



# COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Wednesday, November 15, 2023 at 2:00 PM

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## COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Mayor Rick Scholl  
Council President Jessica Chilton  
Councilor Mark Gundersen  
Councilor Russell Hubbard  
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

## LOCATION & CONTACT:

HYBRID: Council Chambers & Zoom (details below)  
Website | [www.sthelensoregon.gov](http://www.sthelensoregon.gov)  
Email | [kpayne@sthelensoregon.gov](mailto:kpayne@sthelensoregon.gov)  
Phone | 503-397-6272  
Fax | 503-397-4016

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## AGENDA

### CALL WORK SESSION TO ORDER

**VISITOR COMMENTS** - *Limited to three (3) minutes per speaker*

**DISCUSSION TOPICS** - *The Council will take a break around 4:00PM*

1. 2:10PM - Employee Length of Service Recognition - Kolten Edwards - 5 Years
2. 2:15PM - Communications Semi-Annual Report - *Crystal King, Communications Officer*
3. 2:30PM - Semi-Annual Report from Tourism Contractor - *Tina Curry, E2C Corp.*
4. 2:45PM - Request for Donation to Toy N Joy Auction
5. 2:50PM - Report from City Administrator John Walsh

### ADJOURN

### EXECUTIVE SESSION

*Following the conclusion of the Council Work Session, an Executive Session is scheduled to take place to discuss:*

- *Real Property Transactions, under ORS 192.660(2)(e); and*
- *Consult with Counsel/Potential Litigation, under ORS 192.660(2)(h).*

*Representatives of the news media, staff and other persons as approved, shall be allowed to attend the Executive Session. All other members of the audience are asked to leave the Council Chambers.*

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

## Upcoming Dates to Remember:

- November 13, 4PM, Parks and Trails Commission, Council Chambers/Zoom
- November 13, 7:15PM, Library Board, Zoom
- November 14, 6PM, Planning Commission, Council Chambers/Zoom
- November 15, 2PM, Council Work Session, Council Chambers/Zoom
- November 15, 7PM, Council Regular Session, Council Chambers/Zoom
- November 23-24, Thanksgiving Holiday, City Offices Closed

## Future Public Hearing(s)/Forum(s):

- PH: December 20, 6:30PM, Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map Amendment (CPZA.2.23) for 475 N. 12th Street

**VIRTUAL MEETING DETAILS**

Join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89602307012?pwd=QXc2UmoxYVFqQmthYldsRkJMWmZHZz09>

Meeting ID: 896 0230 7012

Passcode: 269388

Dial: 669-900-9128

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The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to City Hall at 503-397-6272.

Be a part of the vision and get involved...volunteer for a City Board or Commission! For more information or for an application, go to [www.sthelensoregon.gov](http://www.sthelensoregon.gov) or call 503-366-8217.

## LENGTH OF SERVICE RECOGNITION



To: Mayor and City Council

From: Kathy Payne, Human Resources Coordinator/City Recorder

Date: November 15, 2023

I am happy to announce that we have one employee who has reached a milestone in their employment with the City of St. Helens. The following individual will be recognized at the November 15 Work Session.

### **5 Years**

**Kolten Edwards** began working for the City on November 5, 2018 as a Police Officer where he still serves today.

**Congratulations Kolten** and **thank you** for your service!

# St. Helens Communications Report

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MAY 2023 TO OCTOBER 2023





SPIRIT OF  
HALLOWEENTOWN  
2023

COMMUNICATIONS  
AND MEDIA





## Media Coverage

**Impressions:** 413 million\*

**Ad value:** \$19,500 (from 50 sources)

**Mentions:** 127

2023 numbers notable since we did not have an internationally-recognized brand partnering with our festival to launch a month-long advertising campaign for their company like in 2022

2022 numbers:

**Impressions:** 577 million

**Ad value:** \$24,978

\*Does not include social media impressions, this is only impressions from traditional media outlet coverage, social media impressions to follow in later slide

**Type:** Television, Newspaper, Radio, Magazine, Online

**Local media:** Portland, Medford, Eugene, Springfield, Klamath Falls, Hillsboro

**National media:** Tennessee, Indiana, New Jersey, Texas, Montana, Florida, Ohio, California, New York, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Georgia, New Hampshire, Vermont, Illinois, Washington, Nebraska, Virginia, South Dakota, Louisiana, North Carolina, Maryland, Michigan

**International Media:** Canada, India, France, Malaysia, Great Britain

**Of note:** KATU, KOIN, KGW, Fox 12, The Oregonian, Travel + Leisure, Yahoo!, Bob Vila, People Magazine, USA Today, MSN.com



