

Strengthening Our Connections:

Addressing Isolation and Loneliness



Workshop Recap and Next Steps

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Workshop Overview

Date: Tuesday, September 24 at the Presidents Hall

Participation: 86 participants from 36 organizations

Goal: Organizations will walk away with tangible ideas for how they can, independently and in collaboration with others, create systems that foster connection and reduce loneliness in our community.

Keynote Speaker & Facilitator: Risa Wilkerson, Executive Director, Healthy Places by Design



Social Connection Matters

Social isolation and loneliness impacts:



Physical
Health



Mental &
Behavioral Health



Cognitive
Health



Economic
Health

Systems Level Issue

Social isolation is rooted in community design, social norms, and systemic injustices.

The following system designs that reliability, predictively, and intentionally lead to isolation and oppression:



Culture



Education



Healthcare



Housing



Internet



Public Spaces



Transportation



Justice

Systems Solutions

1. Design, Maintain, and Activate Inclusive **Public Spaces**
2. Prioritize Connection in **Transportation** Systems
3. Construct **Housing** Environments that Build Community
4. Invest in **Inclusive Practices** and **Community-led Solutions**
5. Make Social Connectedness a **Community Norm**

[Socially Connected Communities: Solutions for Social Isolation Report](#)

Local Examples

Shared at workshop:

1. Kitsap Strong
2. Kitsap Division of Aging and Long-Term Care
3. Kitsap Regional Libraries

Participants' 15% Solutions

45 ideas shared including:

- Community **events** or **support groups** (like “Bring it Together” pilot program, Kitsap Block Party Day, “Sit with a Stranger” pop-ups)
- City or county community **outreach coordinators**
- **Personal** connections
- **Community education** events or articles in newsletters
- **Outreach** and/or **home visits** to communities who experience isolation
- **Mentorship** programs
- Promote **volunteerism** as a social connection activity, promote other volunteer opportunities
- Create **systems of care** for students, BIPOC, and other communities
- Workplace connection activities
- And more!

Next Steps

Planning Committee:

- Complete and distribute report
- Reconvene to discuss future collaboration

KPHD:

- Review how to forward the work through Kitsap Community Health Priorities process (especially as part of Mental Health and Substance Use priority)
- Review workshop content and see how KPHD can incorporate in existing programs

Suggested Resources



Action Guide for Local Government and Community Leaders



We need to address social isolation not as a personal choice or an individual problem, but as a challenge that is rooted in community design, social norms, and systemic injustices.

As covered in [Socially Connected Communities: Solutions to Social Isolation](#), in a healthy community, all residents experience optimal physical, mental, and social well-being. Leaders who strive to create resilient, equitable, and healthy communities often focus on physical and mental health without equal attention on improving social well-being. Social well-being refers to the strength of a

Complex problems require collaborative efforts that engage social networks and build trust in each other and in our government. Fortunately, social well-being can be integrated into community-level strategies that address root causes of poor health and social isolation, such as those identified in *Socially Connected Communities: Solutions to Social Isolation*. **Local government leaders and others who influence community-level policies, systems, and environments are well positioned to help.** This includes mayors, city and county managers, councils of government, and leaders in transportation, housing, parks and recreation, and public health. Leaders of other sectors, nonprofits, and community-based organizations can also be allies.

Additional Resources



[A Public Health Approach to Social Connection in Washington State](#) (State Department of Health)



[Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community](#)

Acknowledgements

Planning Committee:

- Dana Bierman, *Kitsap Public Health District*
- Karen Boysen-Knapp, *Kitsap Public Health District*
- Stephanie Christensen, *Virginia Mason Franciscan Health*
- Jessica Guidry, *Kitsap Public Health District*
- James Hughes, MD, *Kitsap Mental Health Services*
- Mark Hughes, *Kitsap Mental Health Services*
- Jolene Kron, *Kitsap County / Salish Behavioral Health Administrative Services Organization*
- Lynn Pittsinger, *Kitsap Public Health District*
- Doug Washburn, *Kitsap County Human Services*
- Erica Whares, *Kitsap Public Health District*
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- Kitsap Mental Health Services

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Thank you!

