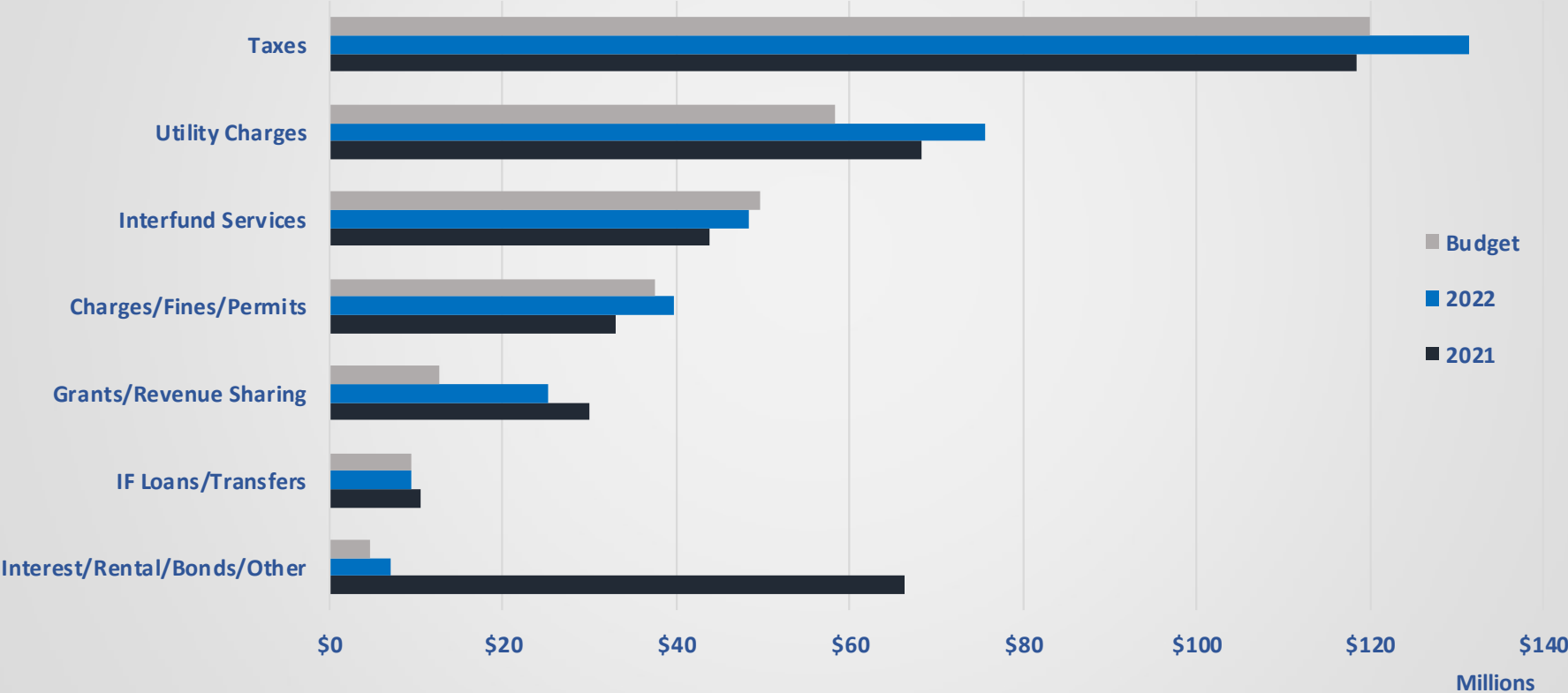


# Unemployment

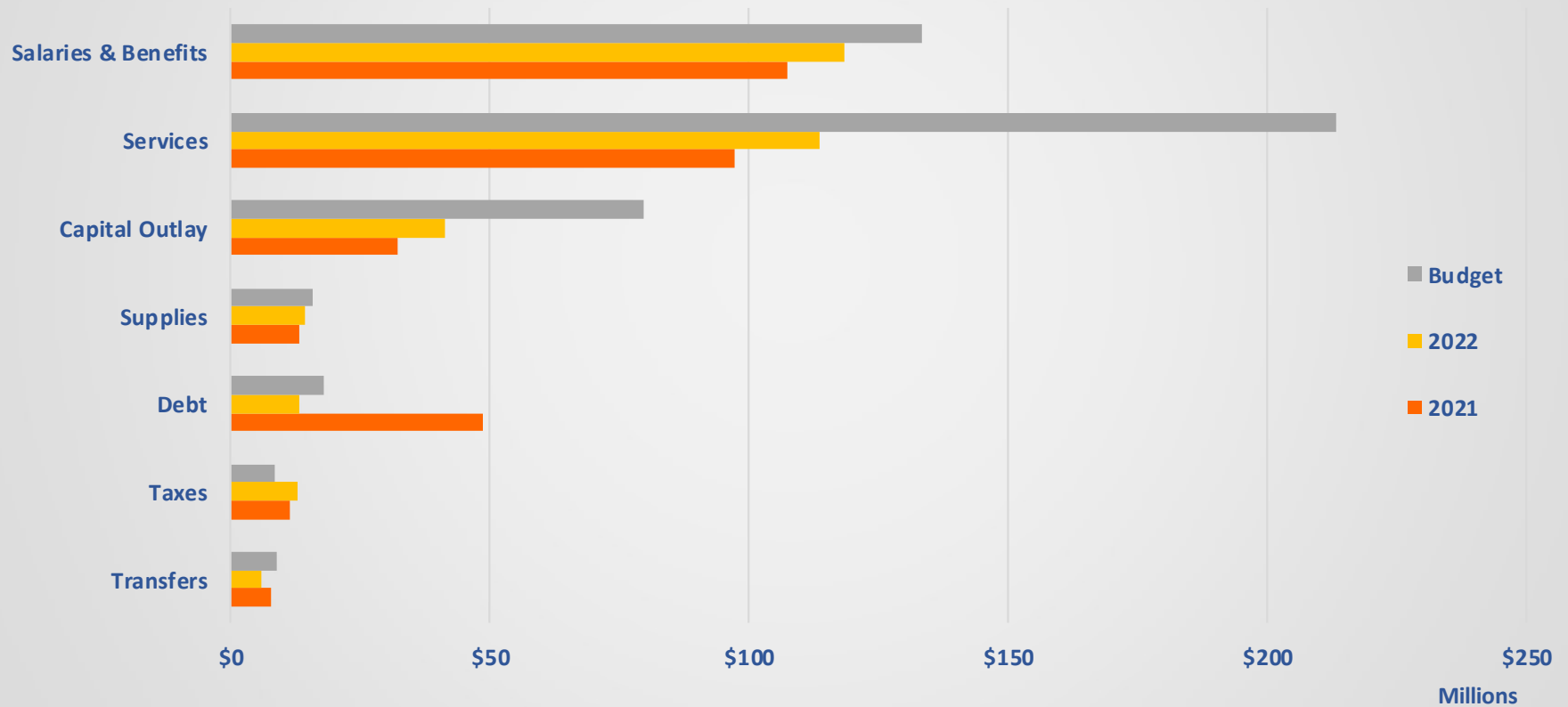


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