## Media Coverage

Live Morning Features on Portland TV

Fox 12 On the Go with Ayo: October 2, 2023

KGW: October 13, 2023

KOIN Kohr Explores: October 18, 2023



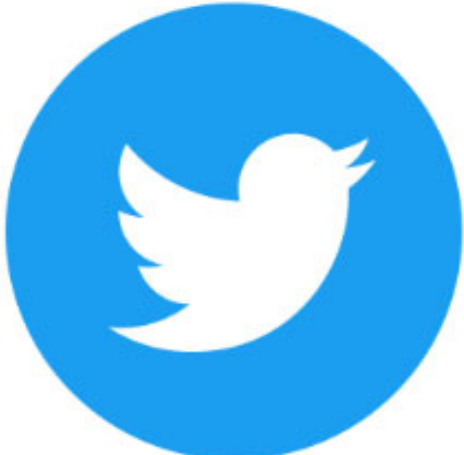
Media Coverage







# Social Media



# Social Media by the Numbers

137,814

Followers

6,594

Follower Increase

795,957

Reach

103,683

Engagement



# Social Media Workload Snapshot

681

Direct Messages

3,291

Comments

78

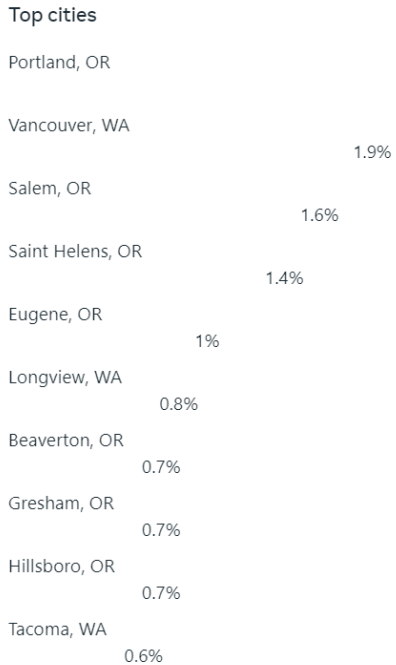
Avg/Day



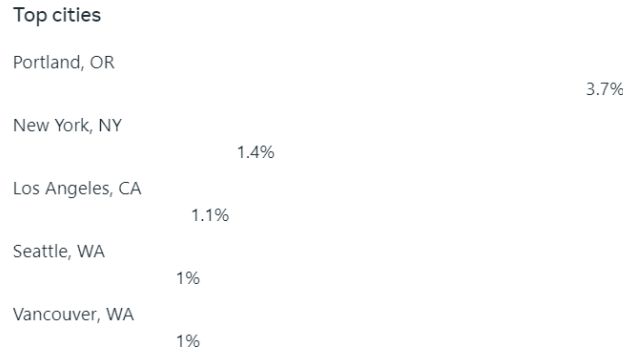
# Social Media



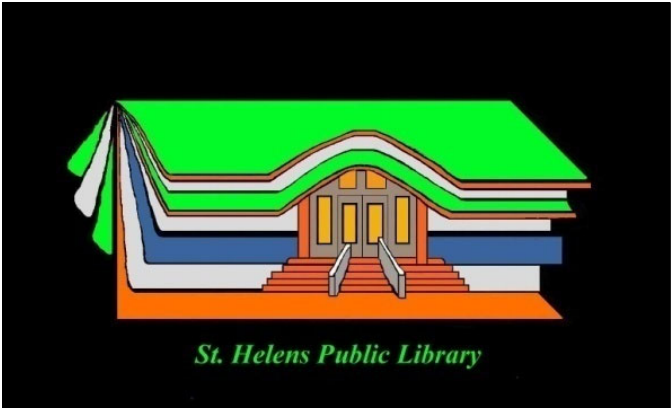
## Facebook



## Instagram



And Everything Else



# By the Numbers

28

Press Releases



1 press release every 4.7 days

900

Social Media Posts



6.9 social media post every day

125

News Media Contacts/Requests



1 media request per day

20

Newsletters



1 newsletter every 6.6 days

# Biggest Projects

130.25

Waterfront  
Redevelopment  
Project Hours



12.4%

186.75

Spirit of  
Halloweentown  
Hours\*



17.8%

\* Plus an additional 53.5 hours from Cameron

# Other Projects / Focused Efforts

Citizens Day in the Park

Independence Day

Sand Island Sandcastle Competition

Cooling Center Group

Trunk or Treat Booth

New PD K-9 Press

Grant Award Announcements

Mill Street Rename Survey



# Up Next

Christmas Ships Parade and Tree Lighting

Winter Weather Messaging

Councilor Gov 101 Videos

Public Works Highlights

Budget Season

# ACTIVATING TOURISM 2023

St. Helens, Oregon -

2023 Semi Annual Report





13 Nights on the River features world-class musicians from all genres. This free concert series draws from around the area and beyond. The vendor marketplace provides food and more. Guests can enjoy drinks, food, music, and vendor experiences too.



