



Council Offices

Analysis by Angela Butel

INTRODUCTION

Council Offices are funded through the General Fund Overhead model, and the requested budgets for all five offices reflect the General Fund FY 2020-21 Current Appropriation Level targets. There are no decision packages submitted for Council Offices; analysis of a request for funds for the transition of the Office of the Commissioner of Public Utilities can be found as part of the Special Appropriations review. As elected leaders of the City, the Mayor and Commissioners play a central role in representing the needs and priorities of Portland's diverse communities. The analysis below outlines some considerations specific to Council Offices that could help shape a broader conversation about effectively resourcing the City's community engagement efforts.

BASE BUDGET KEY ISSUES

In the Fall 2019 Budget Monitoring Report, CBO recommended that Council use the FY 2020-21 budget development process to consider whether the current budget approach provides sufficient resources for Council Offices' community engagement efforts.¹ This review seeks to provide additional analysis to frame this conversation should Council decide to pursue it during this budget process.

The question of whether sufficient resources are currently available to Council Offices for community engagement is difficult to assess for several reasons. Community engagement is not a defined expenditure category in the City's budget, which makes it challenging to see how much the Mayor and Commissioners historically spend on these activities and how much is planned for the current year. Council Offices have flexibility within their external materials and services (EMS) funds for community engagement-related expenses; however, a significant but unquantified amount of staff time is also spent on community engagement activities, which contributes to the challenge in pinpointing precise costs.

The budgets for the four Commissioners were equalized by Mayoral direction in FY 2013-14.² This means that Commissioners do not have the latitude to add resources to their budgets for new activities, though they do have flexibility to allocate their resources between budget categories. While commissioners' offices are less affected than many City bureaus by constraints around personnel costs,³ prioritizing allocation of resources to EMS for community engagement and other activities requires tradeoff decisions around personnel and Internal Materials and Services spending. Commissioners' requested budgets reflect some variation in the allocation of their available funds in FY 2020-21, which could indicate different levels of community engagement spending between Council Offices. At the same time,

¹ City Budget Office, FY 2019-20 Fall Supplemental Budget Report, page 97. Available at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/cbo/article/743155>

² City of Portland, FY 2013-14 Proposed Budget, page 274. Available at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/cbo/article/447763>

³ City Council was exempt from changes imposed by both the implementation of the new Pay Equity law and the FY 2018-19 Classification/Compensation Study, both of which increased personnel costs for many bureaus. In addition, Council staff are not held to a set schedule of performance reviews and merit increases, allowing Commissioners more managerial control over when those cost increases happen.

different approaches to community engagement require varying amounts of resources. Looking at the resources potentially available for community engagement does not necessarily indicate whether those resources are adequate for the kinds of engagement the Commissioner has in mind.

For the sake of analysis, CBO has assessed one of the more expensive kind of engagement—hosting a community event—to gauge Council Offices’ capacity for engagement. Though there are personnel costs associated with planning and staffing an event, many of the direct costs (space rental, food, interpretation, facilitation, etc.) would fall under the more general EMS spending category. Council Offices also use their EMS budgets to pay for office-related items such as office supplies, travel, and professional development. After removing these types of general operational support costs, in the current year Council Offices have between \$24,709 and \$50,104 in materials and services funding which may be used for high priority office needs or for community engagement efforts.

The cost of a community event can vary significantly depending on timing, location, and scope; estimates from Council Office staff range from about \$1,500 to \$4,000 per event. Given the range of available materials and services resources listed above, it would be possible for each Council office to host at least 6 events should this activity be prioritized above other needs. Available resources can stretch farther if Commissioners partner with each other or with other bureaus on events.

While engaging and listening to constituents is an essential component of elected leadership, is difficult to assess the quality and impact of engagement efforts. There is currently no centralized way to track the outcomes of Council Office engagement efforts, such as number of attendees or which communities were represented (though individual offices may track some of these things internally). Without this kind of information, it is difficult to assess whether higher investment would translate to more effective engagement.