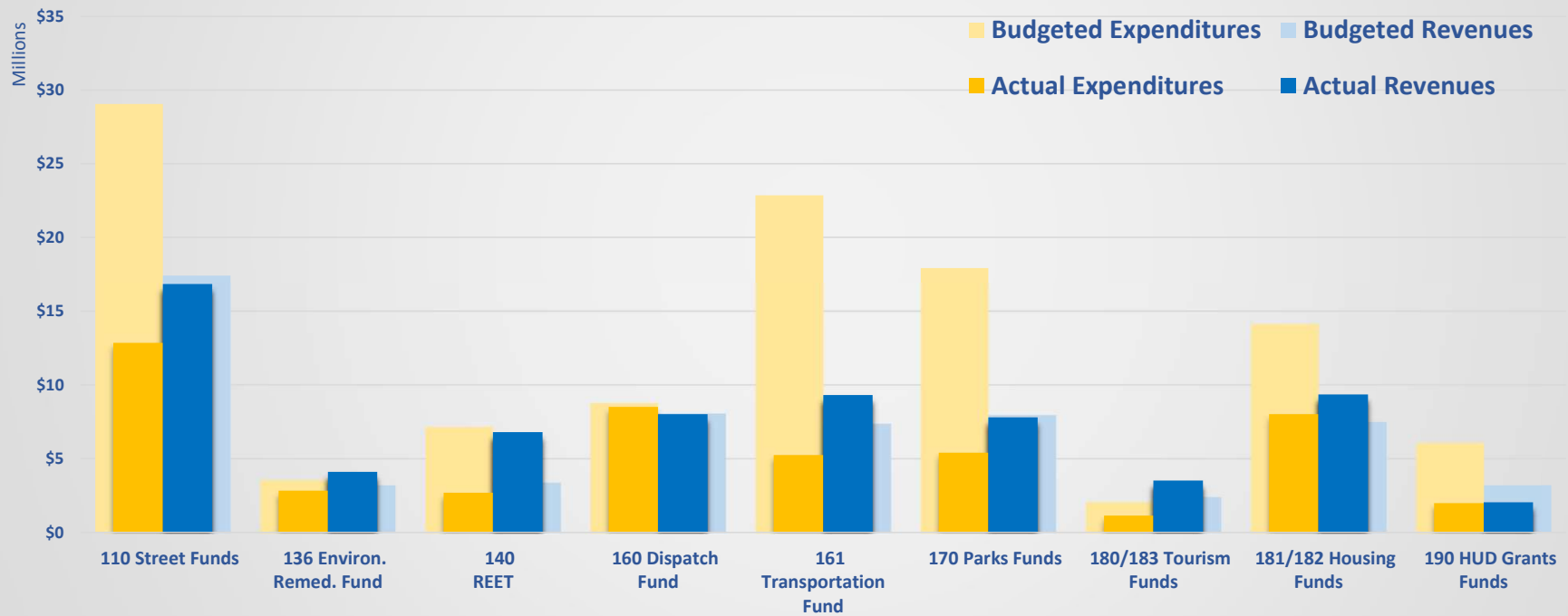
# Citywide Revenue - \$336.8 M



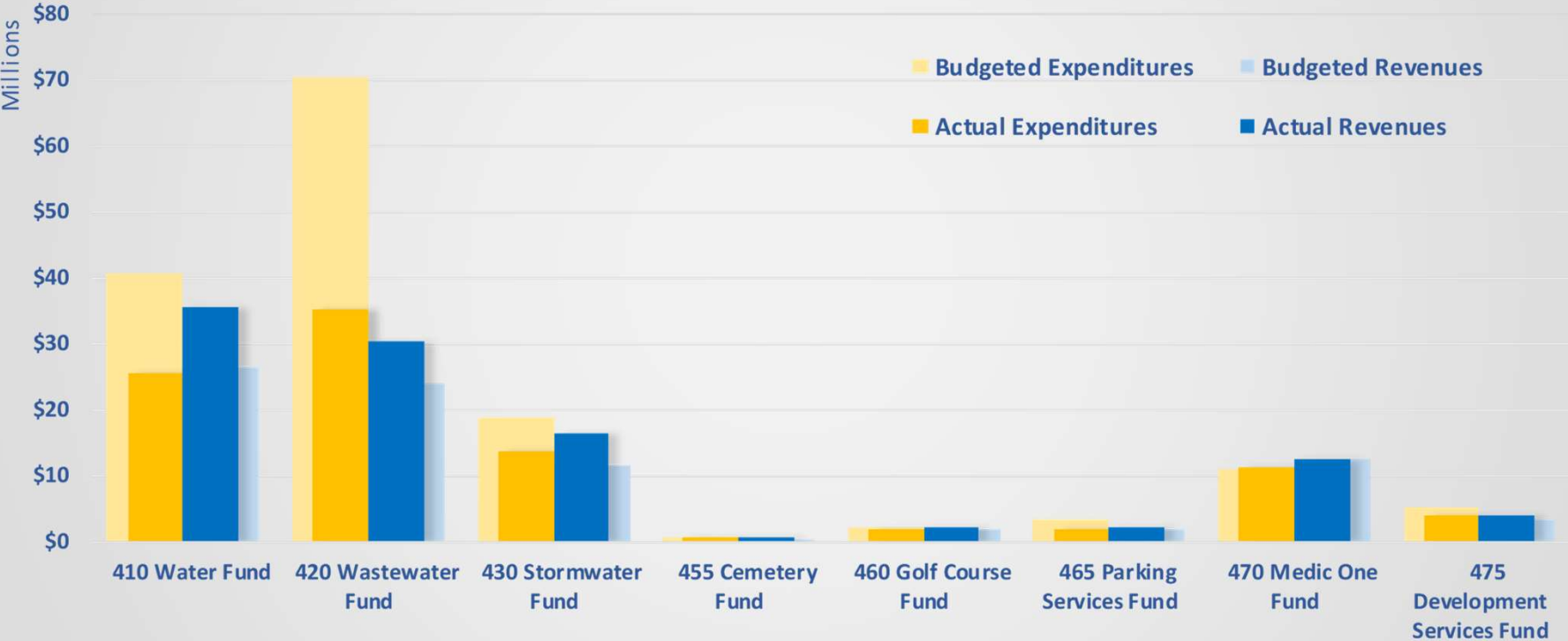
