

2020



Legislative Reference Bureau

[www.milwaukee.gov/lrb](http://www.milwaukee.gov/lrb)



# CITY ATTORNEY

---

## 2020 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

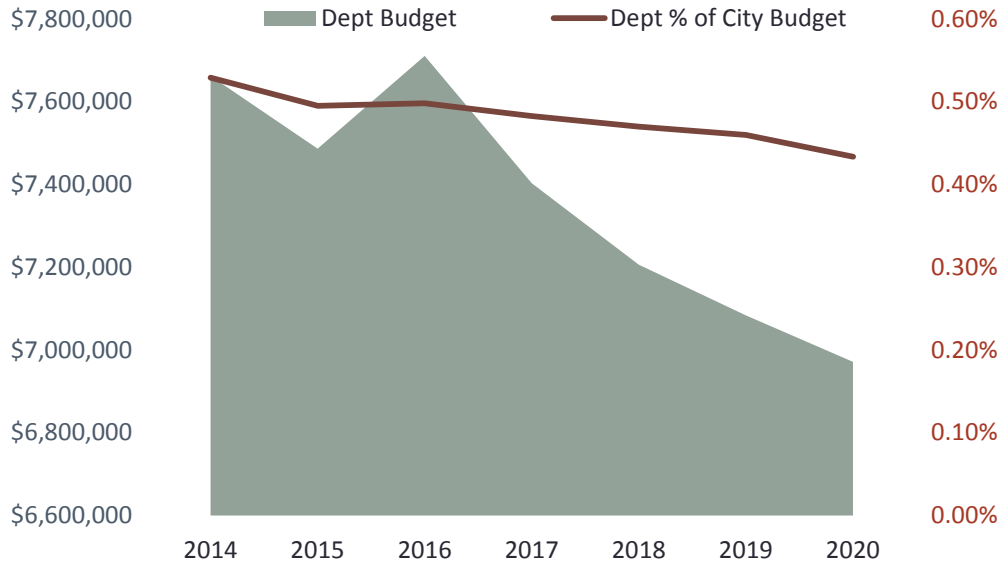
Prepared by: Dana Zelazny, Legislative Fiscal Analyst  
Budget Hearing: 11:00 am on Friday, October 4, 2019



