



City of Kenmore, Washington

Date: October 22, 2020

To: Rob Karlinsey, City Manager
From: Adam Nebenzahl, City Management Intern

Re: DEI Policy and Program Timeline

Introduction

The City Council and staff have a strong commitment to making Kenmore an open, inclusive and welcoming place for all. On 9/14/20, Council adopted Resolution 20-348 directing the City Manager to bring back a plan in early November outlining funding and resources for the process of developing a racial, equity inclusion policy that honors diversity in the city programs and community. The purpose of this memo is to outline a timeline and the steps, actions, and resources needed to develop a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Policy (Track 1, November 2020 through December 2021). A schedule for training (Track 2, Training) to begin the DEI conversation and education for the City organization (November-December 2021) and a schedule for additional organization training in 2021 is attached at the end of the document.

Kenmore's DEI Context: The City Manager's budget message presented in the 10/12/20 Draft 2021-2022 Budget (pages 5-8 attached) provides a description and reasons why Kenmore needs to acknowledge and own the community's long history and ongoing evidence of systemic and institutional racism. The City Manager calls for community engagement and an atmosphere of trust to honestly ask and answer tough questions in a brave and inclusive space for people of color and other marginalized groups to feel visible, validated and valued in their community. The goal for the DEI policy is to identify actionable steps that will help change Kenmore's policies and practices that perpetuate racism.

DEI Actions and Resources 2020:

- 4/28/20 - 12/31/20 Intern funded 20 hours/week. Work on DEI began 6/22/20.
- 9/14/20 Council meeting, staff presented a background memo reviewing DEI policy and implementation measures in other jurisdictions and memo providing suggestions for a Kenmore DEI policy framework.
- 9/14/20 Council Resolution 20-348 directing the City Manager to bring back a plan in early November outlining funding and resources for the process of developing a racial, equity inclusion policy that honors diversity in the city programs and community.

- 8/25/20 staff submitted an application to join the Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE). \$1,000/year membership fee.
- 10/14/20- 12/31/20 Consultant contract 20-C2223 October through November 2020 with The Root of Us, LLC for \$12,000. Scope of work includes assisting with the DEI process design (i.e., this memo), providing DEI training for Council and staff, and providing other DEI related consultation as needed.

DEI Resources 2021-2022: The draft 2021-2022 Budget includes \$150,000 (Strategic Opportunity Funds) for consultant assistance to develop the DEI policy and training in 2021 (\$120,000) plus implementation steps/training in 2022 (\$30,00). A new Human Resources Manager position is also proposed to manage human resource management for the City organization and manage the DEI policy development and plan implementation.

Track 1: Developing a DEI Policy and Program

Appendix A provides a timeline for the following three actions:

- Recruitment process and hiring a Human Resource Manager (December 2020-April 2021): The HR Manager will be responsible for managing DEI policy development including managing the consultant contract, plan implementation, training, and staff support to an appointed DEI Task Force.
- Request for Proposal (RFP) process and hiring a consultant (December 2020-April 2021): The consultant scope of work would include leading a community engagement process, working with the Task Force, and developing recommendations for DEI policies and programs.
- Application process and appointment of a DEI Task Force (February 2021-April 2021): A seven-member Task Force will be appointed by the Council. The Task Force, with the help of the consultant and staff, engages the community in developing recommendations to Council for a DEI policy.
- DEI Policy Development (April 2021-December 2021): This phase includes the consultant, staff, and the Task Force working together on community engagement, holding Task Force meetings, and developing recommendations for Council consideration.
- 2022 taking action steps for implementation following adoption of the DEI policy.