# Citywide Expenses - \$319.9 M



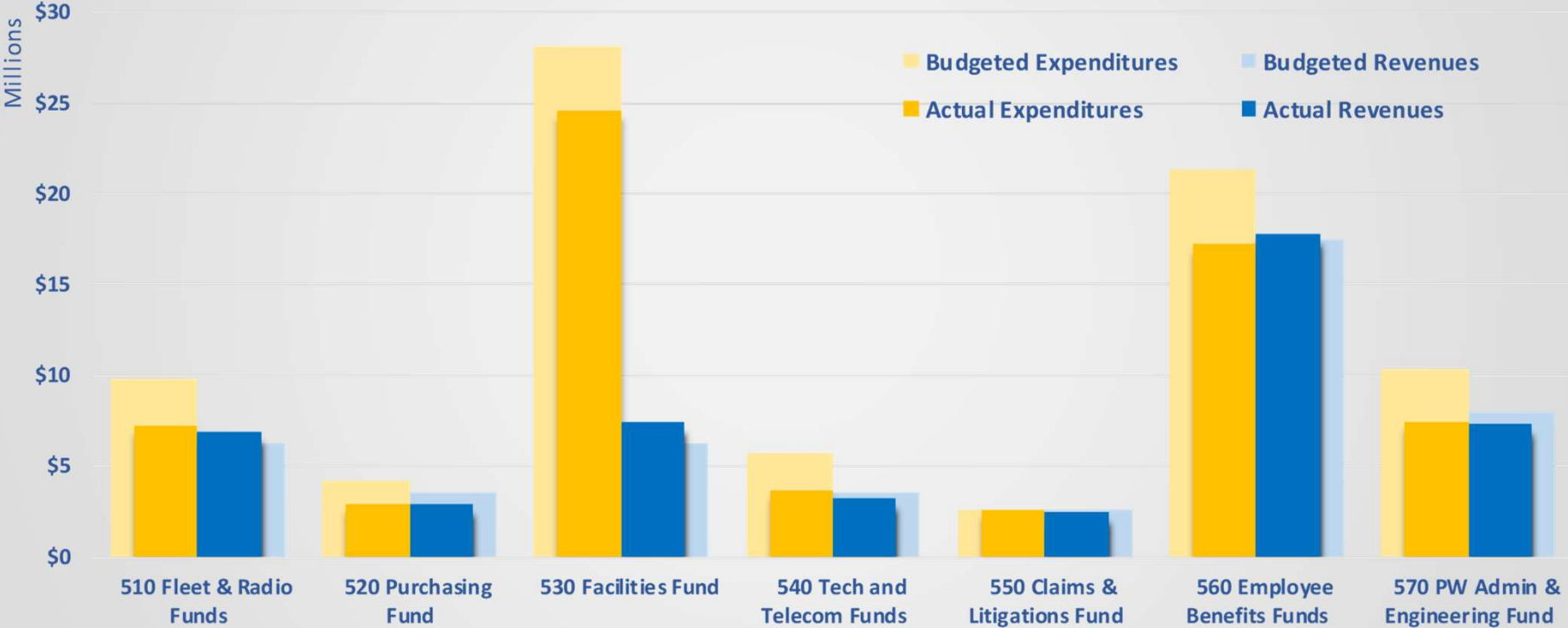
# Special Revenue Funds



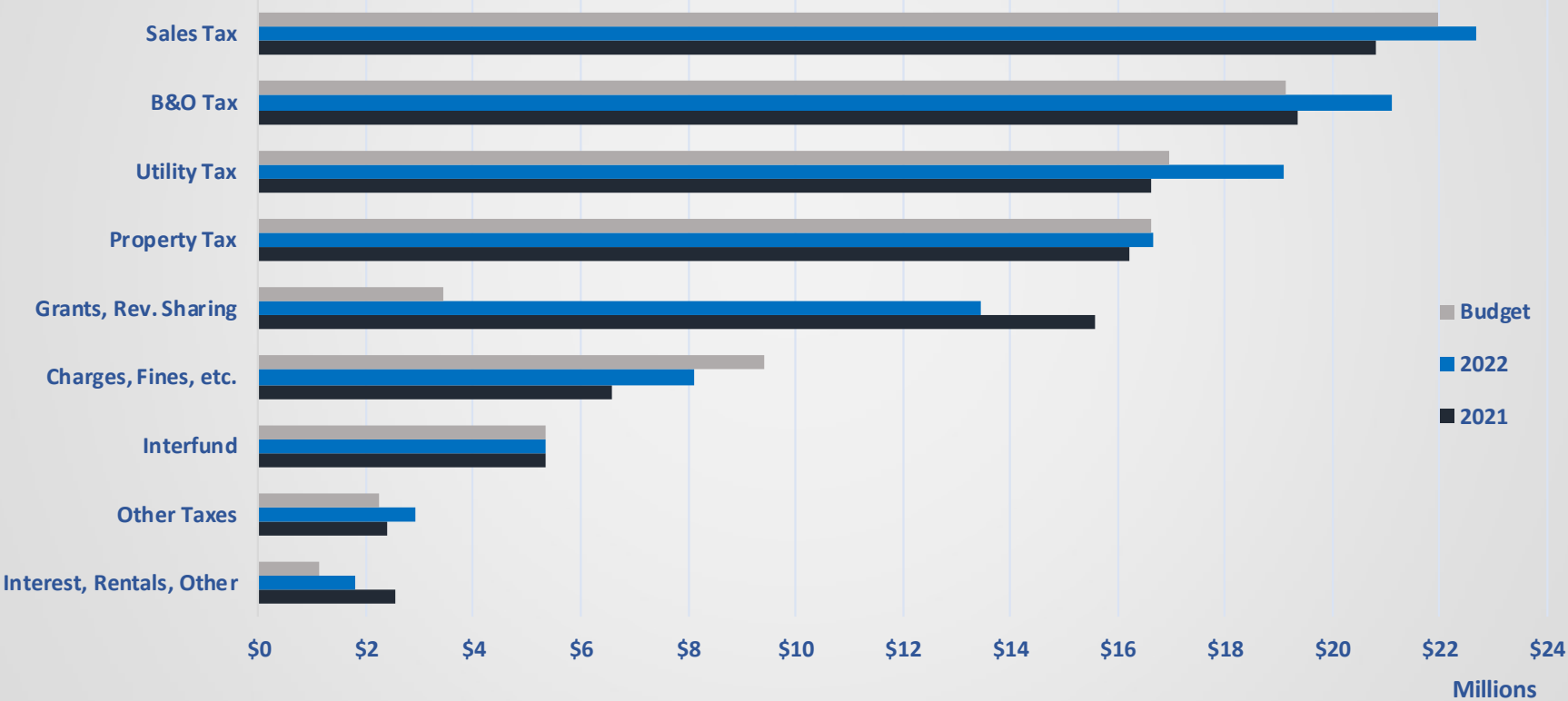