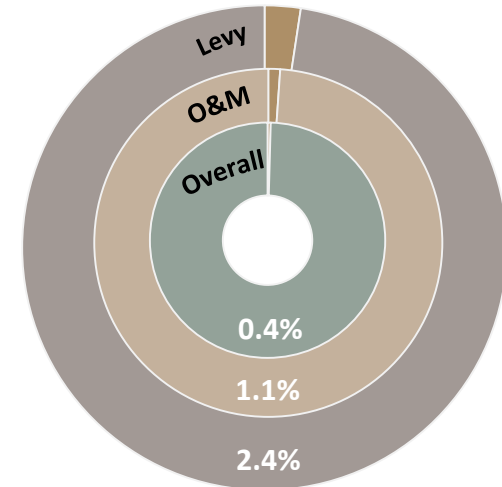
**\$6,971,470**  
Proposed 2020 Budget

**-\$112,255**  
Change in Proposed Budget

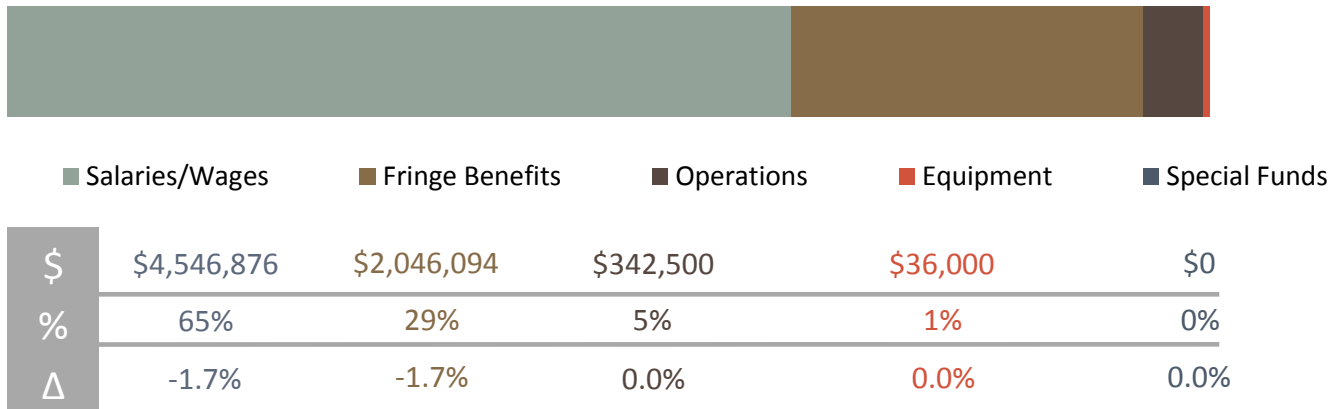
**-1.6%**  
% Change in Proposed Budget



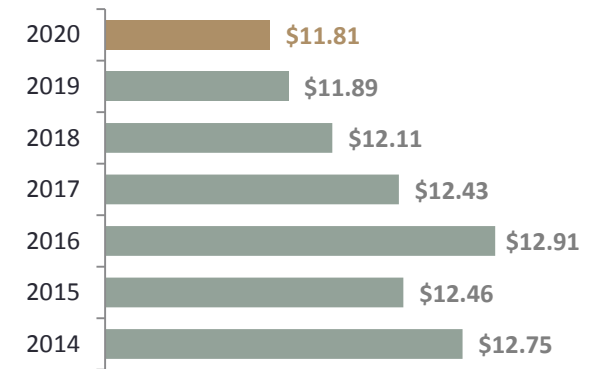
Departmental Budget Impact



Departmental Budget Appropriation Category



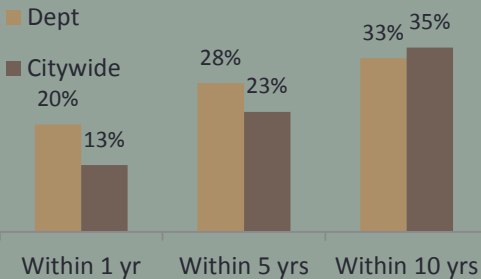
Budget per Capita



# \$175,850

Amount of the Personnel Cost Adjustment, a 16% increase from previous year. However, there are currently no vacancies in the City Attorney's Office. Any position vacated in 2020 may have to be held open for a significant amount of time to meet the department's Salaries and Wages budget, or funds redirected from elsewhere in the department's budget.

### Retirement Eligible



**-1**

Change in Positions

**-1.5%**

% Change in Positions

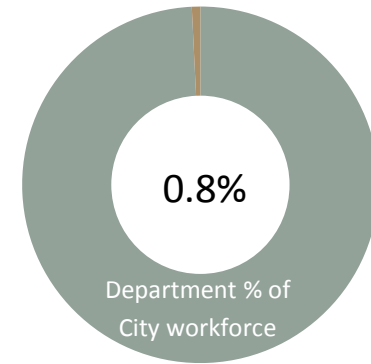
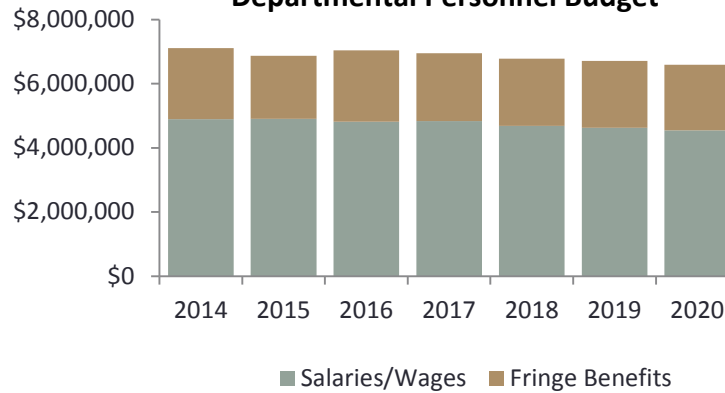
**0**

Current Vacancies

**4**

Voluntary Separations

### Departmental Personnel Budget

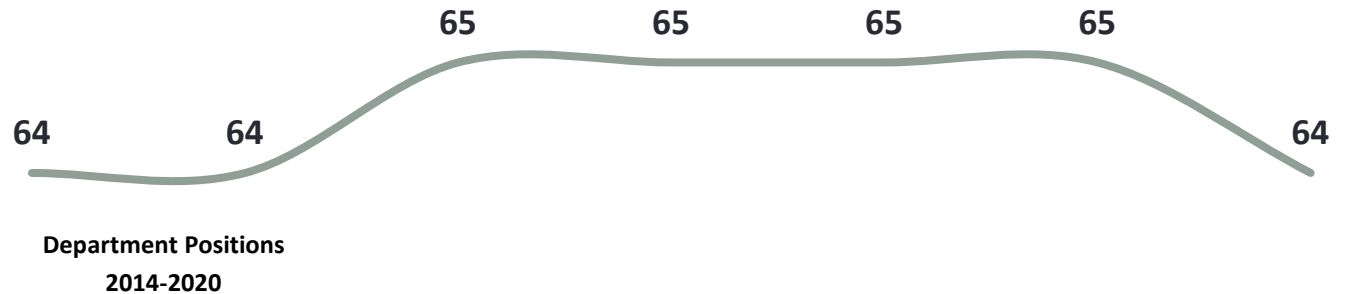


### Staffing

There are currently no vacancies in the City Attorney's Office.

### Staffing

- Mid-year 2019, the Parking Citation Review Manager, which was reimbursed through the Transportation Fund, was formally moved to the Transportation Fund.
- Mid-year 2019, an Office Assistant IV position was eliminated and replaced with a Legal Office Assistant position.