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2025 DRAFT Budget



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Administrator

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About Kitsap Public Health

OUR VISION

A safe and healthy Kitsap
County for all.

OUR MISSION

We prevent disease and
protect and promote the
health of all people in
Kitsap County.



Public Health is Legally Mandated Work

- RCWs 70.05 & 70.46
- Kitsap County Code Chapter 9.52
- And a host of other laws and codes that emanate from the above

Initiative 1

We stop the transmission of communicable diseases through prevention, early identification, and prompt and appropriate intervention.

Initiative 2

We support well-being and resilience for people at every stage of life by focusing on prevention, harm reduction, promotion of factors that positively impact health, and reduction of the factors that negatively impact health.

Initiative 3

We protect our community by promoting healthy environments and preventing unsafe environmental exposures.

Initiative 4

We act as a trusted communicator, convener, strategist, and advocate to promote an integrated response to emergent, emergency, and ongoing public health issues.

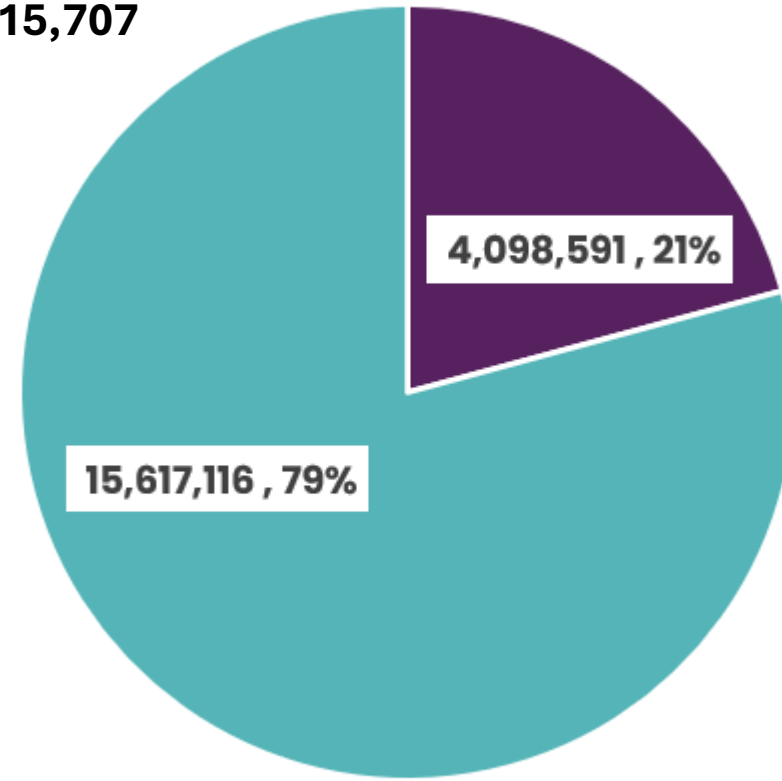
Initiative 5

We use sound management principles to maintain a sustainable, effective, and inclusive agency that supports a diverse and engaged workforce.