# Enterprise Funds



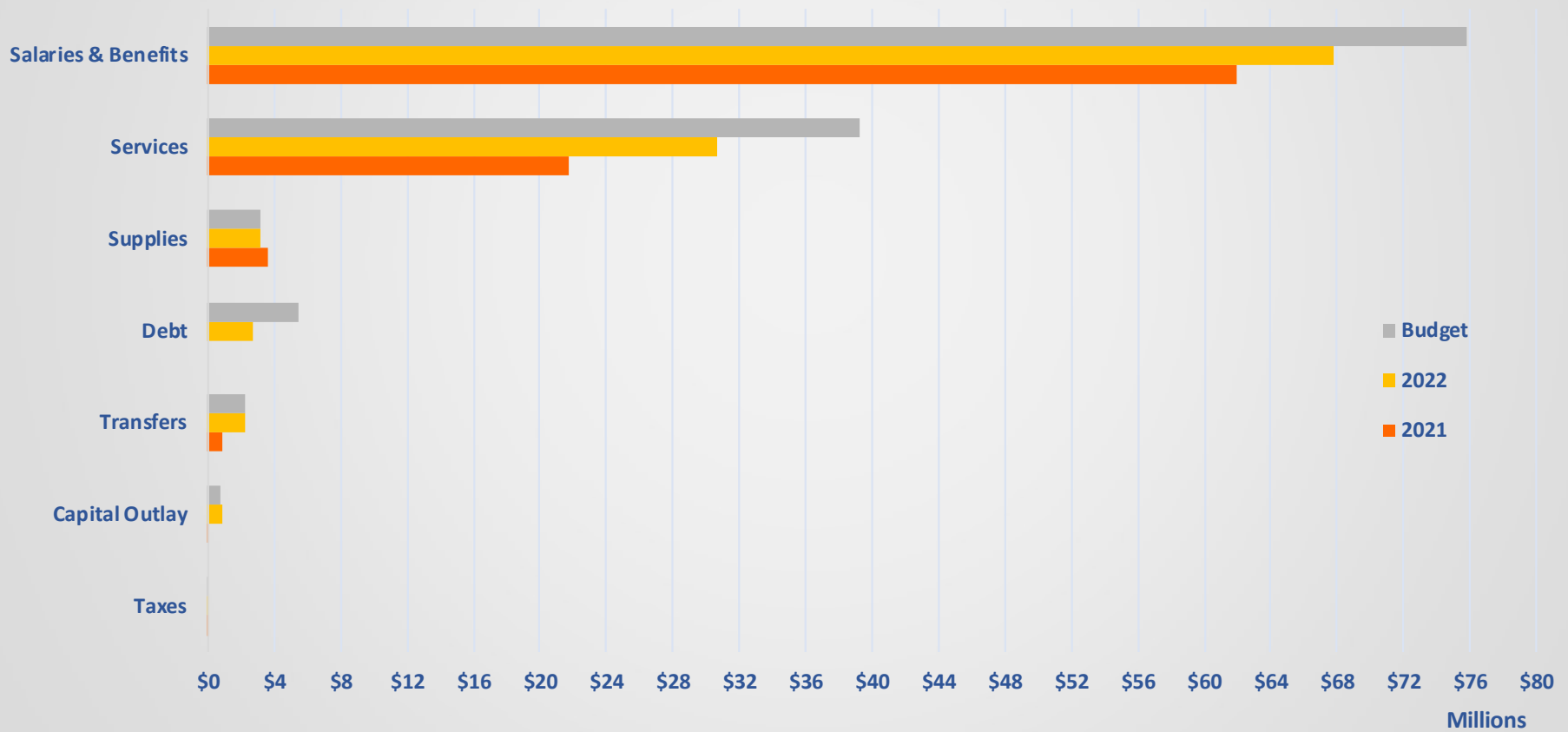
# Internal Service Funds



# General Fund Revenues - \$111.2 M