July 4<sup>th</sup> is everything it should be. Veterans play a strong part in St. Helens. The day is filled with the flag raising ceremony and community activities. Tailgating, fireworks, and awesome music make this a day everyone looks forward to. It's a full day of musical entertainment.



The Sand Island Sand Castle Competition made its 3 Annual debut in August to a welcoming crowd.



Halloween draws an amazing array of guests from all over the world. 50,000 people visit St. Helens. A wide array of activities, music, celebrity appearances, and photo ops fill the seven weekends. It's placed 1<sup>st</sup> in the nation of places to visit both in Oregon and more nationally known publications. Each year our guest experience is enhanced. Many other nonprofits jump in to raise dollars for their causes which makes this much more valuable to our community. This year our new train set the stage for even more guest experiences.



December 14th Christmas Ships and Santa Claus. Live Music and more... 4 p.m. live music by Jim Fisher. Hot cocoa starts at 5 p.m.



The Christmas Ships, the Tree Lighting, and photo ops of a special kind make this one of the most wonderful times of the year. This year plans Santa, Live Music and a return of boaters to City Cou  
Chambers.



# Water Taxi with some famous Twilight guests aboard.



*SandCastle  
Competition*



# Haunted House continues to improve guest experience.



Halloween Hunt takes guests directly into participating retail locations in **uptown** that were open Sundays. This kept guests engaged, active, and spread-out. 2023 will also offer this for guests that partake. Over 500 made the voyage



Improved and updated the After Dark Experience was **TU** up with happy guests from across the globe. Tourism dollars Increased décor and engagement that welcomed allow more guests to experience this fun family-friendly offering. After hours includes Decorated Home Tour, Haunted House and The Big Exhibit of Halloween. This was a new addition in 2023.



In 2023, we welcome another new addition to our ever selection with Etkti at The Alien Museum.

Item #3.



New entry system on the door for year-round entertainment along with Museum of Peculiarities & Oddities.

Page 24





Our sponsors receive unprecedented exposure and continue to support our efforts.

Item #3.



Thank you to our sponsors

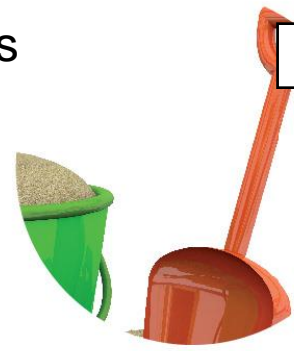


Discovercolumbiacounty.com

Page 26

# Tourism 2023 Late Summer – Fall Highlights

Item #3.



Plaza & City Hall Upgrades:

City Hall Power UpGrade, Lighting and Door Locks

Video Surveillance Enhanced.

Enhanced Signage and Traffic Control Equipment

Summer Activities Increased – Sand Island Sand Castle & Par 3 Golf

Development of Business and Community, Re: New Retail and Business Buildings

Increased earning more profit through licenses, permits & taxes from completed new businesses. Start up businesses continue to be sought after in our downtown.

Spilt Ink. Bistro 63 & Record Store opened for their 1<sup>st</sup> Halloween plus a New luxury hair salon.

New camera equipment for communications department & printers for communications & social media posts.

New Photo Booth.

Updated Museum Offerings with new additions.

New Train Experiences & New Train Upgrades.

Multiple New Props delighting guests.

New Halloween Installations and Signage.

Updated Haunted House Technology & Offering.

Entertainment Enhancement – Live Acts & Celebrities. Disney 2023 VIP

New The Big Halloween Exhibit 40 x 100 commercial tent

Creating New Opportunities For Volunteers.

Community & Volunteerism Increased.

New Sponsors and Partners – Laurelwood Brewing, Rogue Brewing.

Restroom & Garbage Solutions – we recorded no waiting at portables over 5 minutes.

Increased Revenues at store with larger retail space.

The COI for the boat was replaced from this past Feb - through Aug 2028.

New Water Taxi Boat in service. Ride Time Less Than 4 minutes. Over 500 people a day were magically transported to Sand Island. First year there was zero issues with yacht community.

Penny Press in the black – currently resides at Spilt Ink Gallery.

Vending Machine – in the black

Off Site Parking with Bus Shuttles major new expense.

New Christmas Lights & Christmas Props.