Track 2: Training

- Staff and Council Training (November 2020-December 2020): The Root of Us provides online racial equity training exploring Kenmore's history and identity.
- Formation of Staff DEI Committee (January 2021-March 2021): Representatives from each department to form a committee, led by the Human Resource Manager. The Committee will be responsible for developing a training schedule for staff for 2021. There are many online free training resources available.
- Self-Directed Training (January 2021 – March 2021): During the period in between training received from The Root of Us, LLC and the hiring of an HR

- manager and trainer, Staff would be requested to participate in a self-directed training such as the 21 Day Challenge¹ to prevent a gap in anti-racist education.
- Staff/Council Training (April 2021-December 2021): The Human Resource Manager will develop and manage a training schedule and consultant contract for training as needed. Appendix B provides a draft schedule for anti-bias and racial equity training.
 - DEI Lunch Socials: an elective once-a-month dialogue about the issues of DEI locally, regionally, and nationally. These DEI Lunch Socials will be facilitated by interested staff members and can discuss a variety of topics ranging from equity-related articles/books, to educational exercises and discussions, to watching The Institute for Democratic Education and Culture's 'Speak Out' video series.²

Attachments:

1. Excerpt from the City Manager's 10/12/20 budget message

¹ <https://www.eddiemoorejr.com/21daychallenge>

² <https://www.speakoutnow.org/>

Appendix A – Track 1: Developing a DEI Policy and Program Timeline

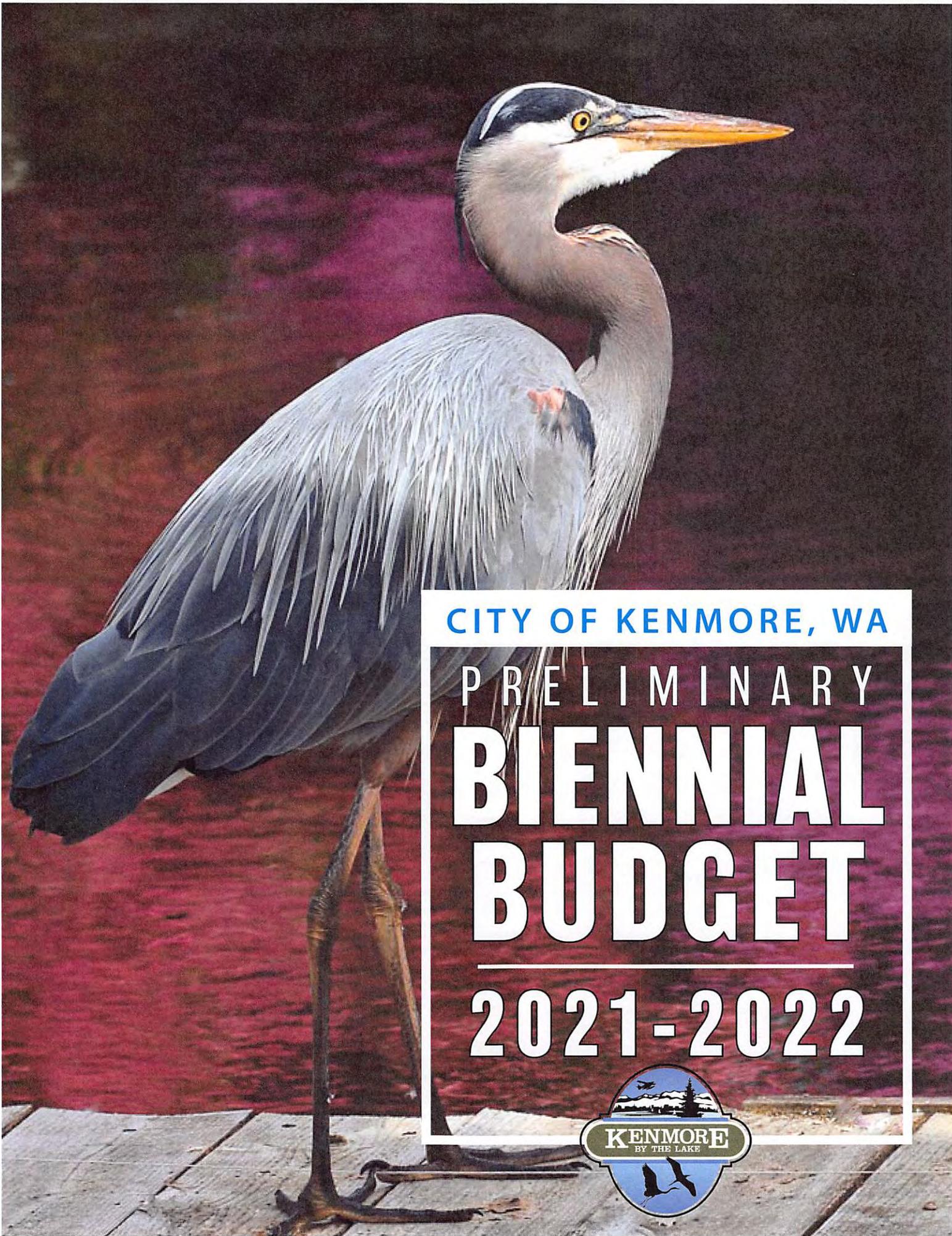
	Leader(s)	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	+++
Allocation of Funds for DEI into 2021-2022 Biennial Budget	City Council, City Manager															
Hiring HR Manager	City Manager															
RFP/Q Process/Consultant Hiring	City Manager, HR Manager															
Task Force Formation	City Manager, HR Manager															
Community Enagagement	HR Manager, Consultant															
Task Force Meetings	HR Manager, Consultant															
Consultant proposes recommendations	City Manager, HR Manager															
Task Force Release Recommendations	City Manager, HR Manager															
Presentation to City Council Findings and Recommendations	City Council, City Manager															
City Manager's Office Analyzes Recommendations and Proposes Next Steps	City Manager															

