

City of Olympia Comparable Cities Analysis

City Staffing Changes 2019 v. 2025
Comparable Cities Staffing by Function, 2025

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Comparison Cities: Budget Questions

City Responsibilities

- How have Olympia's responsibilities changed or staffing levels grown between 2019 and 2025?

Staff Size and Function

- How does Olympia compare in terms of responsibilities and staffing levels, compared to similar cities?

General Fund Budget

- How does Olympia allocate general fund resources, over time and compared to peer cities?

Comparison Cities: Findings

City Responsibilities

- City gained 90 FTE between 2019 and 2025.

Staff Size and Function

- Olympia has some new or expanded initiatives that other cities do not, such as climate, housing and homelessness response, and alternative police & fire approaches.
- Olympia operates a **more robust courts/justice operation** than other cities.

General Fund Budget

- Of the 90 FTE gained since 2019, at least 50 are in the general fund (climate, DEI, alternative police and fire approaches).

Comparison Cities

Olympia (57,450) – I-5 Corridor; operates Police & Fire; four utilities; structural deficit; relatively high general fund spending per household

- Bellingham (97,270) – similar responsibilities, community values, projecting a deficit
- Marysville (74,390) – similar size
- Lakewood (64,620) – proximity and size
- Shoreline (61,910) – similar size
- Lacey (60,210) – proximity and size, projecting a deficit (parks)
- Puyallup (43,410) – proximity
- Tumwater (27,470) – proximity, similar responsibilities, projecting a deficit

2019 v. 2025

Changes in City Responsibilities & Staffing Levels

Staffing Growth, 2019 v. 2025

City of Olympia total staffing has grown by **90 FTE** between 2019 and 2025.

The largest areas of FTE change have been in

- Public Works (38 FTE)
- Police (18.5 FTE)
- Fire (13 FTE)
- Parks, Arts, and Recreation (10.4 FTE)
- CMO, Council, Communications (8 FTE)

	2019	2025	Var.
CMO, Council, Communications	15.0	23.1	8.1
Finance, Clerk, HR, Information Services, Legal-General Counsel	59.3	65.3	6.0
Courts, Probation, Prosecution & Public Defense, Victim's Assistance, Day Reporting	20.8	24.1	3.4
Fire	105.0	120.0	15.0
Police	110.5	129.0	18.5
Parks, Arts, and Recreation	55.5	65.9	10.4
Climate	-	4.0	4.0
Community & Economic Development	62.6	55.2	(7.4)
Public Works	160.3	197.9	37.7
Equipment Rental Fund	5.0	-	(5.0)
Workers Compensation Fund	1.0	-	(1.0)
Total	594.8	684.4	89.6

Staffing Growth by Fund, 2019 v. 2025

Fund	2019	2025	Variance
General Fund	489.0	485.5	(3.5)
Development Fee Revenue Fund		39.3	39.3
Parking Fund	8.5	10.2	1.7
HOME or HUD Fund	.	7.9	7.9
Cultural Access Program Fund	.	2.3	2.3
Waste Resources Operating Fund	28.0	38.3	10.3
Drinking Water Utility Operating Fund	30.4	32.3	1.9
Stormwater and Surface Water Operating Fund	16.8	23.8	7.0
Wastewater Utility Operating Fund	13.7	17.8	4.2
Storm/Surface Water CIP	2.3	.	(2.3)
Facilities Fund	.	11.0	11.0
Fire Fleet	.	8.0	8.0
Equipment Rental Fund	5.0	7.0	2.0
Workers Compensation Fund	1.0	1.0	.
Total	594.8	684.4	89.1

General Fund: ~50 FTE of the 90 total growth between 2019 and 2024. (Net of moves to special revenue and internal service funds.)

Source: analysis of City of Olympia data

Staffing Growth: City Manager's Office

City Manager's Office grew by 4.0 FTE between 2019 and 2025.