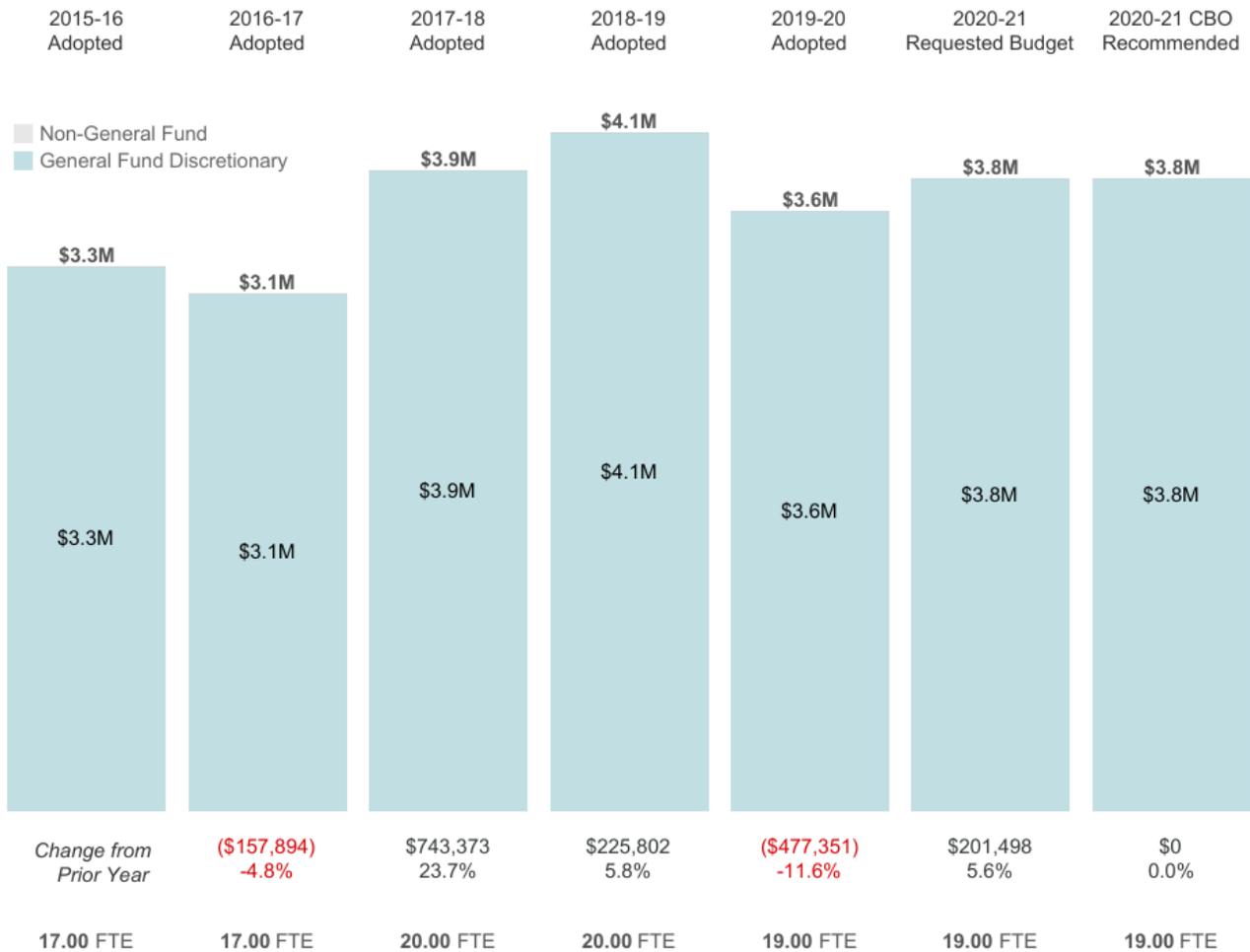
Based on this analysis, CBO recommends that community engagement activities be part of a larger-scale strategic conversation around community engagement, in conjunction with considering questions such as those raised in the [FY 2020-21 Joint Office of Homeless Services CBO budget review](#). For Council Offices, pressing questions exist around the most effective approaches to engagement and the best ways to measure that effectiveness. CBO’s Citywide Performance Management system, through which bureaus track performance data, could be one tool available to Council in this discussion. If a more thorough assessment of community engagement outcomes is of interest, Council Offices could establish performance measures around engagement, such as number of people engaged and breadth of engagement by neighborhood (as well as around other priorities, if desired). Tracking and reporting this type of data in a centralized way could inform improvements to the impact and cost-effectiveness of Council Offices’ community engagement efforts.