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Appendix B – Track 2: City Staff Training Timeline (Draft)

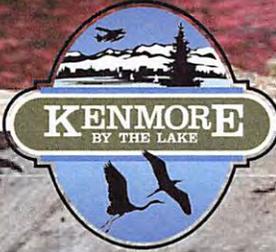
	Leader(s)	Who Participates?	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	+++
Allocation of Funds for Staff DEI training in 2021-2022 Biennial Budget	City Council, City Manager																
The Root of Us, LLC Training	The Root of Us, LLC Trainers	Staff, Management Team, City Council															
Hiring of Trainer(s)	HR Manager, City Manager																
Creation of Staff DEI Sub-Committee	City Manager, HR Manager	Voluntary/Selected Staff															
Anti-Racist Continuing Education	Self-Directed	Staff, Management Team															
Anti-Bias Training	Trainer, HR Manager	City Council, Management Team, Staff															
Racial Equity Training	HR Manager	City Council, Management Team															
DEI Lunch Socials	Voluntary Staff Members	Staff															



CITY OF KENMORE, WA

PRELIMINARY
**BIENNIAL
BUDGET**

2021-2022



pandemic has been a massive humanizing force—allowing us to see each other on a level much deeper than politics—see the fragility, the fear, and the courage.”¹

I think we all have seen this “humanizing force” play out over the last nine months. Think of how families have suffered together as residents of assisted living facilities have had to live in physical isolation from their families and friends; or how many of our senior citizens have had to shelter in place in their homes, magnifying the loneliness that was already there; or how a family member was hospitalized by the virus and could have no visitors; or the despair that came with job loss and delinquent rent; and worst of all, loved ones who have fallen to the virus.

Yet despite this suffering, people have come together and united in countless and quiet ways. For example, some of my coworkers organized a note-writing effort to the residents of our assisted living facilities. I’m sure they made a few people smile that day.

I believe the pandemic will persist well into 2021, and the effect will be felt in 2022 and beyond. Only a small fraction of Kenmore’s and the state’s population has tested positive for COVID-19. In addition, a vaccine will not be available for a while. From what I’m reading, a reliable vaccine may not be available until spring or summer of 2021, and then there will be time needed for the vaccine to be distributed into the population.

The low number of confirmed cases combined with a vaccine not being available soon cause me to conclude that we’re going to be in this state of teleworking, various stages of closures, physical distancing, and other precautions for a long time.² Nevertheless, if the past nine months is any indication of the future, the “humanizing force” of the pandemic will continue as we pull together and help those in need. If that happens, we will come out better and stronger on the other end.

