

2019



Legislative Reference Bureau

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# DPW-FORESTRY



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## 2019 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

Prepared by: Kathy Brengosz, Fiscal Planning Specialist  
Budget Hearing: 10:30 am on Monday, October 15, 2018  
Last Updated: October 10, 2018

Version 1.0



**\$13,834,445**

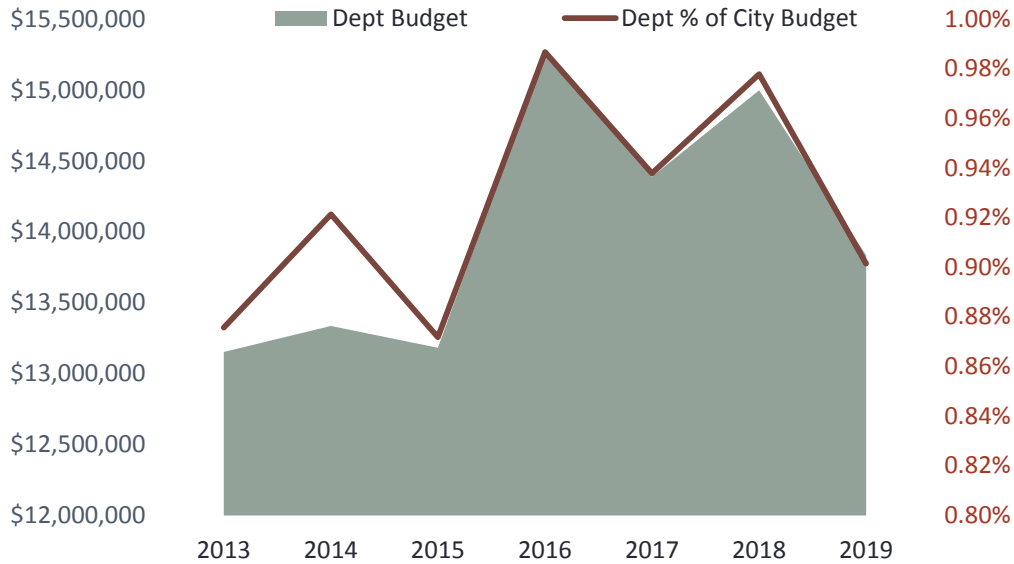
Proposed 2019 Budget

**\$1,163,533**

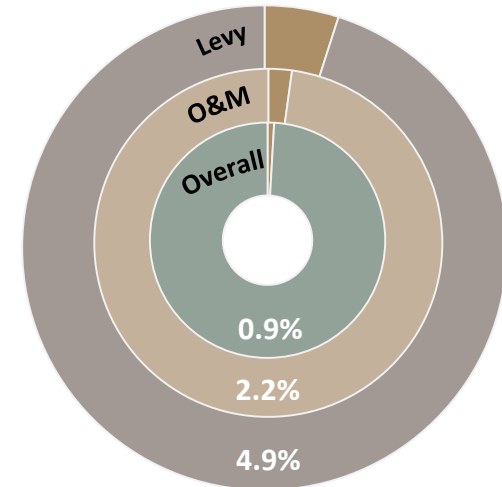