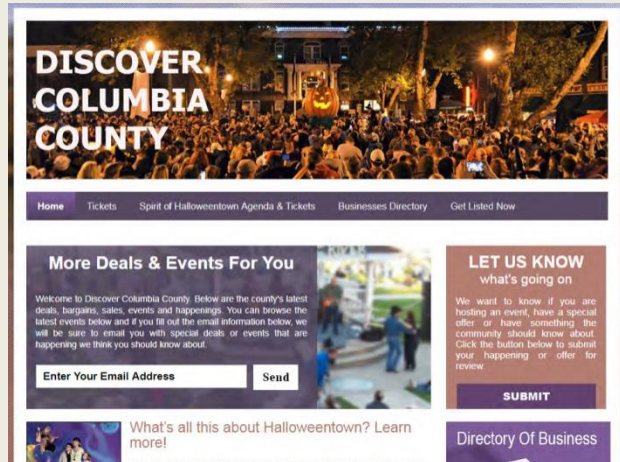
Christmas Ships boaters are returning to dine in at City Hall December 9<sup>th</sup>.

# ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS & MORE

Item #3.

Tourism achieves results that are simply – “out of this world.” Our social media engagement numbers show reaches that far exceed expectations avoiding expensive marketing costs.

Over 3 Million engagements now on [discovercolumbiacounty.com](http://discovercolumbiacounty.com)



**FB fans are now over 110,000 followers from 12,000!**

**We increased our reach even more in 2023. The film crew completed filming here for the documentary about Spirit of Halloweentown and how it has come to be so highly recognized. In addition, OPB is now producing a segment around The Sand Island Sand-Castle Competition. Disney Corporate brought over 400 guests to be entertained for the entire weekend.**

**A detailed report on promotion results is being provided by the City Communications Department.**

# *Special thanks to those who make it happen:*

City of St. Helens Staff

Public Works

Tourism Liaison Stephanie Patterson

All Volunteers

Every Organization & Nonprofit

School Fund Raisers

Guests & Community

Recognizing Those Who Actually Make It Happen

Thank You For Allowing E2C Corp To Continue To Build Your  
Tourism Offerings.

*E2C Corp continues to be mindful of the value of historical standards within the event industry while applying them to current project execution. These industry norms along with customized ideas provide a platform for success. Part of that mindfulness allows participation of individuals or groups to thrive.*

# Council Action Sheet



To: Mayor and Council Members

From: Kathy Payne  
Human Resources Coordinator/City Recorder

Date: November 15, 2023

Subject: Request for Donation for Toy n Joy Auction

## Background

The Annual Toy n Joy Benefit Auction is marking their 41<sup>st</sup> year of conducting this auction that benefits so many children and families in our community. The dinner and auction will be held on Saturday, December 2. Auction proceeds are donated to Columbia River Fire and Rescue Volunteer Association, Columbia Pacific Food Bank, and the St. Helens Kiwanis Holiday Hope Program.

For many years, the City has donated two gift certificates that they auction off for a credit to the winners' City utility bill.

## Recommendation

Staff recommends donating two \$100 gift certificates that can be used towards the winners' City utility bill.

Attachments: Request Letter

## Toy n Joy Auction Donation Request

Thanks for your steadfast support of our annual Toy n Joy auction in past years! This year marks our 41<sup>st</sup> year of conducting this benefit auction which has enabled our Committee to support toys, clothing, and food for many children and their families during the holiday season and beyond. This year's dinner and auction will be held on Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Fairgrounds pavilion with the theme of "The Ugly Christmas Sweater Party." As in the past, we ask for donations from local area businesses, organizations, and individuals for the auction. Donations can be an item or items for the live or silent auction, or simply a cash donation or gift certificate. All donors will be recognized at the auction.

Organizations we distribute the auction proceeds to include the following.

Columbia River Fire and Rescue Volunteer Association

Columbia Pacific Food Bank

St. Helens Kiwanis Holiday Hope Program

Thank you in advance for your kind consideration of this request. Please contact Jay Tappan at 503-369-0189 for any questions or to pick-up your donation.

Warmest Regards,

*Jay M. Tappan*

Jay M. Tappan

Tax ID#: 93-0909740

RECEIVED  
OCT 26 2023  
CITY OF ST. HELENS





**CITY COUNCIL MEMO**

*TOPIC: CASCADES CLOSING – REVENUE LOSS*  
*DATE: NOV 15, 2023*  
*CITY COUNCIL DISCUSSION*

With Cascades pulling out, coupled with the reserve fund balance challenges in our current and forecasted budget we will need to make some decisions about how we balance our budget.