**\$429,573**

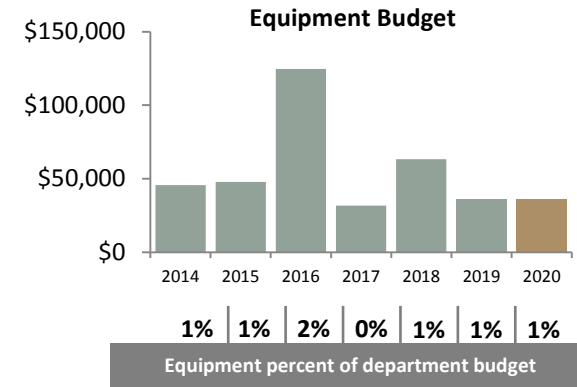
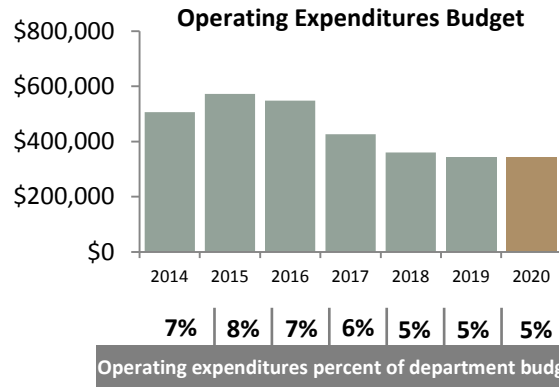
Expenditures in 2018 on outside counsel and expert witness fees.

**\$3,943,120**

2018 Expenditures from the Damages and Claims SPA. The total expenditures from 2015-2018 were \$29.3 million, or an average of \$7.3 million per year. This SPA is typically funded at \$1.225 million per year. Unbudgeted Damages and Claims expenditures are paid for through contingent borrowing. Contingent borrowing authority for damages and claims 2015-2019 has totaled \$32 million.

**\$947,000**

2020 Estimated charges for reimbursed services; up 4.8% from 2019.



**Revenue**

Top 4 areas of Reimbursement Services, 2020 estimates:

- Services to RACM \$284,000
- Services to HACM \$174,500
- Services to Water \$178,000
- Services to ERS \$90,000

**Grants**

This department expects to receive some Democratic National Convention grant funds in 2020 which will be used to offset expenses associated with convention activities, particularly with regard to First Amendment issues.

**Special Purpose Accounts**

Damages and Claims (no change from 2019)	\$1,225,000
Insurance Fund (no change from 2019)	\$922,000
Outside Counsel/Expert Witness Fund (decreased \$400,000, or 47%)	\$450,000

**Capital Requests**

This department has no capital funding in the Proposed Budget.

The department did request \$4.1 million in capital funds for a long-delayed remodeling of the City Hall 8<sup>th</sup> Floor offices.

473

State and Federal Court cases opened in 2018. 538 such cases were closed, while 490 were pending.

301

Number of eviction cases handled in 2018, down from 429 in 2017.

21

Number of exploitive landlord investigations in 2018.

682

Number of liability claims received in 2018, up 12% from 2017; 709 liability claims were closed in 2018.

### Diversity Clerkship

For the 3<sup>rd</sup> year, the City Attorney hired a Graduate Intern via the State Bar of Wisconsin Diversity Clerkship program. First-year law school students from diverse backgrounds gain experience with public sector work through the program.

Graduate Interns are encouraged to seek employment with the department after graduation; as of yet, no former intern has been hired permanently.

### Ordinance Enforcement

The Ordinance Enforcement Division (OED) is located in the Police Administration Building. OED is composed of 5 to 6 Assistant City Attorneys and support staff.

OED reviews and prosecutes municipal citations issued by the Police Department and Department of Neighborhood Services. OED attorneys advise and litigate building and zoning code, traffic, property returns, public safety, nuisance abatement and licensed premise investigation matters.

### Legal Services

The City Attorney's Office provides counsel to Milwaukee Public Schools, the Housing Authority, the Redevelopment Authority, Milwaukee Water Works, the Employees' Retirement System and other City departments as needed.

In 2019, the City Attorney's Office drafted contracts relating to the Democratic National Convention. Department personnel are also expected to provide counsel as needed throughout the 2020 convention on a variety of topics, including First Amendment issues that may arise from protests, etc.

### Evictions Database

The department collaborated with the Department of Neighborhood Services and other stakeholders to establish an evictions database in 2019. The database will be used by the department to identify landlords that may engage in retaliatory evictions, and can be used by the public and stakeholders to track reported code violations and eviction rates.

### Property Assessment Litigation

The department works with the Assessor's Office to uphold property assessments. These activities help to maintain the City's property tax revenue and ensure that the property tax burden is fairly shared by property owners. Recent litigation successes have protected the City from millions in financial exposure.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.