Change in Proposed Budget

**7.8%**

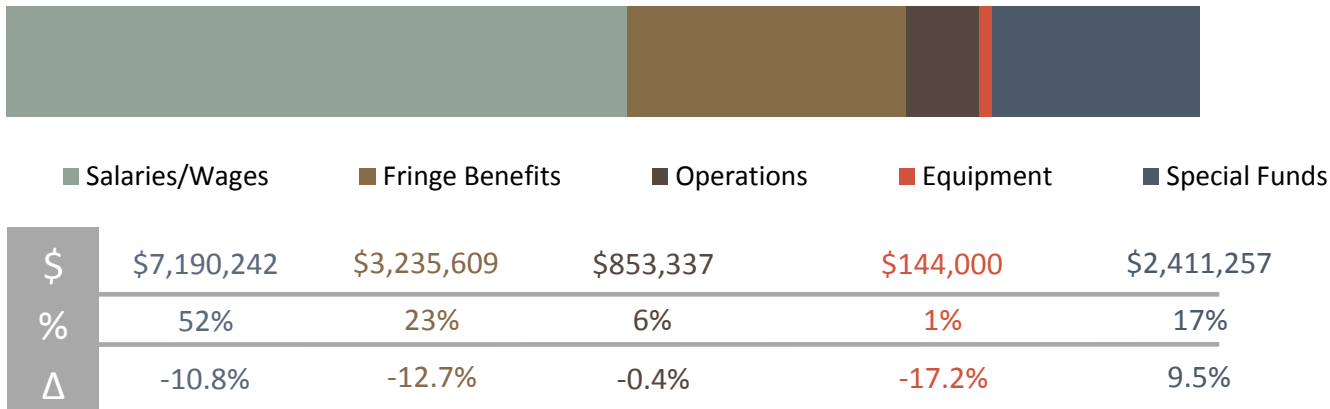
% Change in Proposed Budget



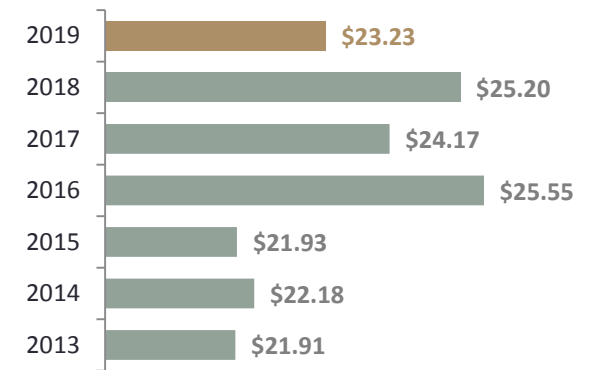
Departmental Budget Impact



Departmental Budget Appropriation Category



Budget per Capita



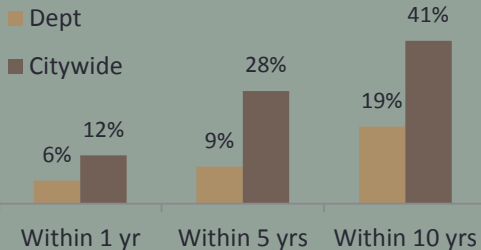
196,900

Forestry-maintained street trees

10 years

Proposed pruning cycle

**Retirement Eligible**



-12

Change in Positions

-4.4%

% Change in Positions

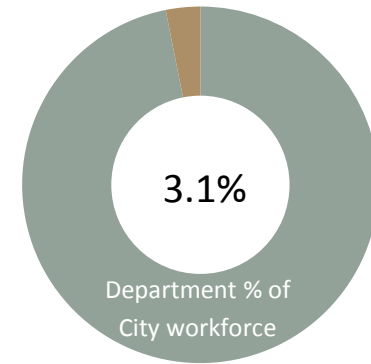
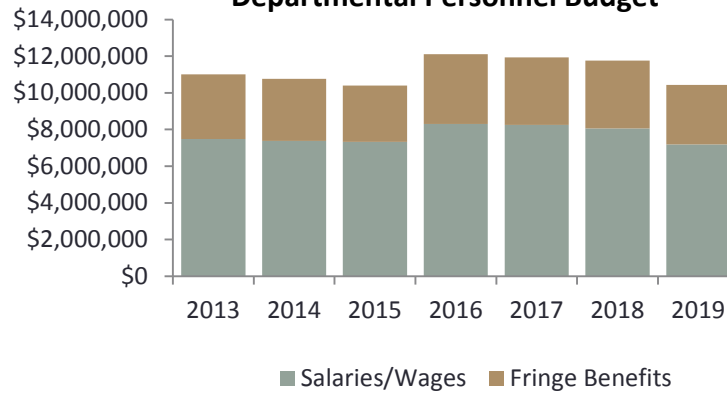
14