**City
Budget
Office**

Office of the Mayor (Wheeler)

Adopted Budget Revenues | 5-Year Lookback



SUMMARY OF REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expenses for the Office of the Mayor are primarily staff costs. External materials and services include professional services, out of town travel, and space rental in addition to operating expenses. Internal materials and services include space and technology costs as well as other OMF interagency agreements. Below is a summary of the total budget for the Mayor’s Office.

Office of the Mayor - All Funds

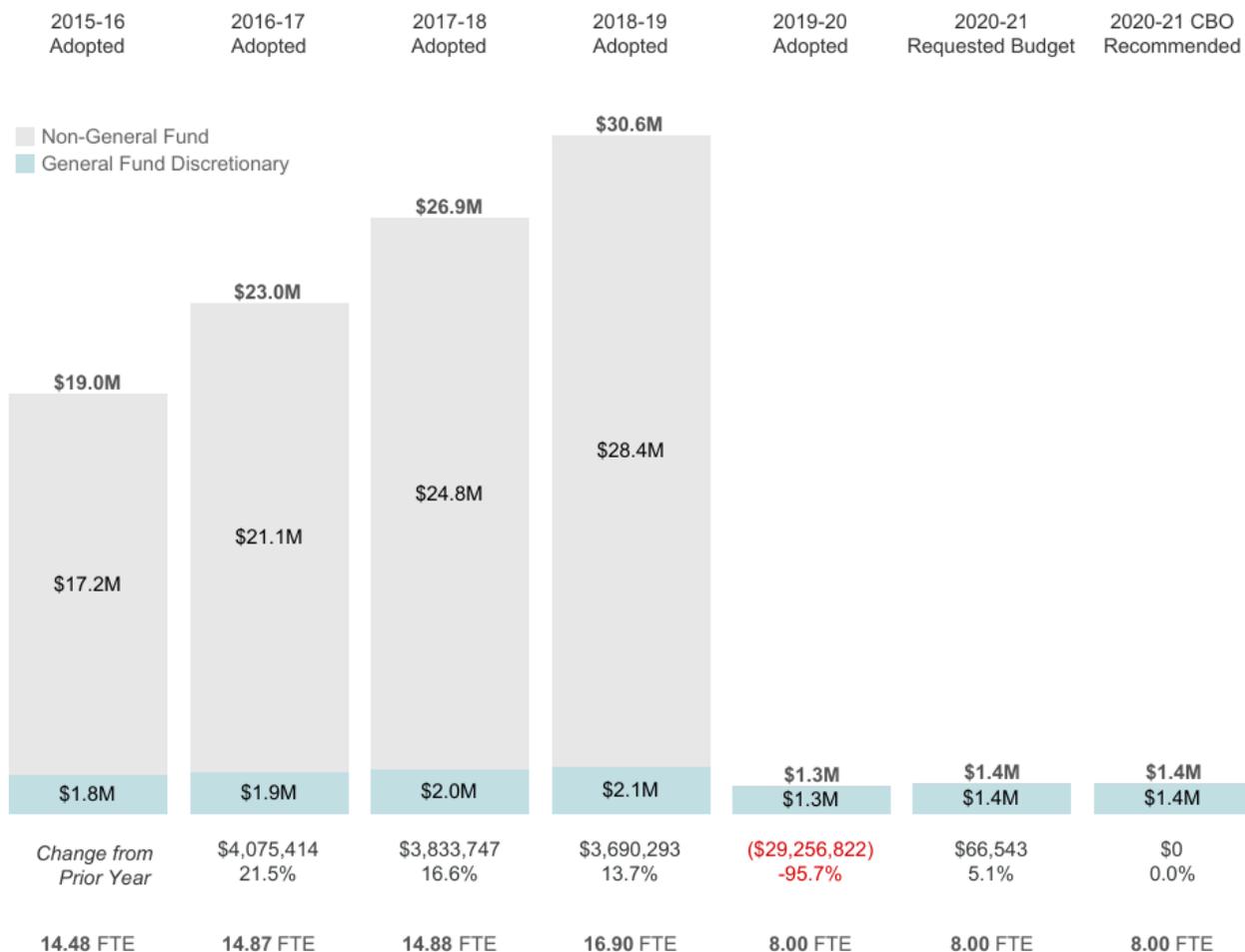
		2019-20 Adopted Budget	2020-21 Requested Base (A)	Bureau Decision Packages (B)	CBO Recommended Adjustments (C)	Total Recommended Budget (A+B+C)
Expense	Personnel	\$2,595,292	\$2,841,149	\$0	\$0	\$2,841,149
	External Materials and Services	\$213,914	\$215,000	\$0	\$0	\$215,000
	Internal Materials and Services	\$819,305	\$773,860	\$0	\$0	\$773,860
	Total	\$3,628,511	\$3,830,009	\$0	\$0	\$3,830,009
Revenue	General Fund Discretionary	\$1,635,831	\$1,746,198	\$0	\$0	\$1,746,198
	General Fund Overhead	\$1,992,680	\$2,083,811	\$0	\$0	\$2,083,811
	Total	\$3,628,511	\$3,830,009	\$0	\$0	\$3,830,009



