City and County of Denver

2027 Proposed Budget

Mayor Mike Johnston
Sept. 10, 2026

Disciplined budgeting + strategic investments = economic momentum

- Disciplined budgeting without raising taxes prepared us for 2027
- Strategic investments are driving economic momentum
- Sales tax revenue is recovering
- Protected core city services (e.g., public safety, rec center hours, street maintenance)
- No layoffs, no furloughs, 2% merit
- Strengthened our reserves for the second year in a row

Key 2027 Investments

Parks & Recreation

- Opening the new all-electric Westwood Recreation Center

- Reopening the new Civic Center Park and Skyline Park

Future Westwood Recreation Center

Future Civic Center Park

Future Skyline Park

Key 2027 Investments

Behavioral Health

- One integrated service response with 911 and 311

Public Safety

- Recruit classes for Denver Fire and Denver Sheriff, with Denver Police holding steady at 96% staffing

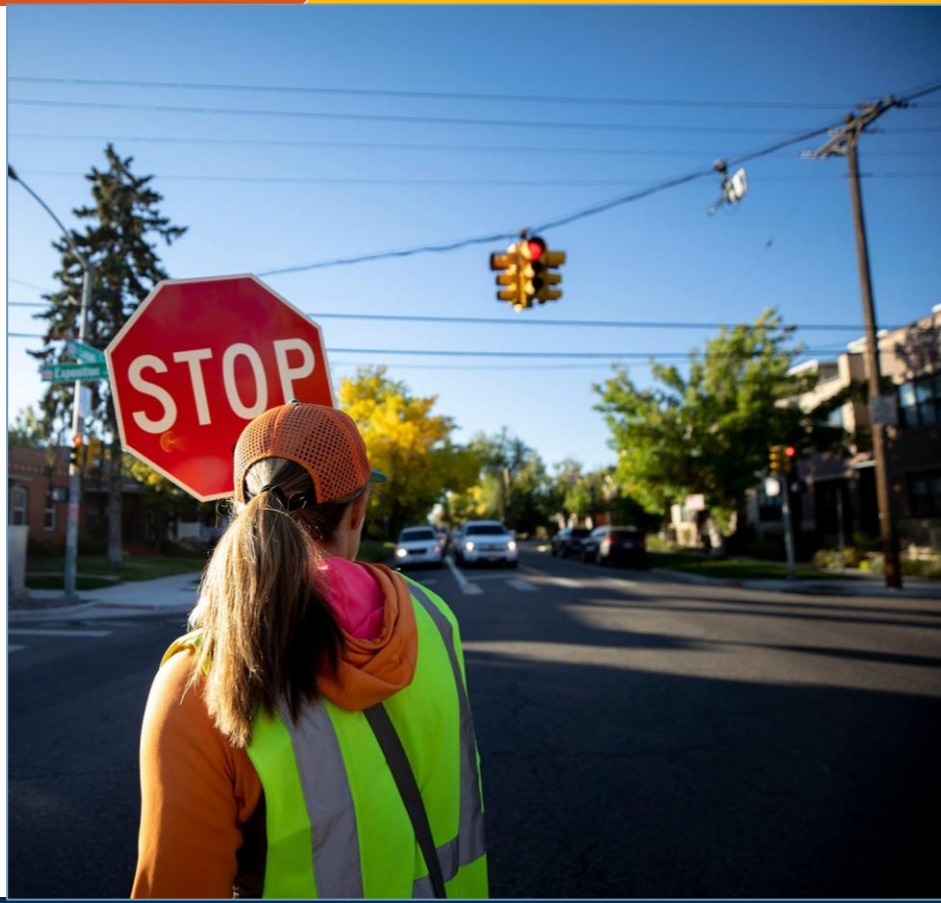
- Supporting new Place Network Investigation (PNI) sites to combat crime

Key 2027 Investments

Infrastructure

- Doubling last year's proposed budget for Safe Routes to School

- Repairing 7 of our highest priority bridges, including along 38th and 31st, Sanderson Gulch, MLK Blvd., and Wadsworth



Key 2027 Investments

Housing & Shelter

- Opening the Columbine Family Shelter to serve families experiencing homelessness

City Employees

- Supporting employees with a 2% merit increase in 2027

Restoring Reserves to 12%

2025 projected reserves at 10.3%, now projecting 12% at end of 2027. Reserves ensure the city can weather severe economic challenges.