Staff has prepared an analysis of revenue impact. The estimated annual revenue loss is nearly \$1.4 million. Of that, the impact to the General Fund is approximately \$364k.

|                        | General Fund | Community<br>Development | Water / Storm | Sewer   |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|---------------|---------|
| Property Taxes         | 218,718      |                          |               |         |
| Franchise Fees         | 145,570      |                          |               |         |
| Utilities User Charges |              |                          | 81,374        | 576,554 |
| Lease                  | -            | 300,000                  | -             | -       |
|                        | 364,287      | 300,000                  | 81,374        | 576,554 |

Approximately \$552,000 will impact the current fiscal year budget. The property tax shortfall will hit in Nov 2024. Even with other prospective industries coming in, we will not regain the lost property tax revenues until at least FY2025.

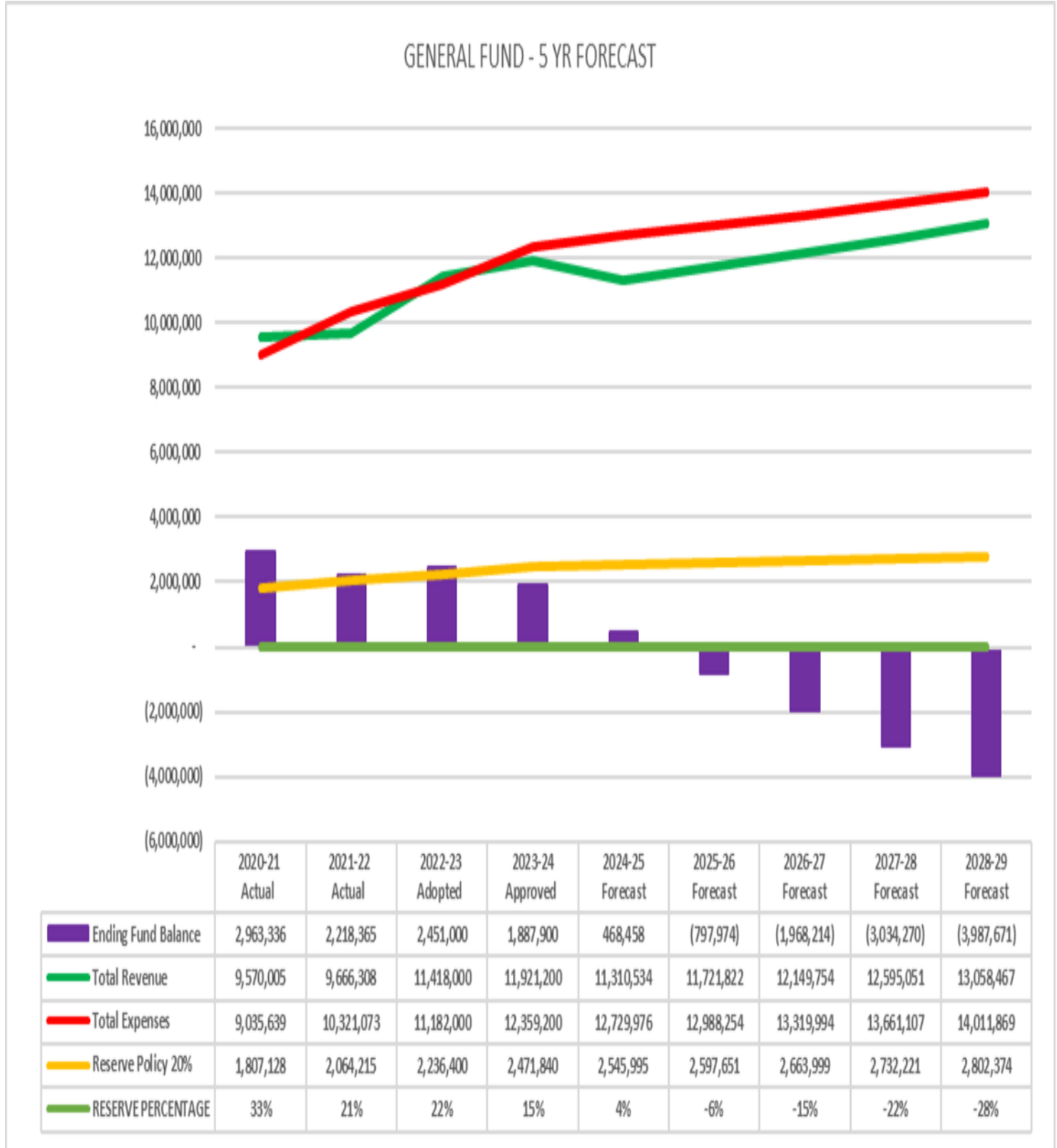
This compounds the problem that was discussed during the budget committee meetings where we have a declining fund balance reserve in the General Fund. As a reminder, City policy is to maintain a 20% fund balance reserve. For FY2024 the budgeted reserve is 15%, with a forecasted 4% in FY2025.

In the Urban Renewal Agency, the loss is impacting project funding.