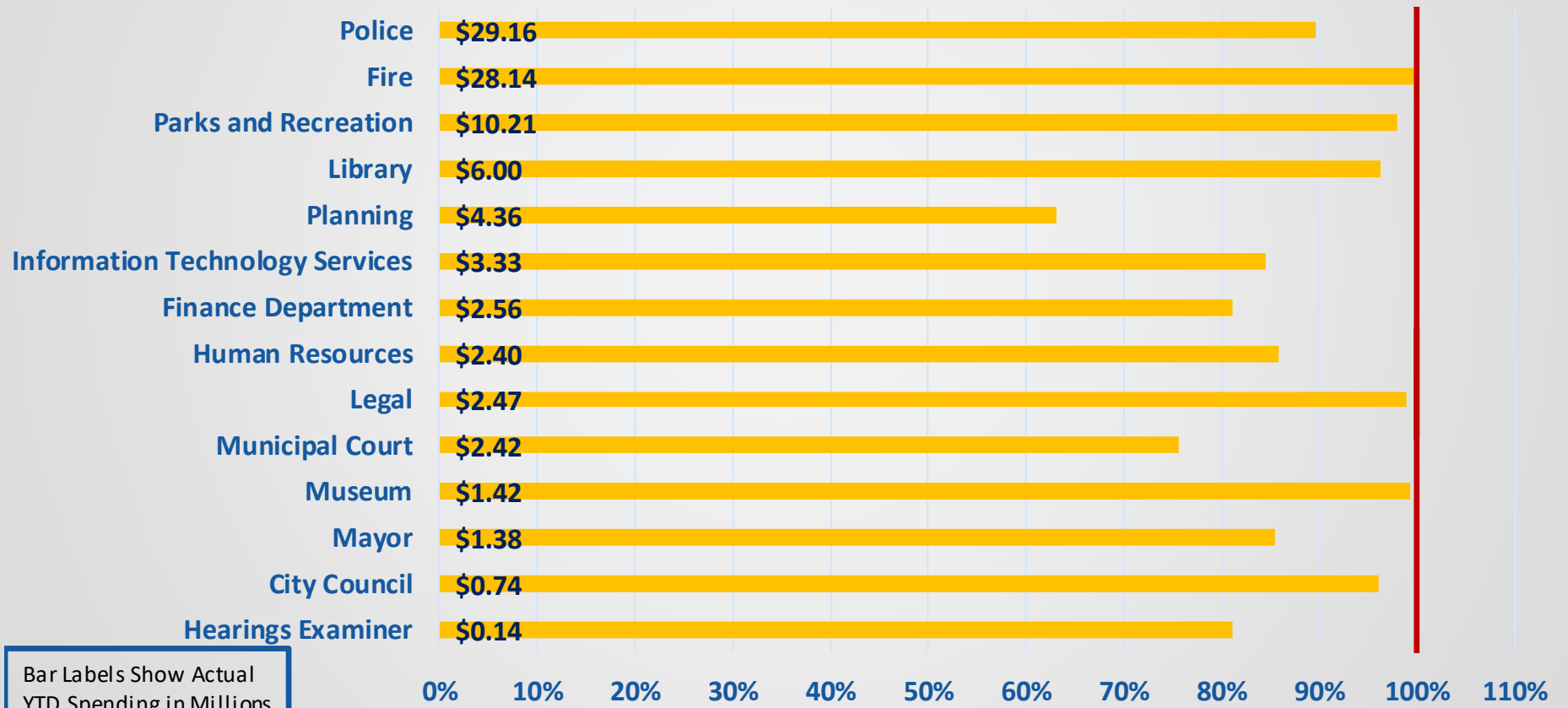


# General Fund Expenditures - \$107.2 M





# General Fund - % of Budget Spent by Department



# General Fund Reserves

**2022 Beginning Reserve:** \$ 47,335,719

**Description** Updated 4/10/2023

Cash 54,608,040

Accounts Receivable 2,954,110

Accounts Payable (1,835,050)

Retainage Payable (2,387)

Accrued Wages (2,926,154)

Rev. Collected in Advance (65,035)

Rental Security Deposits (8,788)