General Fund Reserves	$201.8 million or 12% of expenditures

Denver's Strategy:
Managed Costs and Increased Revenue

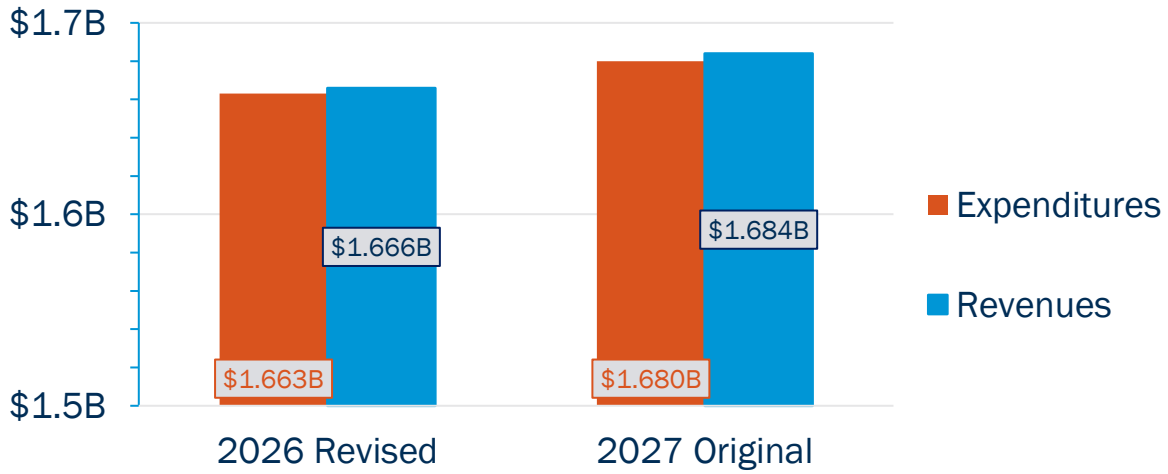
What We Said in 2025: Manage Costs and Increase Revenue

- Restructure city government to make costs meet revenues
  - Immediate steps for 2025
  - Structural change for 2026
- Increase revenue through catalytic investments

Slide originally presented 5/22/2025

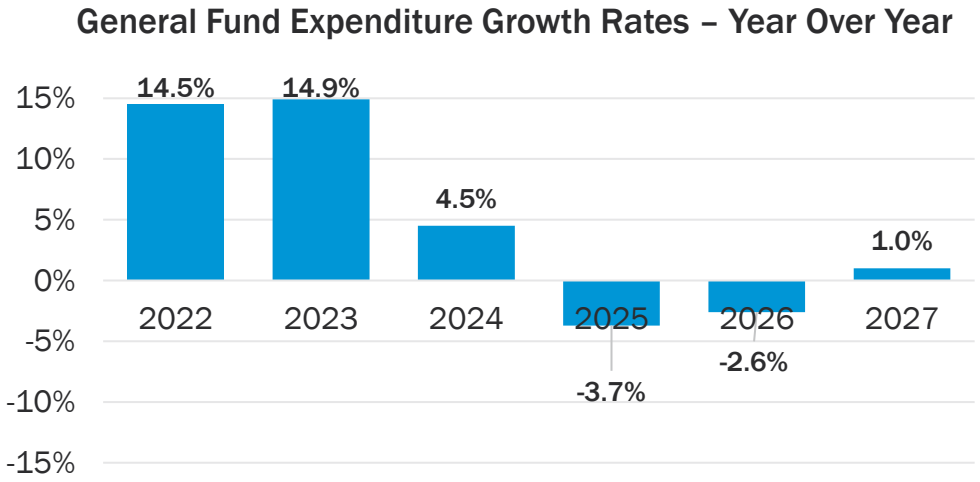
What We've Done:
Managed Costs and Increased Revenues
2027 General Fund Budget: $1.68 Billion

Before these two years, expenses outpaced revenue in six of the last eight years (2018 – 2025).



