

East County Fire and Rescue



2025 Proposed Budget-in-Brief

Integrity • Compassion • Professionalism • Equity

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Complete Adopted Budget & Long-Term Financial Plan

Access the complete proposed budget, long-term financial plan, and other detailed information on the district from our website: www.ecfr.us.

Mission, Vision, & Values

Mission

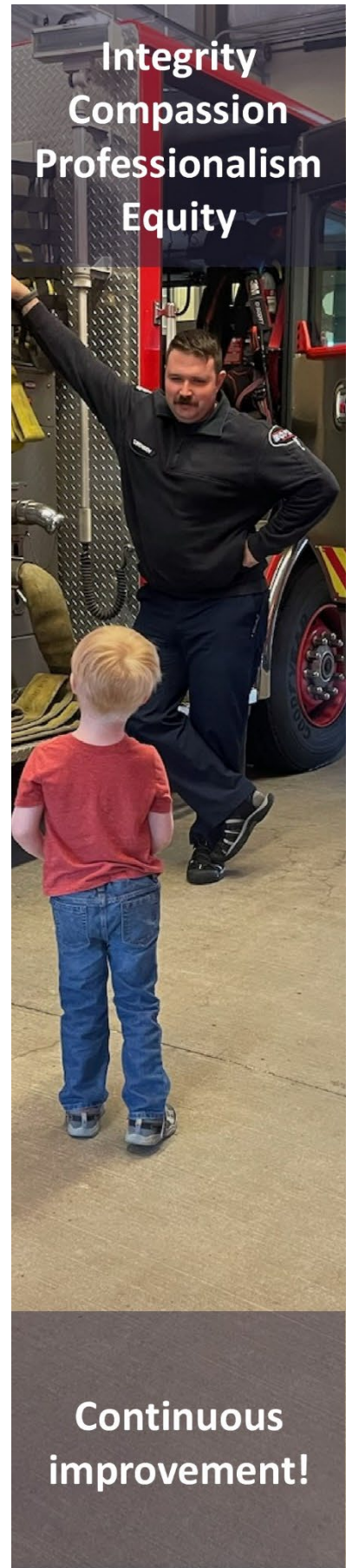
Improve community safety by reducing risk through prevention, education, and response.

Vision

Continuous improvement!

Values

The district’s governance, leadership, and operations are guided by our values of integrity, compassion, professionalism, and equity. These values have been woven throughout East County Fire and Rescue’s human resources and operational processes.



Budget Message

Thank you for supporting East County Fire and Rescue (ECFR)! We provide fire and rescue services in partnership with Camas Washougal Fire Department for emergency medical services. ECFR serves approximately 10,742 residents in a 60-square-mile area (WA OFM, 2023). In August 2024, voters restored our general levy rate to \$1.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. This will allow us to increase staffing and replace aging fire engines and water tenders. As a result, we enter 2025 in a strong financial position.

We operate under a balanced budget, are debt-free, and have successfully passed all financial and accountability audits. The district maintains an AA- bond rating from Standard and Poor's. In addition, the district's 2024 budget earned the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Distinguished Budget Presentation Award, reflecting our commitment to fiscal responsibility and transparency.

Key Accomplishments in 2024

- Ordering a new fire engine to replace the outdated Engine 94, avoiding a price increase and saving \$52,794. The total cost for the new engine is \$942,982.
- Renegotiating a three-year collective bargaining agreement with the International Association of Firefighters, Local 2444. This agreement offers fair compensation and encourages professional development, reducing staff turnover.
- Installing diesel exhaust extraction systems and providing incident command training with the help of a \$254,337 Assistance to Firefighters Grant.
- Hiring three new firefighters, starting January 2025, which will improve staffing reliability and reduce our dependence on overtime.

The 2025 Budget

Our 2025 general fund budget is 8.73% higher than in 2024, largely due to the addition of three firefighters, a deputy fire chief, and salary adjustments to align compensation with comparable fire districts. We have reduced overtime costs by eliminating part-time positions. Increased revenue also allows us to save for apparatus replacements. Along with the new fire engine already on order, we will replace a command vehicle in 2025 and order a new water tender to replace one that has reached its end of useful life with anticipated delivery in 2026.

Looking Ahead

While we've made significant progress, challenges remain. The district relies heavily on property tax revenue, and the 1% annual limit on levy increases doesn't keep pace with inflation. While restored levy supports near-term needs, our capital projects fund is underfunded for long-term needs. In 2025, we will review our long-range financial plan to ensure fiscal sustainability and continued high-quality service.