2025

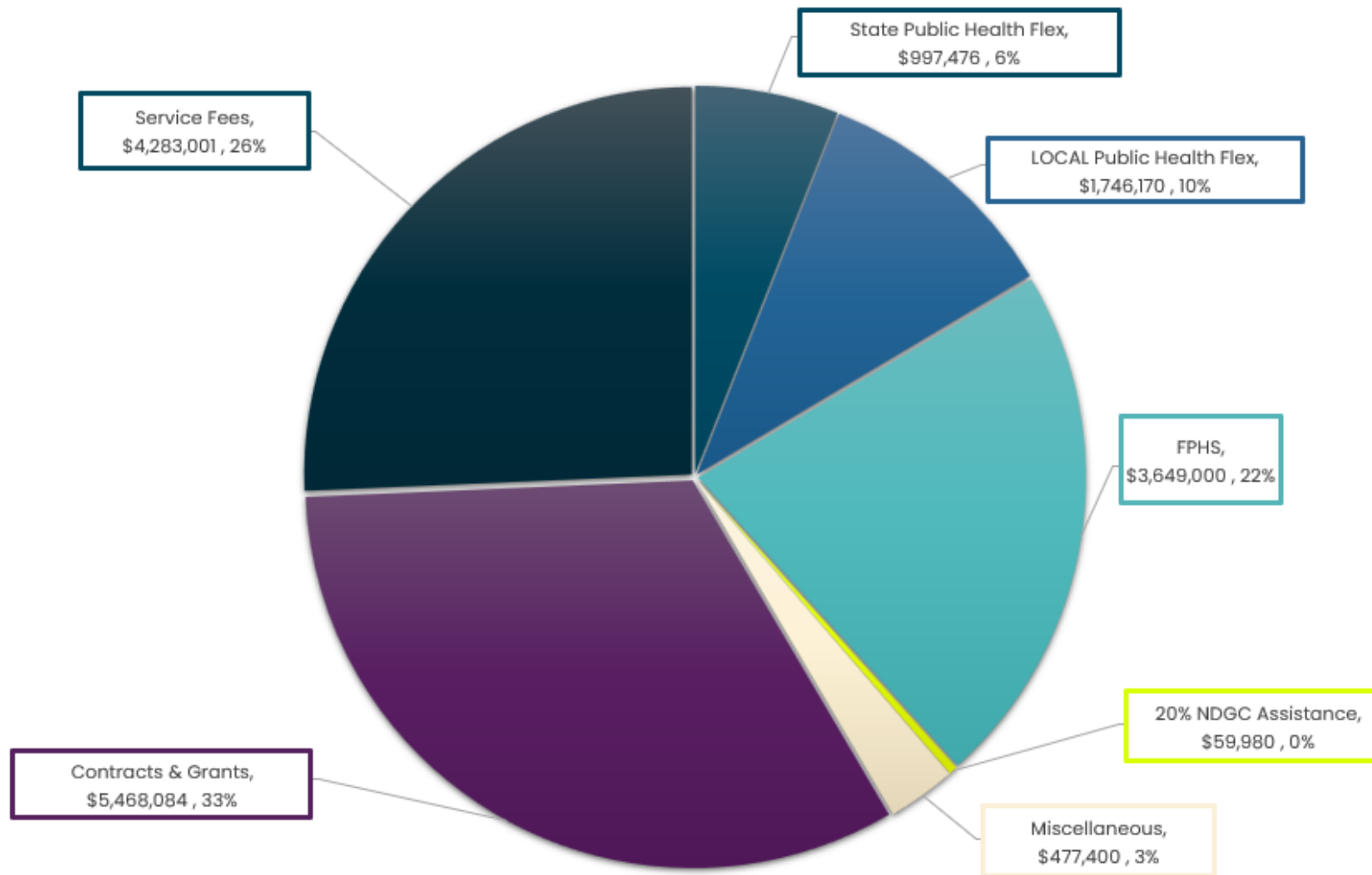
Expenditure Summary

Total \$19,715,707