Includes 1.0 FTE for Council (Assistant to City Council).

One Assistant City Manager position is term-limited.

City Manager's Office	2019	2025
City Manager	1.0	1.0
Assistant City Manager	1.0	2.0
Assistant to the City Manager	1.0	1.0
Assistant to City Council	-	1.0
Executive Services Assistant	-	1.0
Program Assistant	-	1.0
Total City Manager's Office	3.0	7.0

Staffing Growth: Climate

The City added a Climate Program in 2021.

Resilience Coordinator is a project position.

Climate	2019	2025
Building Decarbonization Program Manager	-	1.0
Climate Program Specialist	-	1.0
Climate Resilience Coordinator	-	1.0
Director of Climate Programs	-	1.0
Total Climate Office	-	4.0

Staffing Growth: Fire

Fire Department grew by 13 FTE, net of some restructuring.

- 2 FTE added for CARES program.
- 16 FTE added for BLS.
- Fleet & Maintenance are not general fund.

Fire	2019	2025
Community Assistance, Referrals, and Education Services (CARES)	-	2.0
Fire & EMS Training	1.5	2.5
Fire Basic Life Support (BLS)	-	16.0
Fire Emergency Management	1.0	-
Fleet Vehicles & Equipment Maintenance	5.0	8.0
Operations	88.0	82.0
Preventions (Life Safety)	5.0	5.5
Administration	4.5	4.0
Total	105.0	120.0

Staffing Growth: Police

OPD went through several changes and restructures during this time, resulting in a net gain of 18.5 FTE.

- Closed the jail
- Expanded Crisis Response Unit (was contracted in 2019)
- Proposition 1 positions

Of the 129 shown here, 4 FTE are frozen for 2025.

Police	2019	2025
Administration	13.00	9.00
Records	-	6.00
Technology	1.00	2.00
Property and Evidence Room	1.00	2.00
Corrections	16.00	-
Field Operations	77.50	69.00
Operations Support	-	6.00
Investigative Services	1.00	13.00
Crime Prevention	1.00	1.00
Community Policing	-	4.00
Crisis Response (Outreach)	-	14.00
Familiar Faces	-	3.00
	110.50	129.00

Comparison Cities

Staffing by Function

Central Services

Function	Bellingham	Marysville	Lakewood	Olympia	Lacey	Puyallup	Tumwater
<i>Population</i>	97,270	74,390	64,620	57,450	60,210	43,410	27,470
City Manager's Office (CMO)	14.50	10.0	2.0	7.0	7.0	2.0	4.0
Communications / Public Affairs	Within various departments	N/A	2.0	7.0	4.0	1.0	3.0
City Clerk Services	In Finance	2.0	6.0	4.0	3.0	4.0	2.0
Finance	34.0	18.0	8.0	25.3	12.0	14.0	12.0
Human Resources	27.5	6.0	4.0	8.0	8.0	3.0	5.0
Information Technology	34.60	13.0	4.0	20.0	10.0	8.0	5.0
Legal-General Counsel	16.20	10.0	3.0	8.0	N/A	4.9	3.0

Notes on the data: Collected by survey in December 2024 – January 2025. Shoreline did not provide a response. “N/A” means the city stated that the service was not provided. “-” means the City responded “zero.” “NR” means no response was provided. Data do not include City Council members. Cities may house certain FTE in different offices (e.g., utility billing may be in finance; parks maintenance may be in public works). Some cities listed additional categories of FTE for functions that are within other departments in Olympia and other cities (e.g. GIS, Risk Management). Not all cities provided total FTE counts. For these reasons, numbers shown on these slides do not add up to the total FTE count for cities.