**2023 Beginning Reserve:** 52,724,737

## Reserve Breakdown

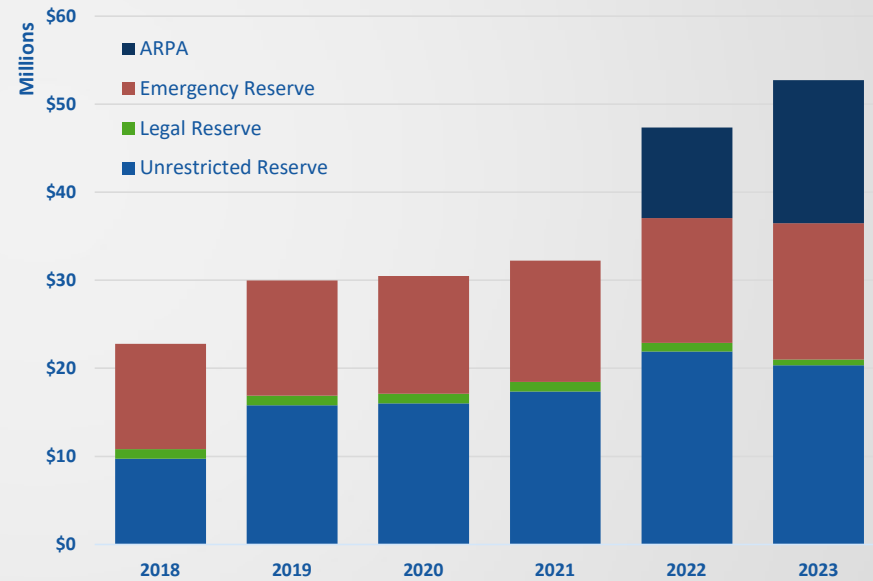
Restricted Unearned Grant Reserve (ARPA) 16,041,719

Legal Reserve 645,125

Emergency Reserve 15,502,974

Unrestricted Reserve 20,534,919

**GF Beginning Estimated Reserves 2018-2023**



## ARPA BUDGET TRACKING

	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent	Total Allocation	Remaining Allocation	Introduction Date
<b>HOUSING, FOOD SECURITY &amp; HOMELESSNESS</b>	<b>7,941,000</b>	<i>3,801,063</i>	<b>10,000,000</b>	<b>2,059,000</b>	
Motel stays for families with children	300,000	59,987			6/21/2021
Samish Commons housing project	1,375,000	1,213,973			6/21/2021
Millworks housing project	2,800,000				2/7/2022
Evergreen Ridge Apartments acquisition assistar	2,525,000	2,525,000			4/25/2022
Food Security	500,000	2,103			6/27/2022
COVID Human Service Grant Continuation	441,000				2023/2024 Biennial Budget
<b>ECONOMIC RECOVERY - EMPHASIS ON TOURISM &amp; CHILDCARE</b>	<b>5,817,000</b>	<i>1,083,036</i>	<b>5,925,817</b>	<b>108,817</b>	
Childcare facility at Samish Commons	725,000				6/21/2021
Direct tourism support	850,000	781,550			6/21/2021
Heart House childcare facility	155,000	155,000			2021/2022 Mid-biennium
Parking fund program support - meters	700,000				2021/2022 Mid-biennium
Downtown Ambassadors pilot	280,000	145,730			2/7/2022
Millworks childcare facility	1,000,000				2/7/2022
Childcare industry and workforce stabilization	1,000,000	756			3/14/2022
YMCA Barkley tenant improvements	300,000				4/25/2022
Boys & Girls Club Yew Street acquisition	200,000				4/25/2022
Ambassadors and Expanded Security for 23/24	607,000				2023/2024 Biennial Budget
<b>CLIMATE RESILIENCY FOR VULNERABLE POPULATIONS &amp; CARBON REDUCTION</b>	<b>5,000,000</b>	-	<b>5,000,000</b>	-	
Library Resiliency Remodel	5,000,000	-			2023/2024 Biennial Budget
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>18,758,000</b>	<i>4,884,099</i>	<b>20,925,817</b>	<b>2,167,817</b>	



# Questions?

Presentation and additional reports available at:  
<https://www.cob.org/gov/dept/finance/pages/reports.aspx>