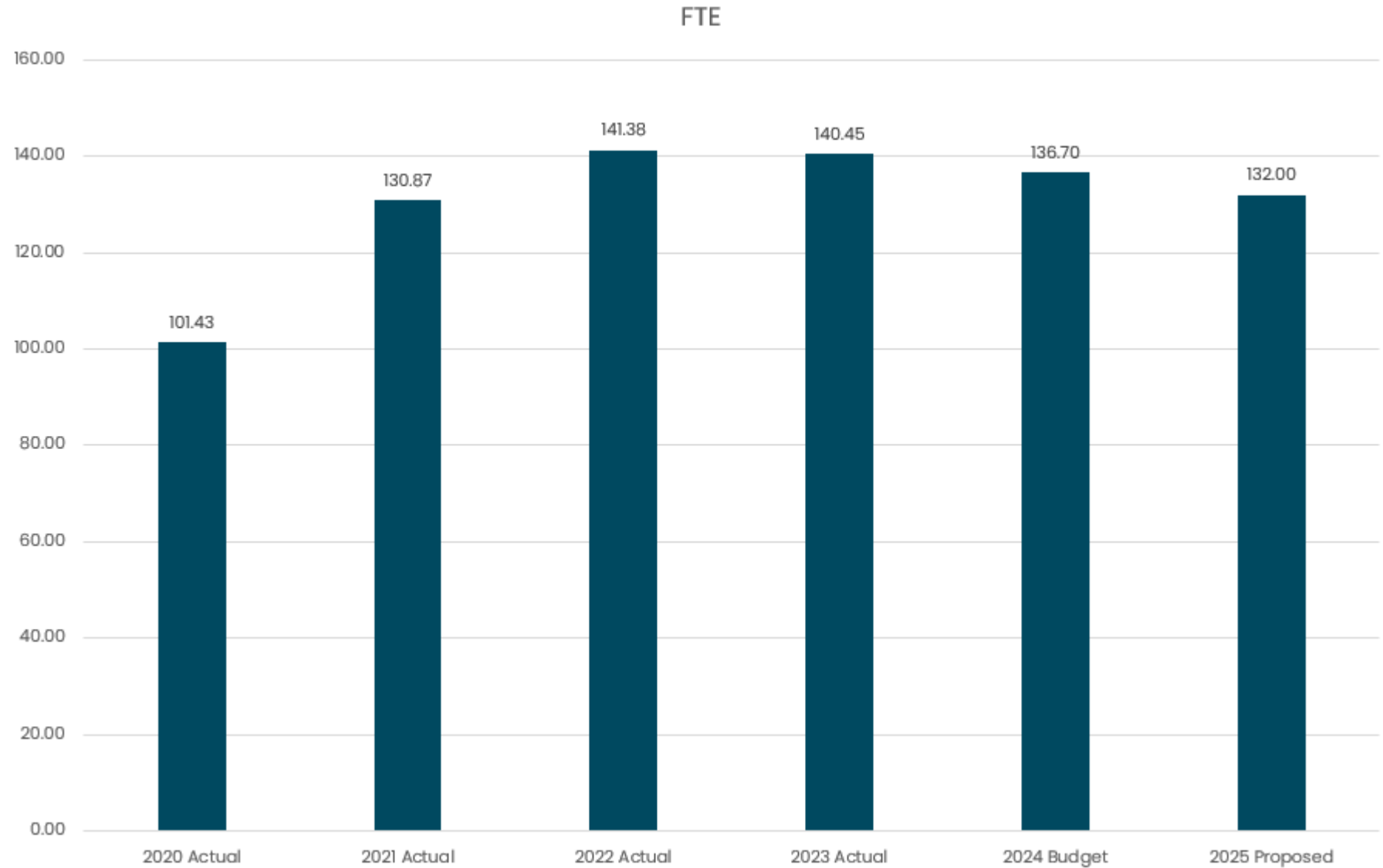
■ Non-Personnel ■ Personnel

Major Revenue Sources 2025