Managing Costs

Continuing our disciplined, multi-year strategy, 2027 General Fund expenditures are proposed at **$1.68 billion**, up only $16.7 million or 1% from 2026, on revenue growth of 1.1%.



Driving Revenue Growth

Resolving homelessness. Unsheltered homelessness down 64% since 2023; largest decline of any American city

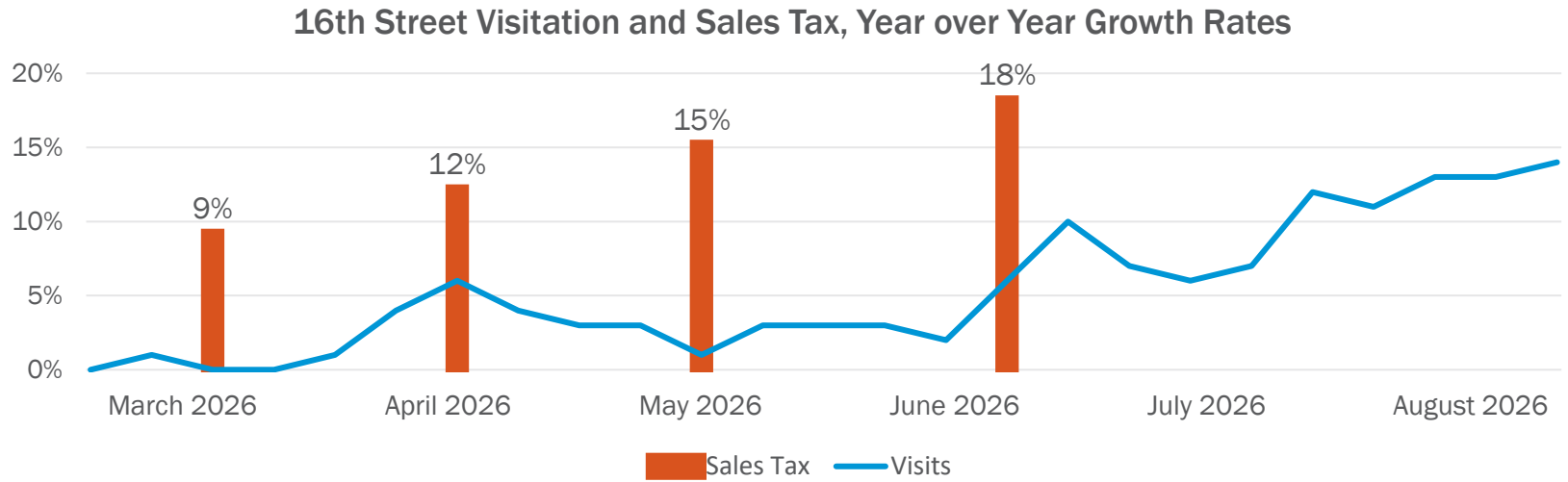
Reducing crime. Since 2022: Auto theft down 72%, homicides down 37%, property crime down 25%

Revitalizing Downtown. Opened 16th Street, converting empty office space, and attracting jobs