It's important to note that the budget for the last 3 years has been inflated with ARPA funds and other Federal subsidies.

The chart below is from the budget document as a reminder of the forecasted fund balance reserves.

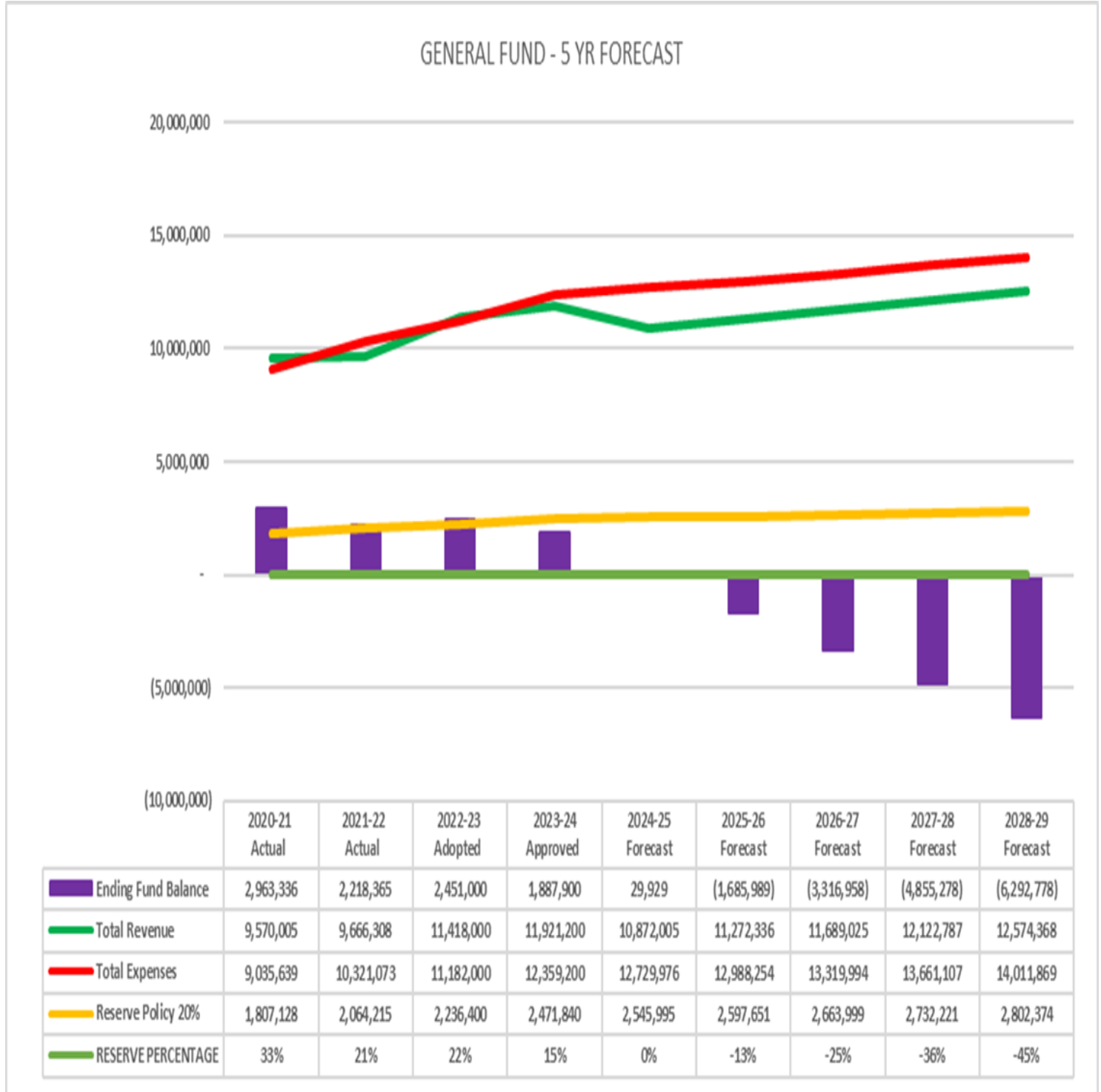
FY2024 Adopted Budget (Current Budget)



**Fund Balance Reserves Impact from Cascades**

The following chart shows the impacts to the FB reserves if no adjustments are made.