Current Vacancies

11

Voluntary Separations

**Departmental Personnel Budget**



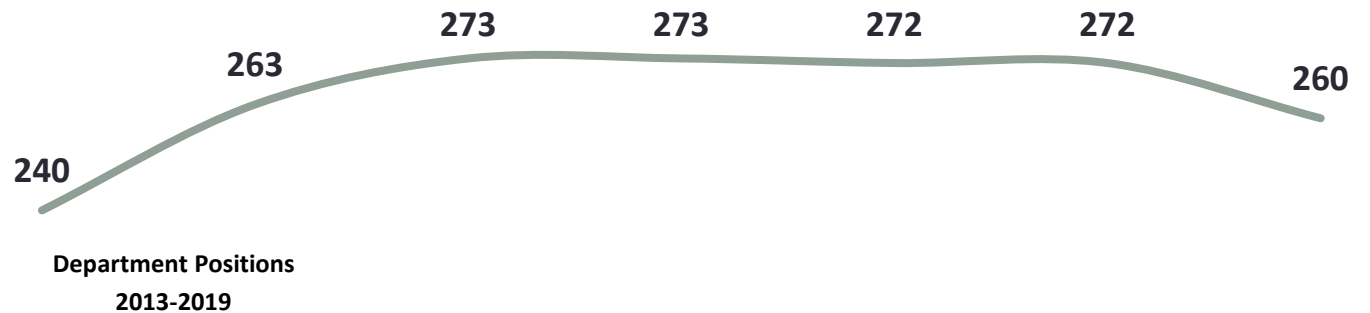
**Staffing Vacancies**

- 10 Urban Forestry Specialist
- 2 Urban Forestry Crew Leader
- 1 Nursery Crew Leader
- 1 Lead Equipment Mechanic

**Staffing Update**

The 2019 Proposed Budget eliminates 11 Urban Forestry Specialists and one Urban Forestry Crew Leader.

The reduction represents 9% of the Urban Forestry Specialist positions.



108

New number of Urban Forestry Specialist positions.  
(down 9% from 2018)

29

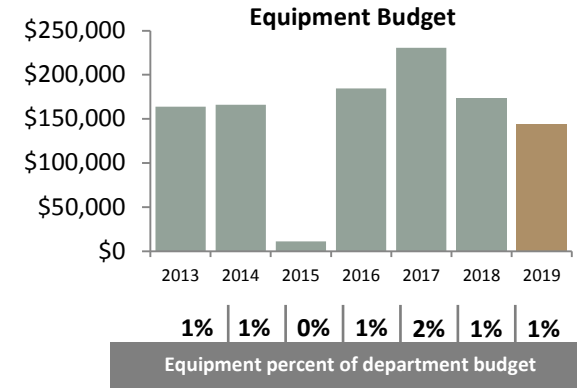
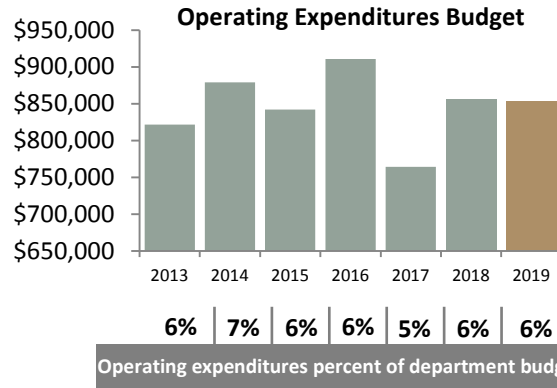
Number of Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentices currently working in Forestry

\$136,269

Savings in 2017 from logs diverted from landfills. Savings to date in 2018 is \$95,000.

500

Number of properties expected to be cited for hazardous ash trees in 2019. To date, 348 properties have been cited in 2018



**Revenue**

The primary source of revenue for Forestry is a \$22.3 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**

\$100,000 - Great Lakes Reforestation Grant to remove and replace 600 small ash trees over 2 years.

\$200,000 - Great lakes Reforestation Grant to plant 800 trees in conjunction with MKE Plays

\$20,000 - Urban Forestry Grant from the WI DNR to develop urban forestry career outreach branding and messaging.