**City
Budget
Office**

Commissioner of Public Affairs (Hardesty)

Adopted Budget Revenues | 5-Year Lookback



SUMMARY OF REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expenses for the Commissioner of Public Affairs are primarily staff costs. External materials and services include professional services, out of town travel, and space rental in addition to operating expenses. Internal materials and services include space and technology costs as well as other OMF interagency agreements. Through FY 2018-19, the Commissioner of Public Affairs’ budget included the Portland Children’s Levy and the Gateway Center for Domestic Violence Services; both programs have since been moved out of the Commissioner’s office, which explains the significant change in the Office’s budget from FY 2018-19 to FY 2019-20. Below is a summary of the total budget for the Office of the Commissioner of Public Affairs.

Commissioner of Public Affairs - All Funds

		2019-20 Adopted Budget	2020-21 Requested Base (A)	Bureau Decision Packages (B)	CBO Recommended Adjustments (C)	Total Recommended Budget (A+B+C)
Expense	Personnel	\$1,015,954	\$1,046,147	\$0	\$0	\$1,046,147
	External Materials and Services	\$8,724	\$30,000	\$0	\$0	\$30,000
	Internal Materials and Services	\$279,596	\$294,670	\$0	\$0	\$294,670
	Total	\$1,304,274	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817
Revenue	General Fund Discretionary	\$610,238	\$624,990	\$0	\$0	\$624,990
	General Fund Overhead	\$694,036	\$745,827	\$0	\$0	\$745,827
	Total	\$1,304,274	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817



**City
Budget
Office**

Commissioner of Public Safety (Eudaly)

Adopted Budget Revenues | 5-Year Lookback



SUMMARY OF REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expenses for the Commissioner of Public Safety are primarily staff costs. External materials and services include professional services, out of town travel, and space rental in addition to general operating expenses. Internal materials and services include space and technology costs as well as other OMF interagency agreements. Below is a summary of the total budget for the Office of the Commissioner of Public Safety.

