

2020



Legislative Reference Bureau

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# DPW-FORESTRY

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## 2020 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

Prepared by: Kathleen Brengosz, Legislative Fiscal Analyst  
Budget Hearing: 10:30 am on Monday, October 14, 2019



**\$13,683,306**

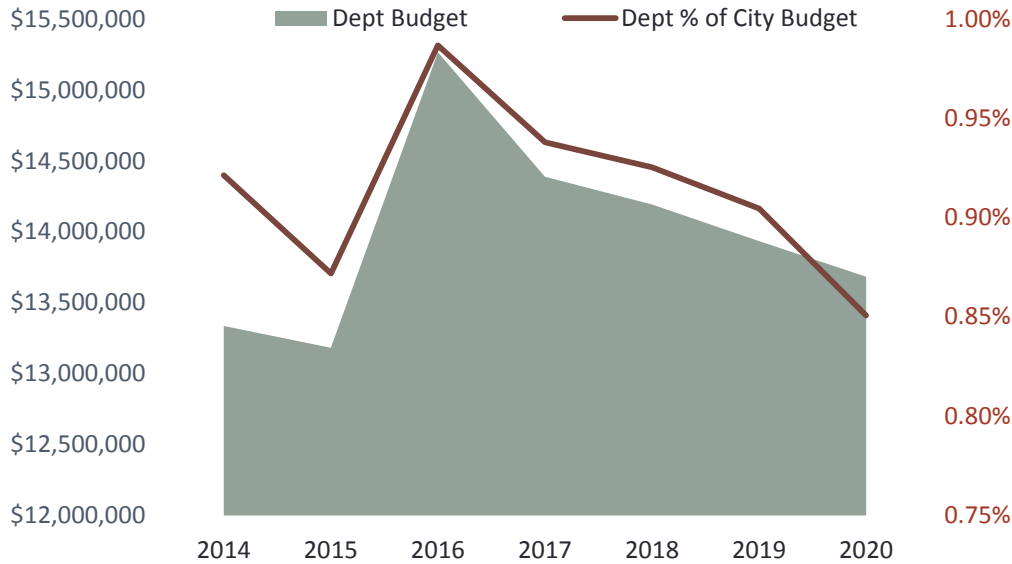
Proposed 2020 Budget

**\$251,139**

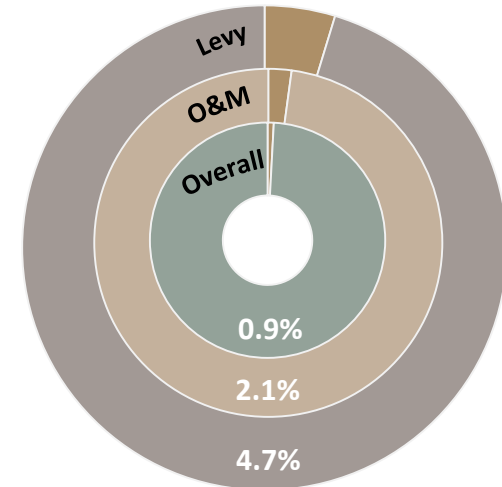
Change in Proposed Budget