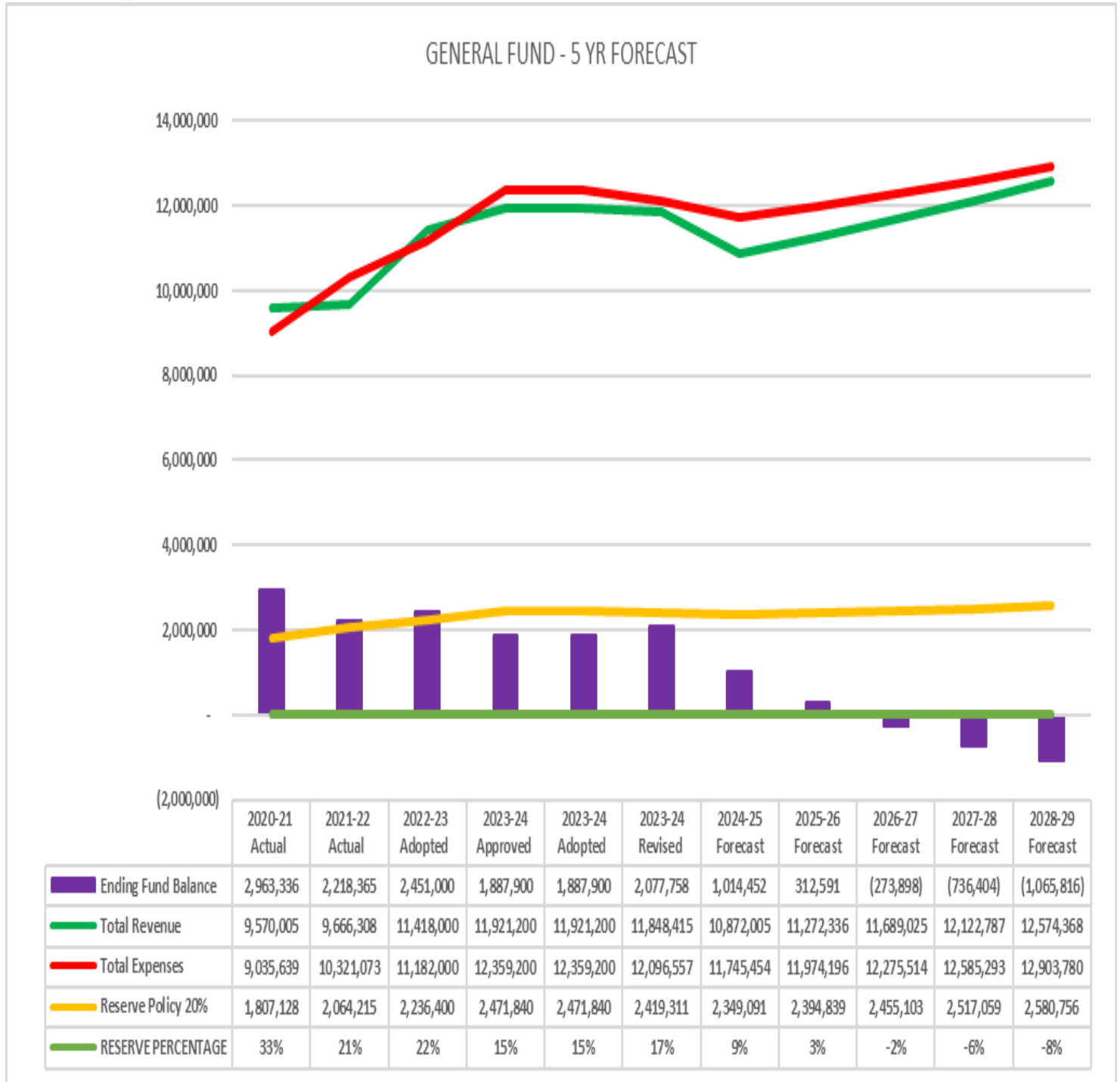
Revenue Loss from Cascades



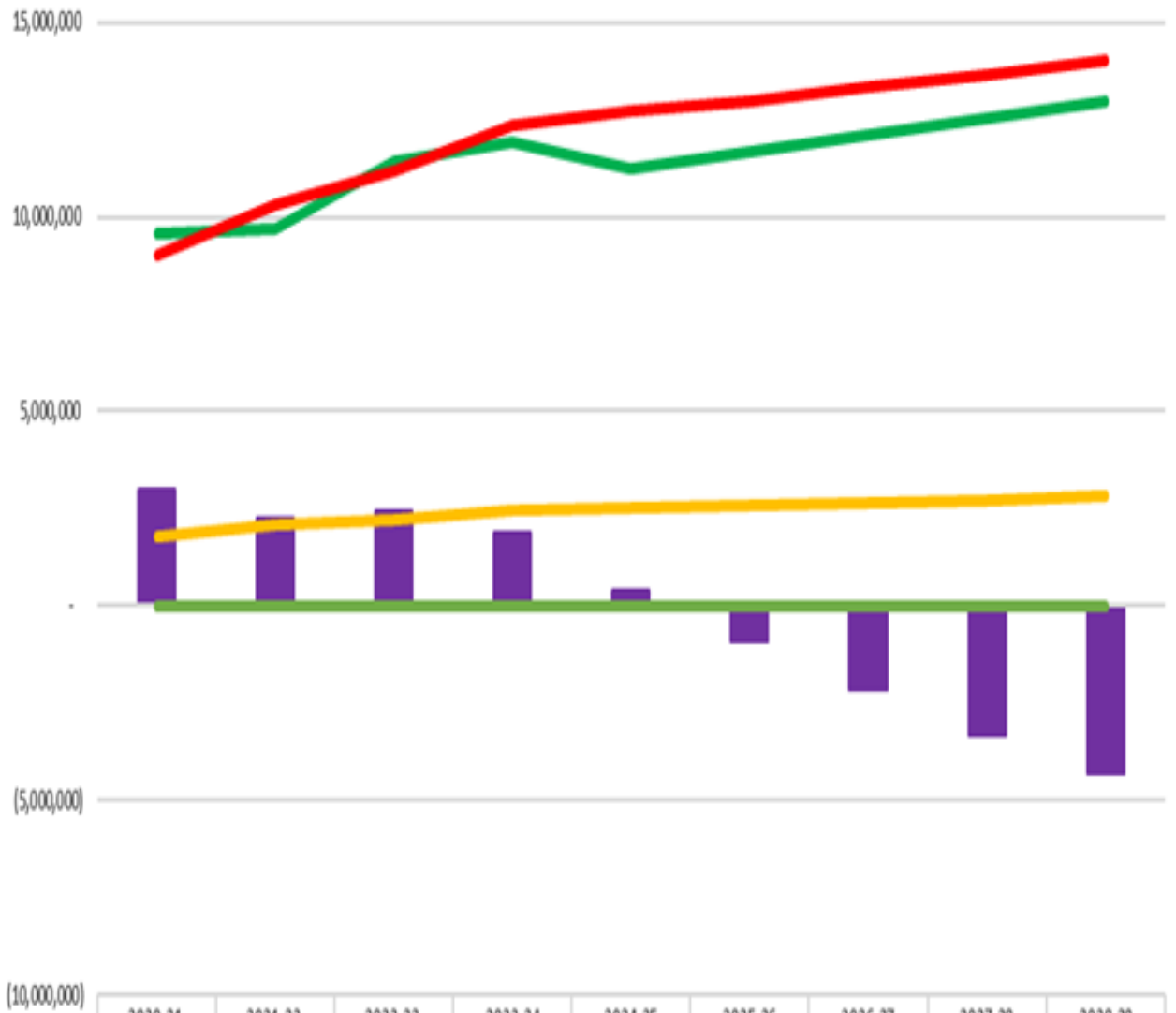
Staff have done some analysis of revenue replacement and eliminating city positions / programs cuts. With the ad of a General Service Fee, we could recover the lost revenue from Cascade and with service or program cuts, we could save approximately \$282K in FY2024 and \$436k 2025 (based on estimated retirement payouts).

Some options include a Local Option Levy, Service Fees(s), a Local Tax / Gas Tax.

Cascade Loss / Service Cuts



GENERAL FUND - 5 YR FORECAST



|                            | 2020-21<br>Actual | 2021-22<br>Actual | 2022-23<br>Adopted | 2023-24<br>Approved | 2024-25<br>Forecast | 2025-26<br>Forecast | 2026-27<br>Forecast | 2027-28<br>Forecast | 2028-29<br>Forecast |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Ending Fund Balance</b> | 2,963,336         | 2,218,365         | 2,451,000          | 1,887,900           | 399,060             | (936,653)           | (2,176,010)         | (3,310,970)         | (4,333,009)         |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>       | 9,570,005         | 9,666,308         | 11,418,000         | 11,921,200          | 11,241,136          | 11,652,541          | 12,080,637          | 12,526,147          | 12,989,829          |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>      | 9,035,639         | 10,321,073        | 11,182,000         | 12,359,200          | 12,729,976          | 12,988,254          | 13,319,994          | 13,661,107          | 14,011,869          |
| <b>Reserve Policy 20%</b>  | 1,807,128         | 2,064,215         | 2,236,400          | 2,471,840           | 2,545,995           | 2,597,651           | 2,663,999           | 2,732,221           | 2,802,374           |
| <b>RESERVE PERCENTAGE</b>  | 33%               | 21%               | 22%                | 15%                 | 3%                  | -7%                 | -16%                | -24%                | -31%                |

Below chart shows how an added \$5 GS Fee and reduction of \$282,016k in FY2024 and \$435,788 in FY2025 would affect the General Fund reserve.

Cascades Loss / Add \$5 GS Fee / Service Reductions