Parting Words

As I retire at the end of 2024, after a 50-year career in fire service, I want to thank the board of fire commissioners and our staff for their dedication to our mission. Your feedback is welcome at chief@ecfr.us or by phone at (360) 834-4908. You can also visit our headquarters at 600 NE 267th Avenue, Camas.

Sincerely,

Chief Ed Hartin, MS, EFO, FIFireE, CFO

East County Fire and Rescue

East County Fire and Rescue (ECFR) operates as a legally organized fire protection district under the *Revised Code of Washington (RCW) Title 52* and is governed by a five-member board of fire commissioners, each serving a six-year term. The board establishes policy and provides direction to the fire chief who is responsible for the day-to-day operations and fiscal management of the district. As a fire protection district, ECFR is a municipal corporation that is independent from Clark County.



Service Area

East County Fire and Rescue (ECFR) serves an area of 60 square miles and a population of approximately 10,426. ECFR's response area is in the southeast corner of Clark County, east of Vancouver and north and east of Camas and Washougal.



Station 91-Staffed Station
600 NE 267th Avenue, Camas, WA 98607



Station 92-Silver Star Search and Rescue
4909 NE 292nd Avenue, Camas, WA 98607



Station 93-Training and Reserve Apparatus
121 NE 312th Avenue, Washougal, WA 98671



Station 94-Staffed Station
1808 SE 352nd Avenue, Washougal, WA 98671

Services Provided

East County Fire and Rescue is an all-hazards service providing fire protection, emergency medical services, hazardous materials response, and rescue services. In addition, the district has established prevention at the core of our service to the community.



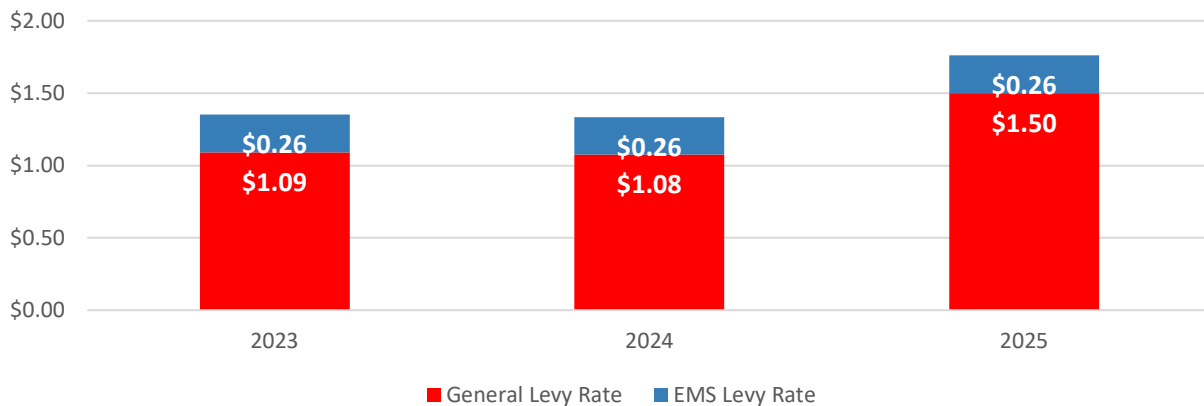
Revenue

In 2025, 98.06% of the district’s \$5,133,998 in revenue will come from property taxes, 83.71% from the general levy and 14.35% from the emergency medical services (EMS) levy.

Revenue Stream	2023	2024	2025	2025 Distribution
General Levy Tax Revenue	\$2,948,395	\$3,013,945	\$4,297,838	83.71%
EMS Levy Tax Revenue	\$705,498	\$721,177	\$736,685	14.35%
Other Tax Revenue	\$33,639	\$20,951	\$21,056	0.41%
All Other Revenue	\$151,913	\$47,635	\$78,419	1.53%
Total Revenue	\$3,839,444	\$3,803,708	\$5,133,998	100.00%

Property Taxes

The *Washington State Constitution* and related laws strictly limit the amount of property tax that local taxing districts can levy. There are two important property tax limitations for fire districts. Annual increases in property taxes levied to 1%, plus revenue from new construction and fire districts are limited to a maximum regular property tax rate of \$1.50/1,000 of Assessed Value (AV).