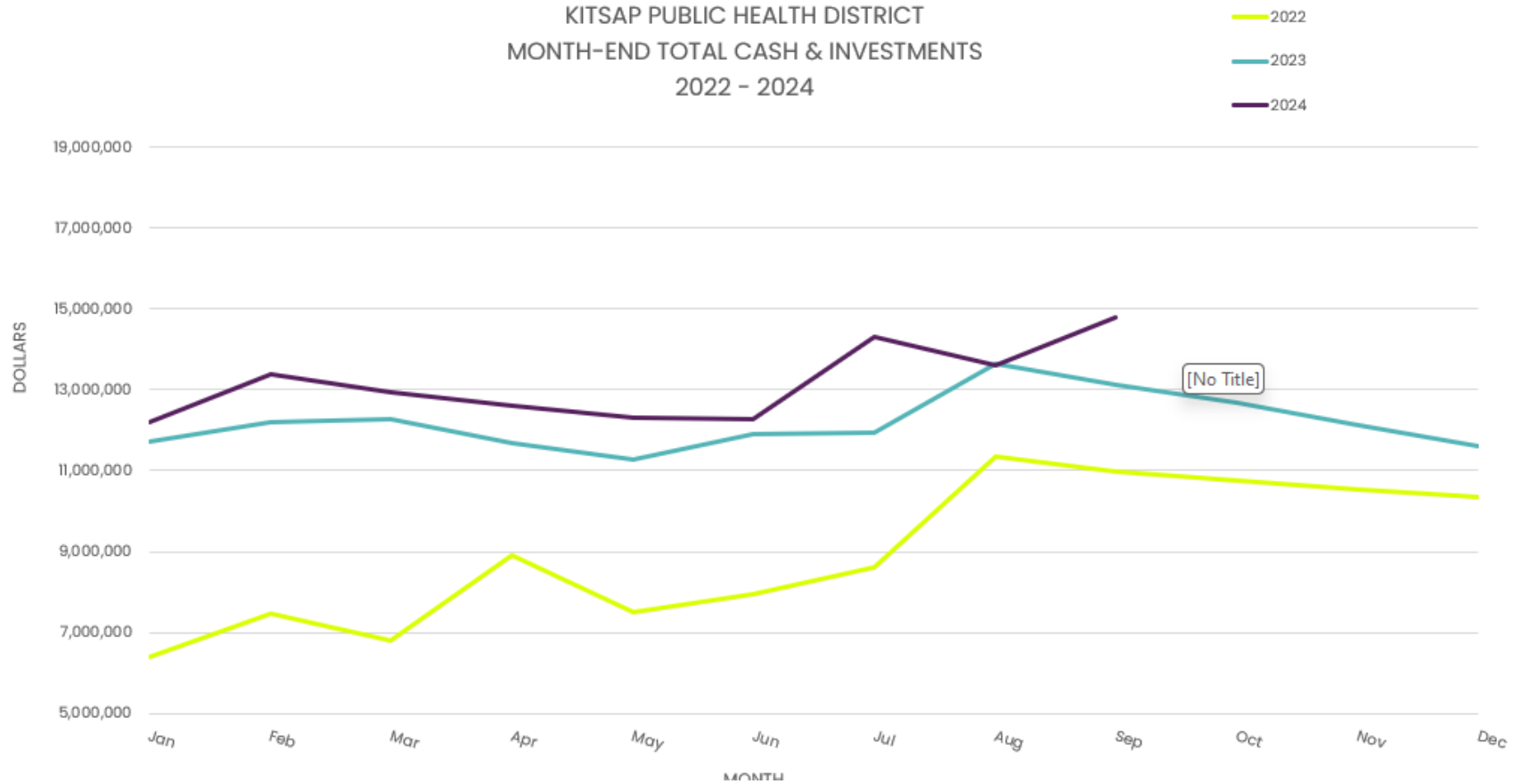


2020-Draft 2025

Staffing Full-Time
Equivalents (FTE)