**Capital Requests**

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.

11,905

Trees pruned in 2018  
(through PP19)

40%

Percentage of Norway Maple trees  
in the street tree inventory.

4,628

Street trees removed in 2017

87%

Tree replacement ratio in 2017.  
The 5-year average is 76%.

**Operational Impacts**

Public safety responsibilities to remove or prune hazardous trees, remove branches which are blocking traffic signals, traffic signs, streets lights, roadways and sidewalks will remain the highest priority.

The non-safety sensitive work such as boulevard beautification, boulevard mowing, landscape maintenance, tree planting and stump-grinding will be most impacted by the elimination of UFS positions.

A smaller workforce will be more impacted by the demands of emergency operations related to wind storm tree damage and snow removal operations. This may increase attrition rates.

**Journeyman Apprentice Program**

Forestry hired its first class of 31 Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentices in June, 2018. The WI Arborist Apprenticeship program is a partnership between the Wisconsin Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, the City of Milwaukee and the respective apprentices.

Arborist Apprentices receive a combination of 7,000 of paid, on-the-job instruction over a 3 ½ year period. The department hopes that a Journeyman Arborist skilled trade credential will help stem the high rate of attrition of Urban Forestry Specialists during their first few years of employment with the City.

**Tree Pruning**

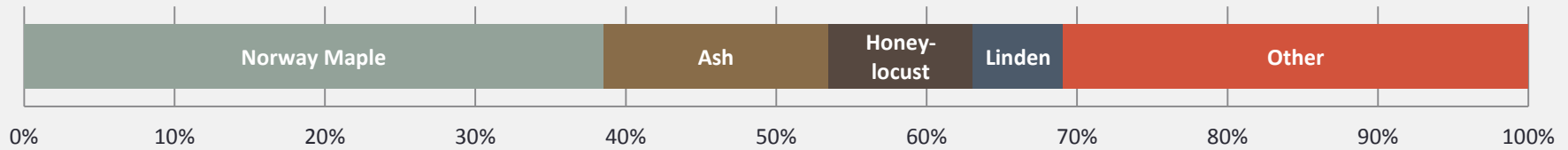
The Proposed Budget funds a 10-year pruning cycle. As the pruning cycle increases, more bio-mass must be removed at each pruning. From 2005 through 2018, the average work hours per tree increased over 30%.

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.

The number of storm related incidents is highly variable from year to year, but has been trending steadily upward since at least 2001. Regular pruning can reduce the likelihood of branch or tree failure during high-wind events.

Studies conducted for Milwaukee by the University of Wisconsin and David Griffith & Associates established a staged 3-6 year pruning cycle as the most cost efficient pruning model for Milwaukee’s tree population.

### Street Tree Distribution, Oct. 2018



#### 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, 12,150 ash trees were treated at a 3-year chemical rate to support the transition to a 3-year cycle in 2019. The transition is expected to be cost-neutral. The department will utilize Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentices. The change will address chronic staffing challenges and reduce the frequency of wounding in treated trees.

#### Hazardous Tree Removals

Prior to the arrival of EAB, 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. Nearly 350 properties have been cited in 2018 to date. 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.

To date in 2018, 54 of 77 (70%) of property owners utilizing city contractors for hazard tree abatement have elected the extend payment option. The average cost per property is \$2,190.

#### Vacant Lot Maintenance

The department’s requested budget for City lot maintenance eliminated funding for one mowing cycle. Proposed funding for 2019 is \$70,000 less than requested, which is equivalent to a second mowing cycle reduction.

#### Calumet Road Facility

Direct Supply has an option on the property where the Industrial Road transfer facility and Self-Help yard are located. If Direct Supply exercises the option, the City will have 2 years to relocate the Sanitation and Forestry operations located there.

The department requested \$2.5 million to purchase a property on Calumet Road. The Calumet site was identified as being a particularly good fit for Forestry operation because the site previously was used by a landscaping company. If Forestry operations were consolidated into a single site, redundant support activities could be reduced.

#### Storm Damage Incidents