**1.8%**

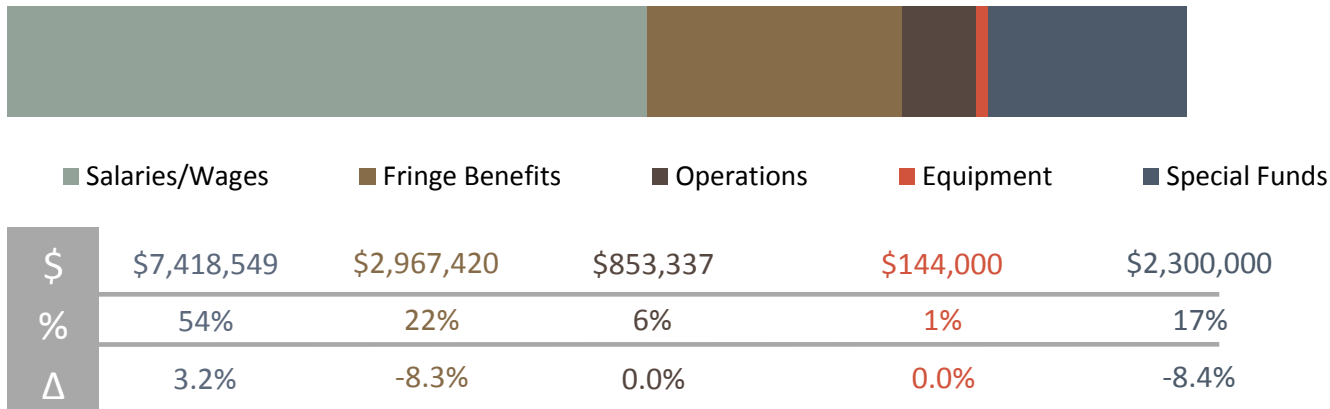
% Change in Proposed Budget



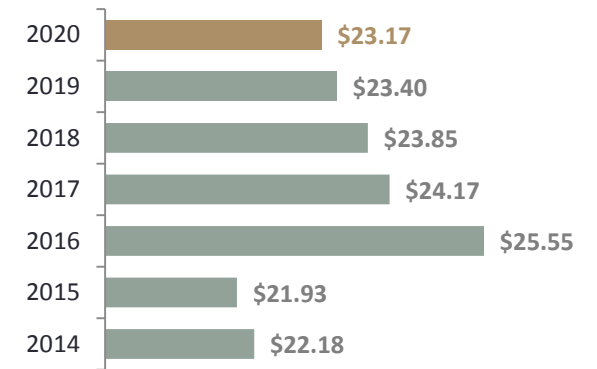
**Departmental Budget Impact**



**Departmental Budget Appropriation Category**



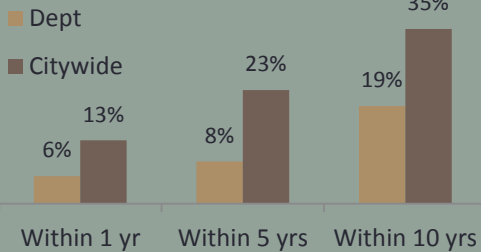
**Budget per Capita**



**194,200**  
Forestry-maintained street trees.

**10 years**  
Proposed pruning cycle.

**Retirement Eligible**



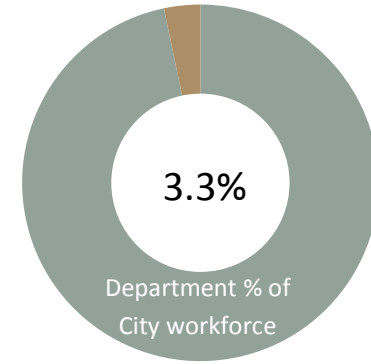
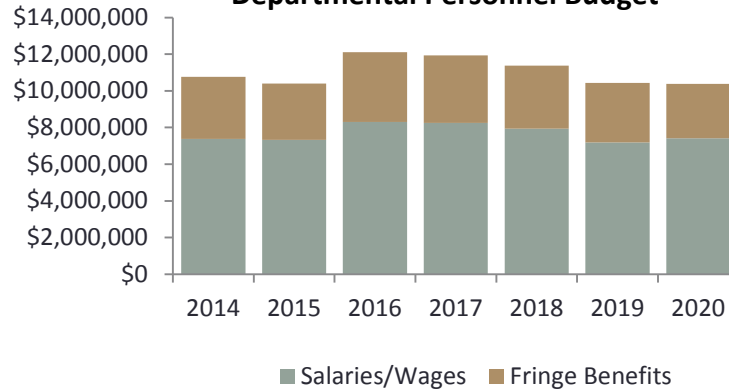
**0**  
Change in Positions