Commissioner of Public Safety - All Funds

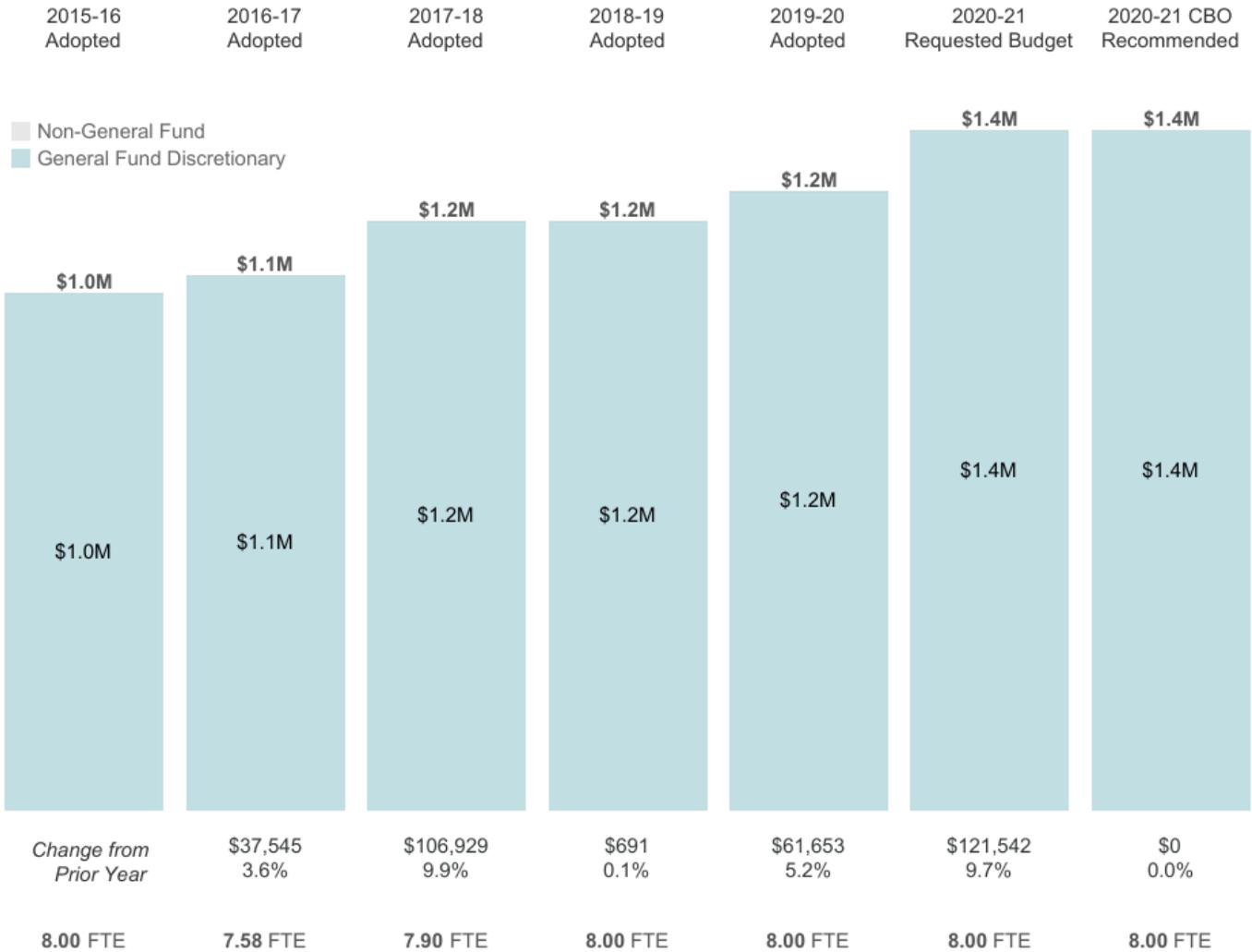
		2019-20 Adopted Budget	2020-21 Requested Base (A)	Bureau Decision Packages (B)	CBO Recommended Adjustments (C)	Total Recommended Budget (A+B+C)
Expense	Personnel	\$994,839	\$1,024,555	\$0	\$0	\$1,024,555
	External Materials and Services	\$25,309	\$52,334	\$0	\$0	\$52,334
	Internal Materials and Services	\$209,126	\$293,928	\$0	\$0	\$293,928
	Total	\$1,229,274	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817
Revenue	General Fund Discretionary	\$575,147	\$624,990	\$0	\$0	\$624,990
	General Fund Overhead	\$654,127	\$745,827	\$0	\$0	\$745,827
	Total	\$1,229,274	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817



