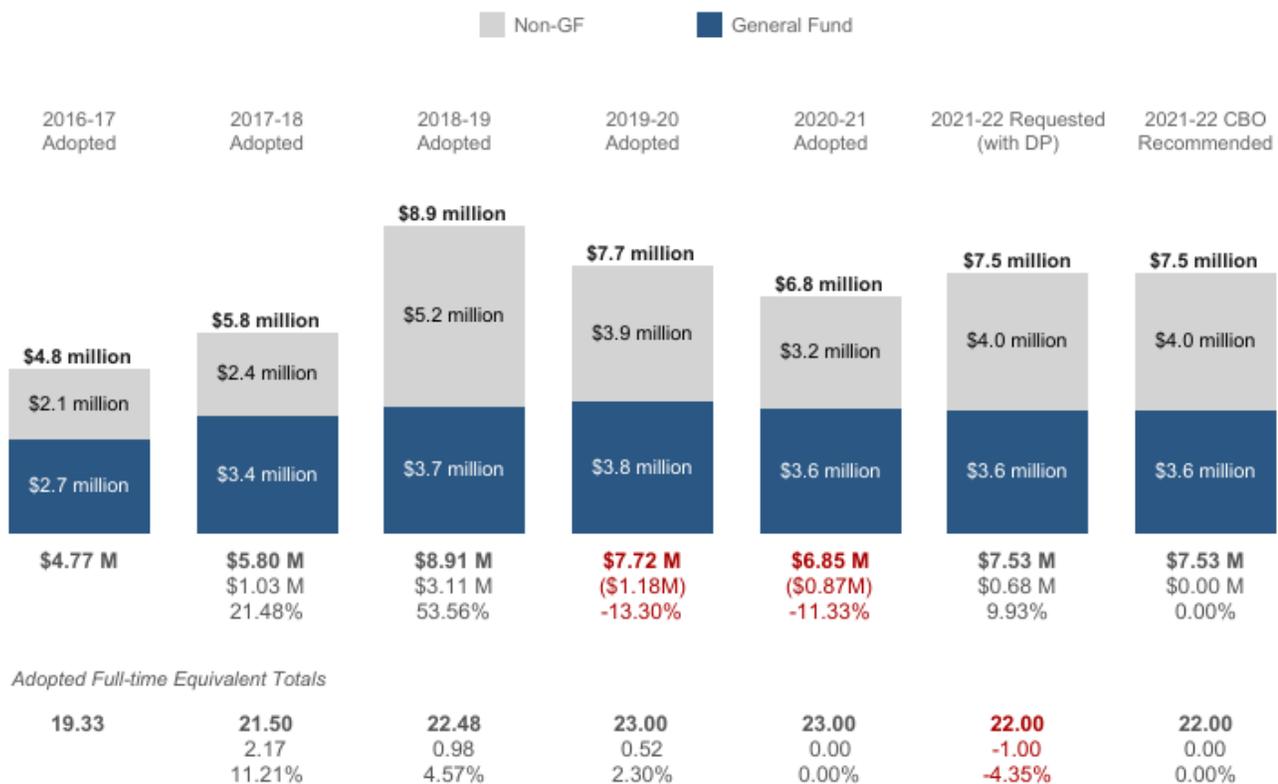




Emergency Management

Analysis by Noah Myhrum

Adopted Budget Revenues | 5-Year Lookback



INTRODUCTION

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Management’s (PBEM’s) FY 2021-22 Requested Budget totals \$7.7 million, including \$3.73 million in General Fund resources. Outside resources primarily consist of grants, which are passed through to other partner bureaus and outside agencies. At present there are no significant changes to the bureau’s base budget. The base budget does not

require a 5% reduction per Mayor's Guidance due to the bureau having fewer than 30 employees. The bureau proposes one realignment package, which CBO recommends:

- CBO recommends realignment of resources supporting 1.0 Full Time Employee (FTE) Supervisor I position, currently vacant and assigned to the Finance and Grants program from PBEM to the Office of Management and Finance, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. This position, when filled, will report to the Community Safety Transition manager.

BASE BUDGET & KEY ISSUES

Current Financial and Operational Challenges

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Management's (PBEM's) Requested Budget for FY 2021-22 seeks to resource and support current service levels and programs within the bureau. The bureau has stabilized in filling key leadership positions, though there remains a limited vulnerability in both the need for Planning & Mitigation staff and financial support staff. These vacancies place strain on the daily operations of a smaller bureau.

At present, there are 4.0 vacant positions across the bureau which equates to 17% of the available Full Time Employees (FTE) positions being vacant. This places considerable pressure on current staff across the bureau for service delivery. This is especially acute during the prolonged response and activation of the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) during the current public health crisis. Due to the prolonged activation of the ECC and personnel vacancies there are additional mandates and projects that need to be addressed such as including ADA requirements regarding the FEMA Emergency Response Plans, daily financial operations such as an Accountant III position that is responsible for payroll and accounts payable, and adequate and consistent support for the ECC, to name a few. All these mandates and projects are imperative, and needs are currently not being met without proper staffing levels. However, due to COVID-19 and activation of the ECC for the long-term emergency response, there remains substantial PBEM work that has been placed on the back burner until existing staff capacity returns, potentially in the coming fiscal year.

Bureau Performance Indicators & Impacts of COVID-19

Bureau performance indicators are anticipated to hold steady or slightly decline as a result of COVID-19. The public health crisis has had some impact to the required and/or needed training sessions related to emergency response, but it is important to note that some trainings or interactions have been able to take place in a virtual environment (such as Teams or Zoom). PBEM is currently working with the Emergency Management Steering Committee to develop recommendations and content for City-specific emergency preparedness training and a standard introduction to the Incident Command System. PBEM is proposing that every City employee complete this training. PBEM has also taken the initiative to create a catalog of video trainings for volunteers along with an accredited online first aid and CPR class for volunteers through Zoom.