**0.0%**  
% Change in Positions

**3**  
Current Vacancies

**30**  
Voluntary Separations

**Departmental Personnel Budget**



**Staffing**

**Positions Eliminated**

28 Urban Forestry Specialists

**New Positions**

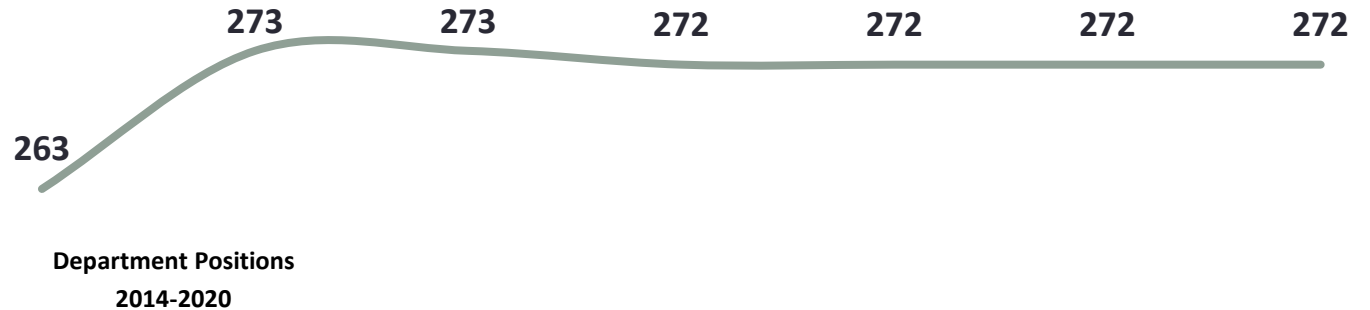
21 City Laborers  
7 Landscape Laborers

Transitioning from Urban Forestry Specialists to Laborers will reduce salaries by \$349,800.

**Staffing Vacancies**

3 Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentice

25 of the 28 Urban Forestry Specialist positions proposed for elimination are filled with Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentices.



91

New number of Urban Forestry Specialist positions, down 24% from 2019.

3.2

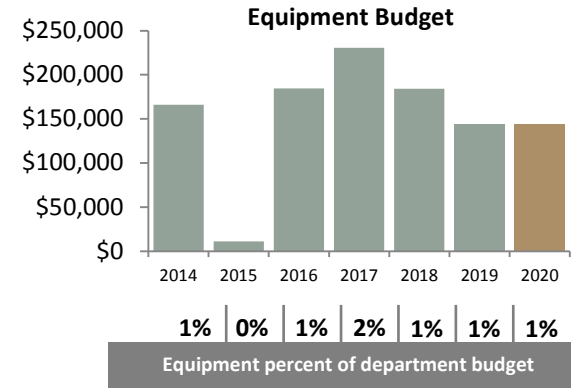
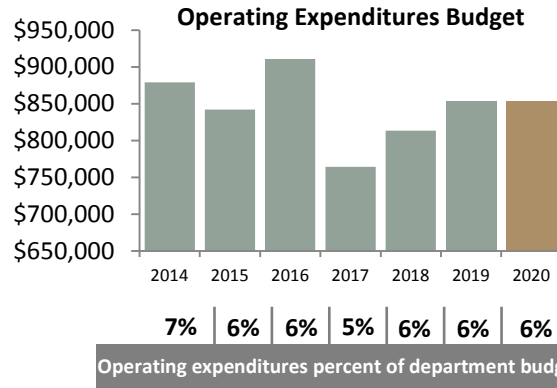
Average work hours per tree in 2019. Up from 2.0 hours in 2010.

11

The number of mowing cycles for vacant lots proposed for 2020.

850

Number of properties expected to be cited for hazardous ash trees in 2020. Over 1,000 properties have been cited since 2018.



**Revenue**

The primary source of revenue for Forestry is a \$23 million transfer from the Sewer Maintenance Fund to support tree production, planting and pruning.

The department also generates revenue from ordered snow and weed removal and other charges related to street removals. Actual revenue from these sources can be highly variable.

**Special Purpose Accounts**

This department has no special purpose accounts.

**Grants**

Forestry has 5 grants, four of which are anticipated to be closed out by Dec. 31, 2019.

The 2018 USDA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant will remain open through June 30, 2021.

The department has two pending grant applications.

**Capital Funding**

Replace Irrigation Taps	\$ 200,000
Tree Planting & Production	\$ 1,250,000
Stump Removal	\$ 360,000
Emerald Ash Borer Program	\$ 950,000
Hazardous Tee Removal	<u>\$ 75,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,375,000</b>

All capital projects in Forestry are financed through the Sewer Maintenance Fund.

# 9,507

Trees pruned so far in 2019  
A total of 16,534 trees  
were pruned in 2018.

# 37%

Percentage of  
Norway Maple trees in  
the street tree inventory.

# 4,647

Street trees removed in 2018.  
On average 2% of trees are  
removed and replaced each year.