Economic Momentum

Downtown Recovery Gains

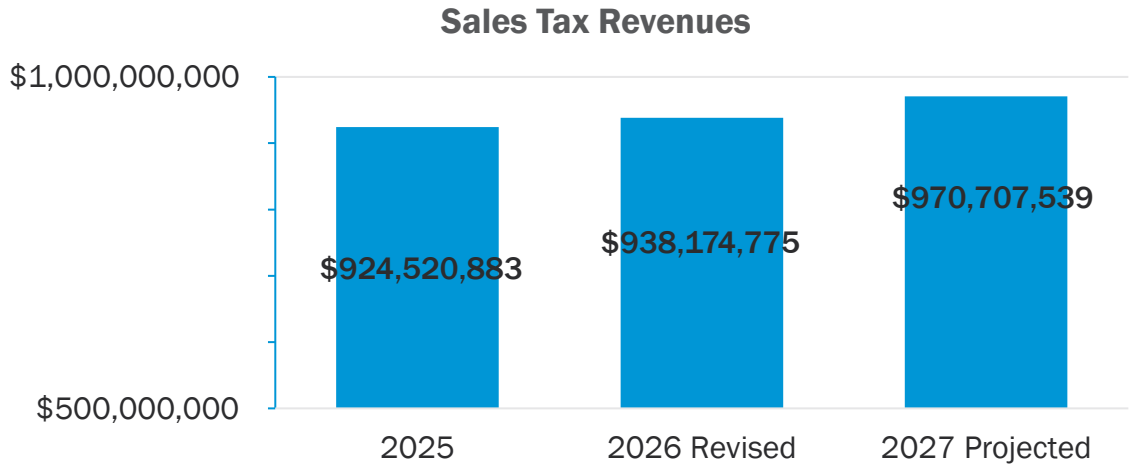
Visitations continue to increase and revenue is outperforming.



Stronger Sales Tax Revenue

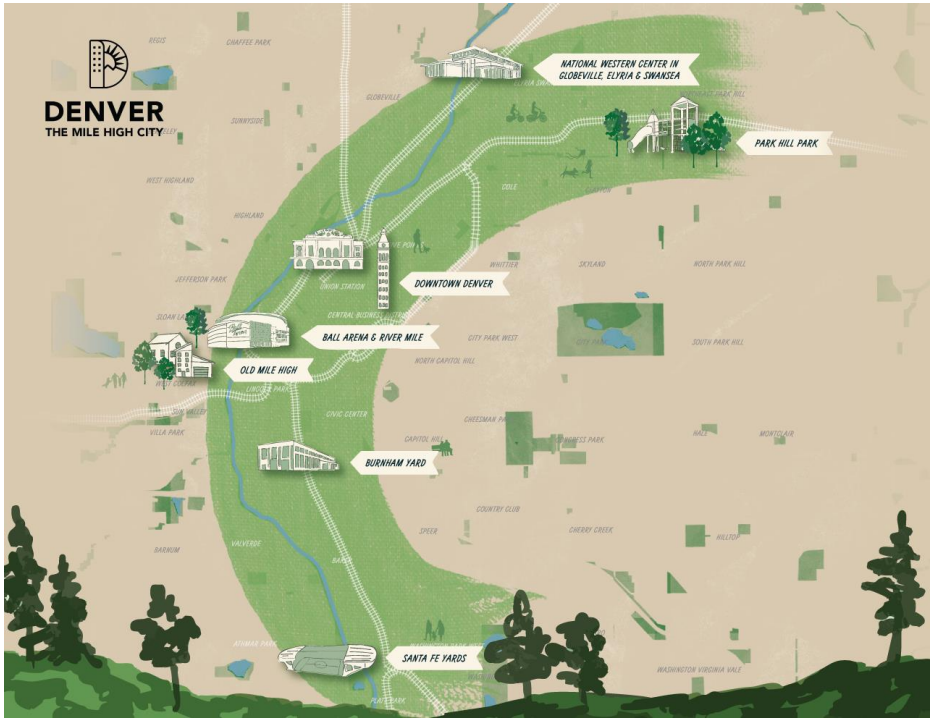
General Fund revenue is projected to increase 1.1% in 2027 to $1.68 billion, driven by growth in sales tax revenue.

Sales tax makes up 58% of the city's revenue and is on track to grow **by 5% from 2025 – 2027**.



What's Next: Continued Investment to Drive Revenue Growth

- **Vibrant Denver Bond**
- **Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** project implementation
- **Sloan's Lake** – TIF revenue, no general fund impact
- **Mile High Line**



Questions