Other Revenues

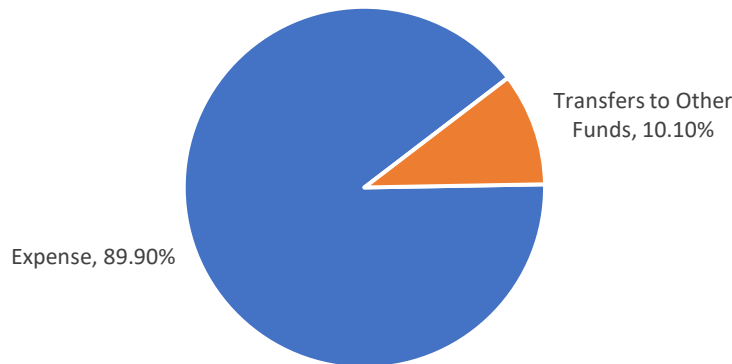
Other revenues include fees for service, grants, sale of surplus real or personal property, etc. In some cases, these are one-time revenues and in other cases they are ongoing but comprise a small proportion of the district’s total revenue.

Expenditures

ECFR’s budget is divided into multiple funds, each with a specific purpose. In 2025 the district’s budget is \$4,747,543 inclusive of both operating expenditures (general and grants management funds) and capital projects (capital projects fund).

General Fund

The general fund is the district’s principal operating fund. This fund accounts for all current expenditures (e.g., personal services and materials and services) not specifically accounted for in other funds as well as transfers to other funds. As all revenue with the exception of grants is deposited in the general fund, other funds such as the capital projects fund and leave accrual fund are funded through transfers from the general fund. ECFR’s general fund budget for 2025 is \$4,064,323 with 89.90% allocated to general fund expenses and 10.10% transferred to other funds.



Capital Projects Fund

Capital assets are items having a cost greater than \$5,000 and a service life of greater than one year (e.g., major equipment, fire apparatus, and fire stations). Effective capital planning makes sure key assets are repaired or replaced before their end of service life or critical failure. In addition, a sound capital projects plan allows us to engage our community in understanding the costs and benefits of maintaining capital infrastructure. The district has no capital projects budgeted for 2025 but will order a new fire engine to replace one that has reached its end of useful life with anticipated delivery in 2025.

Leave Accrual Fund

The leave accrual fund is used to manage the district’s liability for payout to employees for unused vacation upon retirement or other separation from employment. The district anticipates one retirement at the end of 2023 with payout for unused leave in 2025.

Emergency Medical Services Fund

Revenue for the emergency medical services fund is generated by the EMS levy and this fund serves as a pass through with all revenue transferred to the City of Camas for provision of advanced life support emergency medical services in East County Fire and Rescue’s service area.

Budget Summary

General Fund	2023 Actual	2024 Adjusted	2025 Proposed
General Fund Beginning Balance (Less Contingency)	\$2,053,597	\$2,356,627	\$1,682,107
General Fund Contingency	\$0	\$120,799	\$182,687
Revenue	\$3,496,718	\$3,125,405	\$4,408,624
Expenditures	\$2,515,329	\$3,218,374	\$3,653,732
Non-Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0
Interfund Transfers (Out)	\$557,561	\$519,663	\$410,591
Ending General Fund Balance	\$2,477,426	\$1,864,794	\$2,209,095
Capital Projects Fund			
Beginning Capital Projects Fund Balance	\$1,075,587	\$746,848	\$1,275,183
Revenue	\$1,124,080	\$1,275,183	\$1,703,225
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$1,063,812
Interfund Transfers (Out)	\$377,232	\$0	\$0
Ending Capital Projects Fund Balance	\$746,848	\$1,275,183	\$639,413
Debt Service Fund			
Beginning Debt Service Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenue	\$524,300	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$524,300	\$0	\$0
Ending Debt Service Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0
Leave Accrual Fund			
Beginning Leave Accrual Fund Balance	\$46,326	\$43,015	\$51,336
Revenue	\$1,176	\$11,075	\$14,283
Interfund Transfers (Out)	\$0	\$2,754	\$11,311
Ending Leave Accrual Fund Balance	\$43,015	\$51,336	\$54,309
Grants Management Fund			
Beginning Grants Management Fund Balance	\$0	\$242,086	\$28,572
Revenue (Includes the Beginning Balance)	\$254,337	\$28,571	\$1,428
Expenditures	\$12,251	\$242,086	\$30,000
Ending Grants Management Fund Balance	\$242,086	\$28,572	\$0
Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Fund			
Beginning EMS Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0
Revenue (Includes the Beginning Balance)	\$701,062	\$721,177	\$736,685
Expenditures	\$701,062	\$721,177	\$736,685
Ending EMS Fund Balance	\$0	\$0	\$0
All Funds			
Total Ending Balance (All Funds)	\$3,509,375	\$3,219,884	\$2,902,817