Systemic Racism. Racial Equity. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Not only did the pandemic rock our world in 2020, but so did the murder of Georg Floyd and the public outcry against systemic and institutional racism that has been mounting for years. But hopefully this call for action and the resulting steps we take will not just rock our world, but change our world, our systems, and us, for the better.

Kenmore is not immune to racial inequity and disparity. Our Hispanic residents are twice as likely to live below the poverty level as our white residents, and Black Kenmore residents are five times more likely.³ Educational attainment⁴ and other demographic measures for Kenmore tell a similar story.

¹ *New York Times*, April 30, 2020

² Aren’t you glad we all stocked up on toilet paper?

³ Kenmore percent of race living below poverty level: white—5.9%, Hispanic—12.4%, and Black—30.3%. Source: United States Census Bureau American Community Survey, Poverty Status in the Last 12 Months, Table S1701.

⁴ United States Census Bureau American Community Survey, Educational Attainment, Table S1501.

For King County, income for Black households is 52% of white households, and Hispanic households bring in about a third less than white households.⁵

Trends show that the number of children below the poverty line is growing dramatically in King County, with children of color bearing the disproportionate brunt of that trend. About 46% of Black children in King County are below the poverty level—seven times the rate for white children.⁶ Health, education, and other indicators point to similar demographic trends in King County.⁷

But this is more than about statistics and numbers. Qualitatively, we know there is much hurt, anger, frustration, and despair among too many of our sisters and brothers who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). These feelings are justified and are not new; the most recent social unrest and protests once again bring this issue to the forefront and hopefully motivate all of us to move, to act, to change.

Such action and change can take place right here in Kenmore. We do not need to wait for a national or regional conversation or strategy—we can start right here at home. But any conversations we have and actions we take must not be superficial. It's not just about changing our attitudes—it's about dismantling systemic racism throughout the complex and entrenched social, political, and economic systems that bias in favor of white people.

To go below the surface and change the machine, we need to take intentional ownership of what's happened. We should historicize Kenmore, and we must be willing to dig deep, to be vulnerable, to be humble, and to own up to our own history. We have to honestly ask and answer tough questions that will make us uncomfortable and make us more aware, and we have to create a safe, inclusive space for people of color and other marginalized groups to ask the tough questions and tell us what they've gone through—and to be able to do so and truly feel heard and understood—not interrupted, not ignored.

In her book *So You Want to Talk About Race*, Ijeoma Oluo said, “We have a real problem of racial inequity and injustice in our society, and we cannot wish it away. We have to tackle this problem with real action, and we will not know what needs to be done if we are not willing to talk about it.”⁸

Oluo goes on to say that “These conversations will always be hard because they will always be about the hurt and pain of real people. . . . And if you are white, and you don't want to feel any of that pain by having these conversations, then you are asking people of color to continue to bear the entire burden of racism alone.”⁹

Under your leadership and direction, we as a community can go on this journey of uncomfortable conversations and meaningful action. Hopefully along the way, we'll learn a lot—such as ways

⁵ King County Office of the Executive, Performance Strategy and Budget. *King County's Changing Demographics*, Chandler Felt, Demographer. 2016.

⁶ See footnote 3

⁷ Communitiescount.org

⁸ 2019, pages 44-45

⁹ Page 51

we unknowingly make race an issue; deep down, what our implicit biases might be; an awakening to microaggressions and the damage they do; what is intersectionality and how this more inclusive view casts a wider umbrella; and what specifically can we do to truly move the needle in Kenmore—to truly alter the machinery of societal systems laced with policies and practices that maintain barriers for people of color and keeps in place a racial caste system that too few want to acknowledge or talk about but is alive and well.¹⁰

But what can little old Kenmore do to make real progress on this societal issue? Isn't it national or even global in scope, and therefore shouldn't we leave it to larger institutions such as Congress or the U.S. Supreme Court to solve? Actually, there are things we can do at the local level. We can start with examining our own systems and processes.

