

# **BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY SALES TAX**

The Public Safety Sales Tax (PSST), approved by Benton County voters in 2014, is a 0.3% (or 3/10 of one percent) sales and use tax. This amounts to 30 cents on a one-hundred-dollar purchase. The collected funds are used for criminal justice purposes. The Public Safety Sales Tax continues to fund 54 local police officers and sheriff's deputies across Benton County and the cities within it, as well as four deputy prosecutors, a superior court judge and supporting staff.

The tax is set to expire at the end of 2024. Benton County is placing a proposition before the voters to determine if the tax should be continued. If the tax is continued, below is a summary of the revenue that each agency is estimated to receive and what they intend to utilize those funds on. This list is not exclusive and is non-binding as needs and priorities may change and revenues may come in higher or lower than estimated.

## **ESTIMATED REVENUE**

The following table provides revenue estimates for the next ten years of collection. Funding is divided between the County and the five cities within the County. The County receives 60% of the revenue and the cities collectively get 40%. That 40% is then divided between the cities based on their percentage of the total population.

Estimated Revenue Over Next Ten Years

	Benton County	Benton City	Kennewick	Prosser	Richland	West Richland
2024	\$10,095,000	\$141,000	\$3,366,000	\$246,000	\$2,347,000	\$630,000
2025	\$10,196,000	\$142,000	\$3,400,000	\$248,000	\$2,370,000	\$636,000
2026	\$10,298,000	\$143,000	\$3,434,000	\$250,000	\$2,394,000	\$642,000
2027	\$10,401,000	\$144,000	\$3,468,000	\$253,000	\$2,418,000	\$648,000
2028	\$10,505,000	\$145,000	\$3,503,000	\$256,000	\$2,442,000	\$654,000
2029	\$10,610,000	\$146,000	\$3,538,000	\$259,000	\$2,466,000	\$661,000
2030	\$10,716,000	\$147,000	\$3,573,000	\$262,000	\$2,491,000	\$668,000
2031	\$10,823,000	\$148,000	\$3,609,000	\$265,000	\$2,516,000	\$675,000
2032	\$10,931,000	\$149,000	\$3,645,000	\$268,000	\$2,541,000	\$682,000
2033	\$11,040,000	\$150,000	\$3,681,000	\$271,000	\$2,566,000	\$689,000
2034	\$11,150,000	\$152,000	\$3,718,000	\$274,000	\$2,592,000	\$696,000

## **ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES**

### **CITY OF KENNEWICK:**

The City of Kennewick intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$3,400,000 by paying for the following:

- 15 Sworn Officer Positions
- 2.5 Police Support Specialists
- 1 Evidence Technician
- 1 Assistant City Attorney
- Supplies, equipment, training and associated costs for the above personnel

## **CITY OF RICHLAND:**

The City of Richland intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$2,600,000 by paying for the following:

- 10 Police Officers
- 1 Lieutenant
- 4.3 Support Staff
- Vehicle Expenses
- Training, travel, and ammunition
- Clothing, supplies, tools and other support expenses
- Cost allocation & overhead
- Dispatch, radio, and records management system; also known as BiPin/BCES

## **CITY OF WEST RICHLAND:**

The City of West Richland intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$650,000 by paying for the following:

- 3 Police Officers
- 1 Office Staff
- Training and equipment

## **CITY OF PROSSER:**

The City of Prosser intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$246,000 by paying for the following:

- 2 Patrol Officers
- Equipment

## **CITY OF BENTON CITY:**

The City of Benton City contracts for law enforcement services with Benton County. The cost of these services is paid for, in part, with the \$141,000 revenue received from the Public Safety Sales Tax.

## **BENTON COUNTY:**

The Public Safety Sales Tax, is currently providing funding for 65 positions across Benton County. These positions address public safety needs and support the criminal justice system. The County also provides funds that enhance community focused programs such as the Boys and Girls Clubs, Safe Harbor and many others.