**City
Budget
Office**

Commissioner of Public Utilities (Fritz)

Adopted Budget Revenues | 5-Year Lookback



SUMMARY OF REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expenses for the Commissioner of Public Utilities are primarily staff costs. External materials and services include professional services, out of town travel, and space rental in addition to general operating expenses. Internal materials and services include space and technology costs as well as other OMF interagency agreements. Commissioner Fritz plans to end her term as the Commissioner of Public Utilities in the coming year, so this office will undergo a transition midway through FY 2020-21. As discussed in the Special Appropriations review of the Council Transition decision package, CBO recommends covering costs associated with this transition through a program carryover during the Spring Budget Monitoring Process. CBO also recommends creating a clearer distinction between the office's pre- and post-transition budget and directing any underspending from the first half of the year to a reserve fund to cover costs of future Council transitions.

Below is a summary of the total budget for the Office of the Commissioner of Public Utilities.

Commissioner of Public Utilities - All Funds

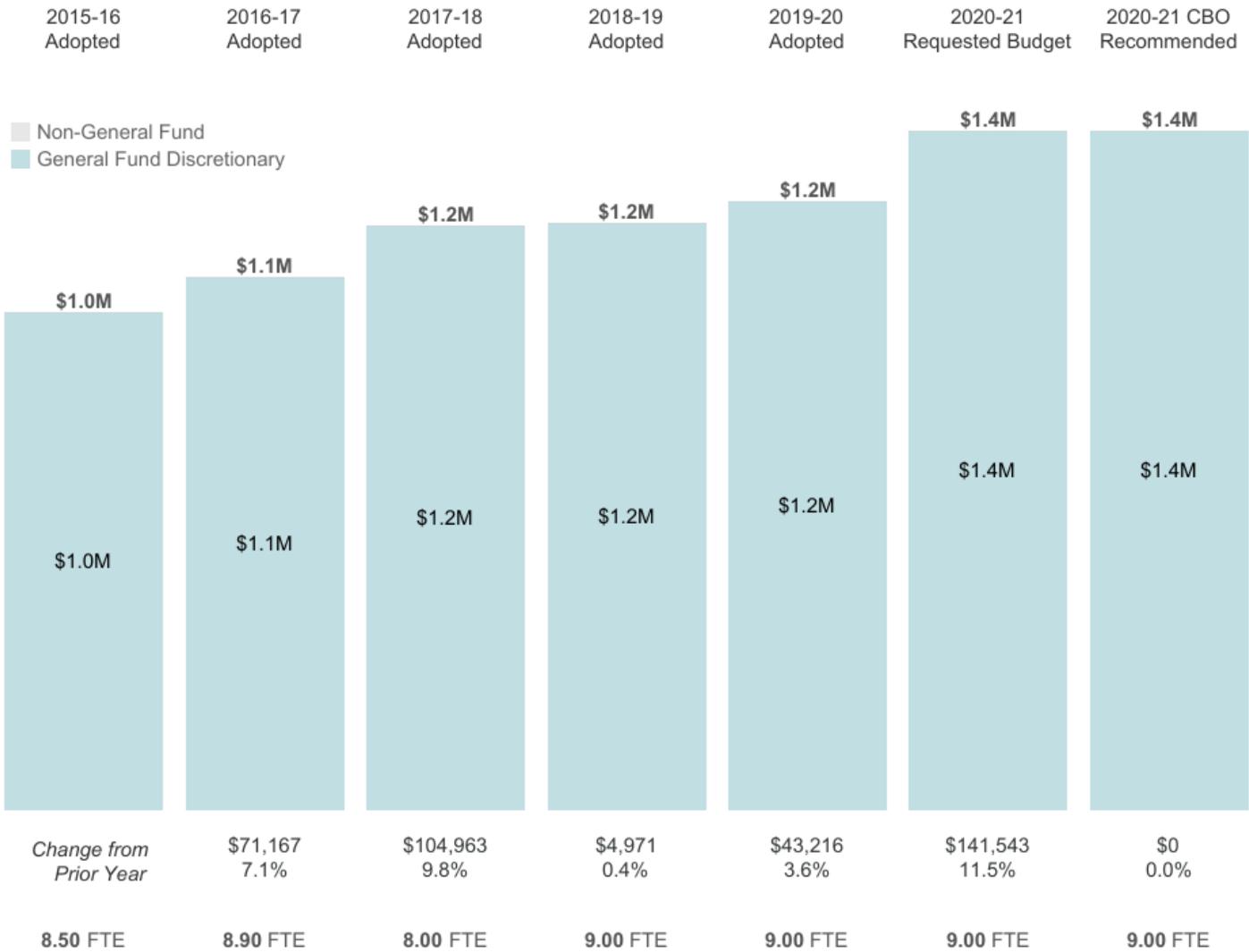
		2019-20 Adopted Budget	2020-21 Requested Base (A)	Bureau Decision Packages (B)	CBO Recommended Adjustments (C)	Total Recommended Budget (A+B+C)
Expense	Personnel	\$981,856	\$1,039,453	\$0	\$0	\$1,039,453
	External Materials and Services	\$69,045	\$43,730	\$0	\$0	\$43,730