Courts, Probation, Prosecution, Defense, Victim's Assistance

<i>Population</i>	97,270	74,390	64,620	57,450	60,210	43,410	27,470
Function	Bellingham	Marysville	Lakewood	Olympia	Lacey	Puyallup	Tumwater
Municipal Court	16	13	7.8	11.6	N/A	11.0	Contracted
Community Court	Part of Muni. Court	NR	Part of Muni. Court	1.0	N/A	Part of Muni. Court	NR
Day Reporting	N/A	NR	NR	1.0	N/A	N/A	NR
Probation	Part of Legal	NR	Part of Muni. Court		N/A	1.9	NR
Prosecution Division	Part of Legal	NR	1.0	5.0	N/A	3.2	NR
Public Defense	Contracted	NR	Contracted	2.0	N/A	Contracted	NR
Victim's Assistance	Part of Legal	NR	0.50	1.0	N/A	1.0	NR

Other Core Services

Function	Bellingham	Marysville	Lakewood	Olympia	Lacey	Puyallup	Tumwater
Population	97,270	74,390	64,620	57,450	60,210	43,410	27,470
Fire	223.4	N/A	N/A	120.0	N/A	N/A	51.0
Police	205.6	132.0	114.0	129.0	91.00	100.0	41.0
Parks & Recreation	123.9	10.0	23.0	65.9	17.50	18.5	22.5
Community Planning and Development	56.8	18.0	24.5	55.2	22.00	35.0	-
Economic Development	Part of Community Planning	NR	1.5	4.25 (part of CPED)	Part of Community Planning	Part of CMO / Community Planning	1.00
Public Works (incl. Fleet, Facilities, Utility Billing)	313.0	157.0	21.2	188.3	166.0	90.0	78.0

Other Functions or Offices - Unique

Cities added to the survey to provide FTE counts for various functions that were not common to all.

- Cultural Access: Olympia, 2.25 FTE (in Economic Development)
- Library: Bellingham (57.9 FTE) and Puyallup (15.6 FTE)
- Museum: Bellingham (4.4 FTE)
- Human Services: Lacey (2.0 FTE)

New or Expanded Initiatives (1 of 2)

	Olympia	Bellingham	Lacey	Lakewood	Marysville	Puyallup	Tumwater
Climate (e.g., building decarbonization, resilience, climate programs, etc)	4 (CMO)	2 (Mayor's Office)	1 (DCED)	Handled by existing Planning and Public Works staff)	No	No dedicated staff.	1 (Utilities). ½ non-general fund.
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging	3 (1 in PARD, 2 in HR)	1 (Mayor's Office)	1 (CMO)	Assigned to CMO Communications Manager, handled by existing staff, and contracted out.	No	Handled by Human Resources staff	Assigned to Communications Manager.
Housing and Homeless Response	9 (CP&D) – non general fund	Existing staff in CPD and Mayor's Office. Partially non-general fund.	4 (Department of Human Services, DCED, CMO).	Handled by existing Planning and Public Works staff.	No	0.5 FTE in Emergency Management plus existing EM staff.	No FTEs. Planning Manager handles this as small part of role.
Clean Team	7.25 (Public Works) – non general fund	Contracted out; Street Fund	N/A	Handled by Parks Operations and Maintenance.	No	No dedicated staff; handled by existing PW and Parks staff	Handled by existing staff.

New or Expanded Initiatives (2 of 2)

	Olympia	Bellingham	Lacey	Lakewood	Marysville	Puyallup	Tumwater
Community Assistance Referral and Education Services (CARES)	2 (Fire)	contracted to County	contracted out	Not provided	No	No dedicated staff	No dedicated FTE; interlocal with Olympia. General Fund.
Crisis Response (Outreach)	14 (OPD)	contracted to County	contracted out	Not provided	No	No dedicated staff. Limited contracted resources with Multicare.	No
Familiar Faces	3 (OPD)	NR	contracted out	NR	No	No dedicated staff	No
Basic Life Support Transport Services	16 (Fire)	contracted out; funded out of GF and special funds	N/A (Lacey FD 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A	ALS only; BLS is private. General Fund mostly.