Further, real change happens one heart at a time—you can't get any more local than that. And we might be surprised how our actions can ripple over into other communities. The more cities, big and small, that take on this issue, the more momentum will build and the more it will roll up to the state and national levels.

Kenmore can make a difference. When approved for funding and resources as proposed in this preliminary budget, in early 2021 we will begin the process of developing a racial equity and inclusion policy that honors diversity in our programs and community. As you directed in Resolution 20-348 last month, a proposed plan for this process will be presented to you in early November. The proposed process will include engaging our community and creating a brave space and an atmosphere of trust for people of color and people who have been “othered” and marginalized to open up to share their lived experiences and struggles.

An atmosphere of trust can be created through the process of learning our individual and community identities, how we are interconnected with each other, and who we really are. Fernell Miller, founder and CEO of [The Root of Us](#) says, “When we fail to see and understand ourselves, we fail to see and understand each other,” and that “having accurate knowledge of our roots allows us to use that knowledge to build strong, equitable, inclusive, and diverse communities of practice.”¹¹ The process will tell us how we can own up and be transparent about what's going on now and what truly needs to change.

And again, we need to go beyond proclamations, public statements, and words on paper. What actionable steps can we as a community take that will produce real deliverables that will help change the system, including Kenmore's systems and institutions? To me, this question is at the heart of the matter and will make the process worth the time and resources *if* we can answer it. I'm looking forward to this process—I know it's going to be hard and at times painful, but I believe that it will result in positive and long overdue changes that we all deserve, but especially for those in our community who have been “othered,” discriminated against, and marginalized for far too long.

¹⁰ *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, by Michelle Alexander. 2020. Page 26

¹¹ Correspondence with Fernell Miller, October 7, 2020. www.therootofus.com

Later in this letter, there will be more details on what staffing and resources will be allocated to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the 2021-2022 budget, but let me end this section of the budget message by quoting late Congressman John Lewis:

I think there's something brewing in America that's going to bring people closer and closer together. Adversity can breed unity; hatred can give way to love. We need a leadership of love now, a strong leadership to lift us, to transport us, to remind us that God's truth is marching on. We can do it. We must do it. We have to go forward as one people, one family, one house. I believe in it. I believe we can do it. (*His Truth is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope*, by John Meacham. 2020. Page 249)

2021-2022 Budget Highlights

For the City of Kenmore, the first year of the next biennium will begin in better financial shape than we forecasted last spring. As major sectors of the economy were closing and as the general population was sheltering in place, we expected significant drops in certain revenues, including permitting fees, sales tax, and fuel tax. I am pleased to report that these drops as predicted did not materialize. Sales tax is down only about four percent compared to last year, and permit fees are on par with last year. Fuel tax is down about fifteen percent, which is significant, but not the fifty percent that we braced for.

To prepare for the drops in revenue, we cut many discretionary expenditures where we could. See the expenditure reductions table under Financial Sustainability Plan later in this letter. The expenditure cuts we made combined with the better-than-anticipated revenues have positioned us well for the next biennium and will allow us to maintain key services and jump start some important City Council initiatives.

However, we must continue to approach the budget and our spending with caution. We do not know the full extent of the financial effects of this pandemic recession. Further, we project that 2021 will see less revenues than originally budgeted for 2020. At the time of this writing, it appears that Initiative 976 which eliminates vehicle license fee revenue will be upheld, cutting more than \$350,000 per year from our Street Fund. In addition, for the next biennium we are predicting notably lower sales tax, fuel tax, and development services fees than a pre-pandemic scenario would have anticipated.

In light of all of this, we believe the City's 2021-2022 biennium budget will have the resources to maintain current services and advance your top priorities. These priorities are as follows:

2020-2021 City Council Priorities

October 2020 Update: Given unprecedented circumstances in 2020, we must acknowledge the impacts of the pandemic and the public outcry against system racism by adding the following priorities:

- Respond to the pandemic