	Internal Materials and Services	\$198,374	\$287,634	\$0	\$0	\$287,634
	Total	\$1,249,275	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817
Revenue	General Fund Discretionary	\$584,505	\$624,990	\$0	\$0	\$624,990
	General Fund Overhead	\$664,770	\$745,827	\$0	\$0	\$745,827
	Total	\$1,249,275	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817



**City
Budget
Office**

Commissioner of Public Works

Adopted Budget Revenues | 5-Year Lookback



SUMMARY OF REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Expenses for the Commissioner of Public Works are primarily staff costs. External materials and services include professional services, out of town travel, and space rental in addition to general operating expenses. Internal materials and services include space and technology costs as well as other OMF interagency agreements. Below is a summary of the total budget for the Office of the Commissioner of Public Works.

Commissioner of Public Works - All Funds

		2019-20 Adopted Budget	2020-21 Requested Base (A)	Bureau Decision Packages (B)	CBO Recommended Adjustments (C)	Total Recommended Budget (A+B+C)
Expense	Personnel	\$984,197	\$1,021,141	\$0	\$0	\$1,021,141
	External Materials and Services	\$49,327	\$74,268	\$0	\$0	\$74,268
	Internal Materials and Services	\$195,750	\$275,408	\$0	\$0	\$275,408
	Total	\$1,229,274	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817
Revenue	General Fund Discretionary	\$575,147	\$624,990	\$0	\$0	\$624,990
	General Fund Overhead	\$654,127	\$745,827	\$0	\$0	\$745,827
	Total	\$1,229,274	\$1,370,817	\$0	\$0	\$1,370,817