### **Benton County Sheriff's Office**

The Benton County Sheriff's Office intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$4,850,000 by paying for the following:

- 24 commissioned Law Enforcement Officers which include:
  - 2 School Resource Officers
  - 2 Detectives assigned to the METRO Drug Task Force
  - 1 Detective assigned to the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force
  - 4 other agency task force Detectives
- 4 Support Staff
- Training, equipment and supplies for the above positions and other officers

### **Benton County Prosecutor's Office**

The Benton County Prosecutor's Office intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$1,400,000 by paying for the following:

- 4 Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys
- 5 Legal Secretaries
- 1 Victim-Witness Coordinator
- 1 Assistant Chief Deputy Prosecutor
- Training, equipment and supplies for the above positions

### **Benton County Superior Court**

The Benton County Superior Court includes the Adult Drug Court. The Benton County Superior Court intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$650,000 by paying for the following:

- 1 Superior Court Judge
- 0.5 Court Commissioner
- 3 Bailiffs
- 0.5 Guardianship Case Manager
- 1 Adult Drug Court Coordinator
- 2 Adult Drug Court Case Managers
- Training, equipment and supplies for the above positions

### **Juvenile Justice Center**

The Juvenile Justice Center is also administered by the Superior Court. The Juvenile Justice Center intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$575,000 by paying for the following:

- 2 Juvenile Drug Court Coordinator and Case Managers
- 1 Selective Aggressive Probation Case Manager
- Functional Family Therapy Program
- Commercial sexual exploitation of children/sex trafficking (CSEC) Contract Services
- Youth Education and Employment Training Program
- Detention Mental Health Contract Services
- Training, equipment and supplies for the above positions

### **Benton County Clerk's Office**

The Benton County Clerk's Office intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$753,000 by paying for the following:

- 8 Legal Process Assistants
- Training, equipment and supplies for the above positions

### **Benton County Coroner's Office**

The Benton County Coroner's Office intends to maintain its historical PSST annual spending of \$417,000 by paying for the following:

- 1 Forensic Pathologist
- Part-time Autopsy Technician
- Training, equipment and supplies for the above positions

## Office of Public Defense

The Office of Public Defense intends to maintain its approved PSST annual spending of \$2,150,000 by paying for the following:

- A portion of 12 Public Defender positions, totaling 5.5 full-time employee equivalents
- Portions of up to 12 contracted public defense attorneys

## Commissioners

The Commissioners Office intends to maintain its current PSST annual spending of \$210,000 by paying for the following:

- Mental health services in the Benton County Jail (\$160,000)
- Administrative costs for oversight of the public safety sales tax programs (\$50,000)
- Purchase of capital equipment, such as patrol cars for the Sheriff's office, as funding allows

## Planning

The Planning Department intends to maintain its approved PSST annual spending of \$91,000 by paying for the following:

- 1 Code Enforcement Officer
- Training equipment and supplies for the above position

## Gang & Crime Prevention Programs

The County proposes to continue providing funding for community-based Gang & Crime Prevention programs, up to \$900,000 annually.

## Additional Criminal Justice Needs

Although Benton County currently allocates all its anticipated revenue from the Public Safety Sales Tax, there are additional needs within the various County departments that may be funded, contingent on available budget and approval by the Board of County Commissioners. This list represents the needs identified at the time of creation and is not exclusive of, or in higher priority to, other needs or programs that may be identified in the future.

### Sheriff's Office

- 3 Sheriff's Deputies for Courtroom Security
- 2 School Resource Officers for the SRO Program
- 1 Lieutenant to oversee special programs, such as SRO, Boating, K-9 Program, etc.
- 1 South Deputy position
- 1 Trainer Advisor Counselor (TAC) Officer

### Prosecutor's Office

- 1 Prosecution Investigator
- 2 Felony Prosecutors
- 1 Support Staff

### Superior Court

- 3 Court Commissioners
- 1 Adult Drug Court Case Manager
- 1 Adult Drug Court Secretary
- 3 Judicial Clerks

### **District Court**

- 1 Therapeutic Courts Legal Process Assistant
- 1 Therapeutic Court Behavioral Health Specialist/Probation Officer
- 2 Blake/Diversion Cases Legal Process Assistants
- Professional Services for interpreter
- Commissioner or Pro-Tem Judge for Blake/Diversion cases
- 3 Bailiffs

### **Clerk's Office**

- 1 Office Administrator
- 3 Legal Process Assistant positions
- IT support, hardware and software

### **Coroner's Office**

- 2 Pathology Support Staff
- 1 Lead Deputy Coroner
- 2 body removal vans with equipment
- CT scanner for autopsy triage