# 89.1%

Tree replacement ratio in 2018.  
The 5-year average is 96%.

### Transition from Urban Forestry Specialists to City & Landscape Laborers

The proposed laborer positions will be assigned to boulevard-mowing and maintenance. They will also provide ground support for pruning crews, performing activities such as brush chipping, clean-up operations truck driving, debris hauling and equipment transport.

In the winter months Laborers will continue to provide ground support and will also participate in snow and ice control operations.

### Vacant Lot Maintenance Special Fund

Forestry has one special fund for in rem property and vacant lot management and maintenance. Proposed funding for 2020 is \$2.3 million, a reduction of \$211,250 (8.4%) from the 2019 Budget.

Activities funded also include:

- Mowing along interstates
- Multi-use trail maintenance
  - Mowing
  - Snow removal
- Dead/hazard tree removal on in-rem properties

Expenditures from this fund are driven by weather and by the amount of illegal dumping activities.

### Hazardous Tree Removals

Prior to the arrival of emerald ash borer, there were approximately 570,000 ash trees within the city limits. Although Forestry's injection program has prevented the loss of street trees, EAB is moving rapidly through unprotected ash trees on private property public spaces.

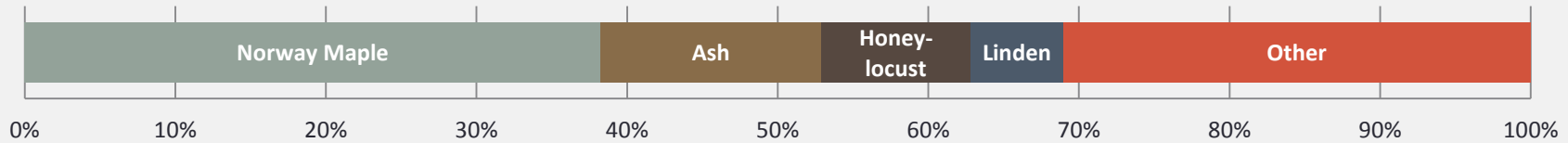
Over 1,000 properties have been cited since 2018. The number of properties cited reflects Forestry's staffing capacity to inspect properties and issue citations. It does not reflect the actual number of properties with dead and dying ash trees.

Since 2018, 349 of 863 (40%) of property owners using City contractors for hazard tree abatement have elected the extended payment option. The average cost per property since 2014 is \$1,800.

### Stumping

The City began outsourcing a portion of stump removal to private contractors in 2013 to address an increasing backlog of stumps. In 2020, all stumping will be done by City forces

### Street Tree Distribution, Oct. 2019

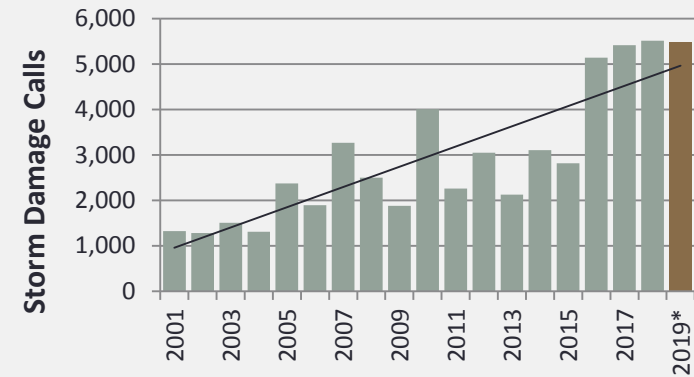


#### Tree Pruning

The Proposed Budget continues to fund a 10-year pruning cycle. As the pruning cycle increases, more bio-mass must be removed at each pruning. From 2005 through 2019, the average work hours per tree increased over 30%.

In addition, as the pruning cycle gets longer, arborists are more frequently reassigned from regular duties to address complaints and emergency situations. It is expected that a 10-year pruning cycle will quickly drift into a demand/complaint-based pruning program.

#### Storm Damage Incidents



#### Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)

In 2009 Forestry began treating street ash trees on a 2-year cycle, injecting half of the ash tree inventory each year. EAB was confirmed in the city in 2012.

In 2017, Forestry began to transition to a 3-year cycle to address chronic staffing challenges and reduce the frequency of wounding in treated trees. The transition is now complete. The department will continue to use Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentices to treat trees.

#### Trees Pruned