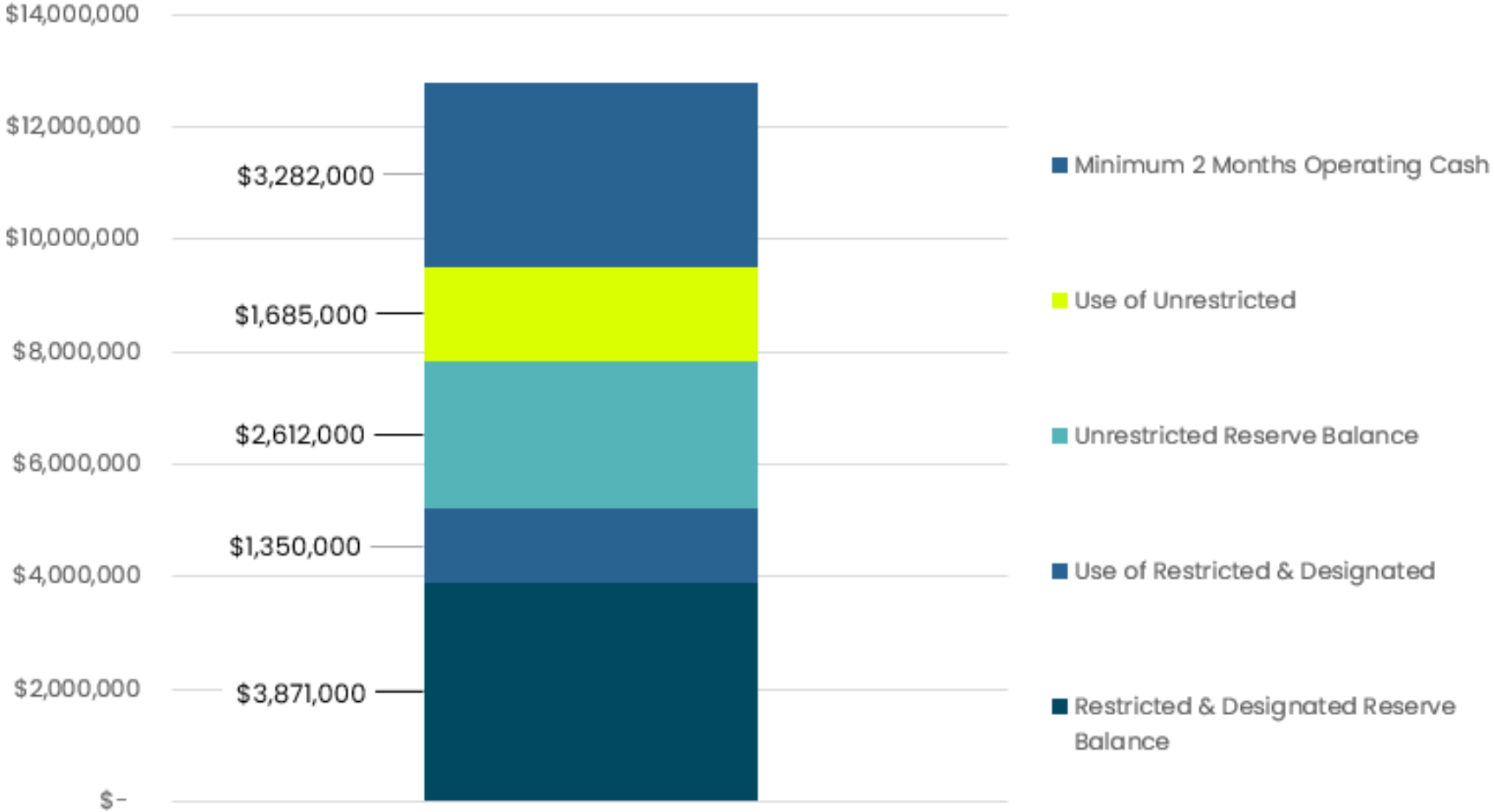
2024 Total Cash & Investments



Fund Definitions

- **Operating Funds:** Funds that can be used by the Health District for any activity in which it can legally engage. These funds are not restricted and are used for current operations.
- **Designated Funds:** Funds that are designated for a specific use by Health District Administration or the Board of Health but are not otherwise restricted by State or Federal law or contractual obligations.
- **Restricted Funds:** Funds that are limited in their use due to provisions established by State or Federal law, or contractual obligations.

Draft 2025 Reserves



Draft 2025 Budget Notes

- Status quo budget requests of Board Member Jurisdictions
- Proposed use of \$3.05 M of reserves to balance budget
- Proposed EH Fee increases for the Food program and one fee reduction for the Drinking Water and Onsite Sewage program
- Staffing level comparable to 2024
- Union negotiations



THANK YOU!

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