Over 30,000 Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) volunteer hours have been logged in 2020. The NET program was also able to hold a citywide drill in 2020 outside and with social distancing measures. The bureau currently plans to host another NET drill on May 3, 2021. NET is currently supporting the pandemic response by staffing COVID-19 testing and vaccine clinics. PBEM is also providing BEECN trainings virtually and has ramped up the number of BEECN volunteers. Currently PBEM is convening a hybrid online/in-person Wilderness First Aid class for 30 trainees in East Portland.

In prior years the bureau has requested resources to address performance indicators associated with the Planning and Mitigation program. Specifically, there has been an outstanding need for additional and ongoing General Fund resources for a planner position to address the known capacity constraints with the Planning & Mitigation program. In 2013, PBEM significantly expanded its library of plans in an effort to meet Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP) standards. Even though PBEM expanded its library of plans it has not expanded its Planning staff to address the need to keep these plans up to date. A series of vacancies and COVID-19 complications have only exacerbated this issue. To date, 50% of the plans are outdated. PBEM has taken some initiative in addressing this void by working with Portland State University to develop a long-term IGA in support of planning and mitigation efforts at the City. PBEM plans to continue this effort with Portland State University to maintain its natural hazard mitigation plan and hazard-specific plans such as earthquakes and floods. This work will be supervised by PBEM's Planning staff who will also continue to maintain the City's business continuity plan along with the basic emergency operations plan. Finally, to help elevate some stress from the Planning & Mitigation staff, PBEM plans on moving the functional plans such as debris management and damage assessment to the Operations group. The costs to cover the partnerships with Portland State University is anticipated to be covered by PBEM's External Material & Services budget.

Personnel

In the FY 2020-21 budget review¹ CBO recommended "adjusting PBEM's performance measure targets to reflect FY 2020-21 goals based off current staffing levels, and issue communication to the public regarding plans for the next year." CBO recommends addressing the staffing levels, citywide training programs, and capacity to update the emergency management plans, and begin to plan how to address these needs as the response to COVID-19 starts to dwindle. These issues should be discussed with the Public Safety Work Group (PSWG) as soon as the Community Safety Transition Director is hired, to create a viable and comprehensive plan to address these voids. To support the goals of the PSWG and in recognition of the City's General Fund shortfall, the bureau has held its Finance Manager position vacant and has elected to submit a realignment package to provide the vacant Finance Manager to the Office of Management and Finance, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer. A new Community Safety Transitions team is under development, and this resource would join in this effort to have centralized support for community safety functions. Given that there are some voids in the bureau that support daily financial roles

¹ FY 2020-21 PBEM Budget Review: [754849 \(portlandoregon.gov\)](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/754849)

(accounts payable, payroll, and grant management), CBO recommends OMF fill this position, or start providing additional financial support to PBEM operations until this position is filled as there is risk to compliance and reporting for grants and other activities where there is not inhouse expertise at PBEM.

Part of the urgency in this recommendation is that it's been noted in prior CBO reviews² that PBEM has relied on Grant Revenue to cover ongoing bureau operating costs. Without this support, PBEM may be vulnerable position if Federal and State Grant revenue ever decreases or are not awarded and there is no financial back-up plan in place. In addition, there is added pressure associated with maintaining proper grant management and accounting, which PBEM does not have current inhouse expertise to manage.

Finally, PBEM should work with the Community Safety Transition Director when the position is filled to address which functions could be shared amongst the Safety Group. Some functions, such as budget, would be challenging to integrate if the existing directors continue to report directly to their Commissioner-in-Charge. However, this is likely an essential change to fully capture and reallocate any cost savings that result from consolidation strategies, changes to service models, or other innovations. PBEM has collaborated with partner public safety bureaus to identify efficiencies in the public safety system. In the past fiscal year, they identified an opportunity to share their PIO functions with BOEC, resulting in a voluntary reduction of 0.5 FTE.

² FY 2019-20 Budget Review: [714548 \(portlandoregon.gov\)](https://www.portlandoregon.gov/budget/714548)

SUMMARY OF REQUESTS & RECOMMENDATIONS (ALL FUNDS)

Portland Bureau of Emergency Management

		2020-21 Adopted Budget	2021-22 Requested Base (A)	Bureau Decision Packages (B)	CBO Recommended Adjustments (C)	Total Recommended Budget (A+B+C)
Revenue	Intergovernmental	\$3,154,215	\$3,888,149	\$0	\$0	\$3,888,149
	Interagency Revenue	\$89,300	\$62,314	\$0	\$0	\$62,314
	General Fund Overhead	\$1,967,139	\$2,092,749	(\$89,600)	\$0	\$2,003,149
	General Fund Discretionary	\$1,637,029	\$1,644,327	(\$70,400)	\$0	\$1,573,927
Revenue	Sum:	\$6,847,683	\$7,687,539	(\$160,000)	\$0	\$7,527,539
Expense	Personnel	\$3,261,319	\$3,896,556	(\$149,481)	\$0	\$3,747,075
	Internal Materials and Services	\$885,620	\$1,033,776	\$0	\$0	\$1,033,776
	External Materials and Services	\$2,700,744	\$2,757,207	(\$10,519)	\$0	\$2,746,688
Expense	Sum:	\$6,847,683	\$7,687,539	(\$160,000)	\$0	\$7,527,539