

2026



Legislative Reference Bureau

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DPW – SANITATION



2026 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

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Budget Hearing: 10:00 am on Thursday, October 16, 2025

DPW – Sanitation

\$51,587,325

Proposed 2026 Budget

-\$605,389

Overall Change from 2025

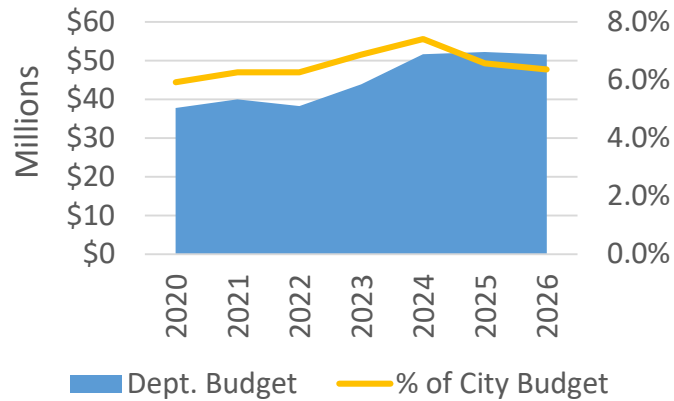
-\$802,092

Difference from Requested

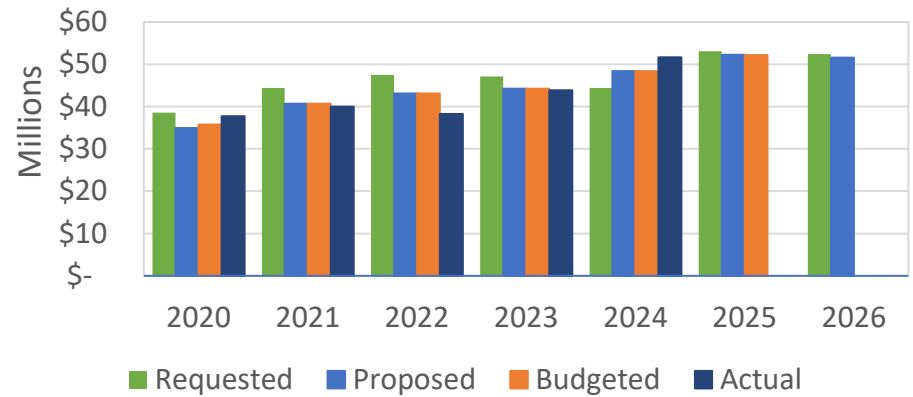
\$52,389,417

Requested 2026 Budget

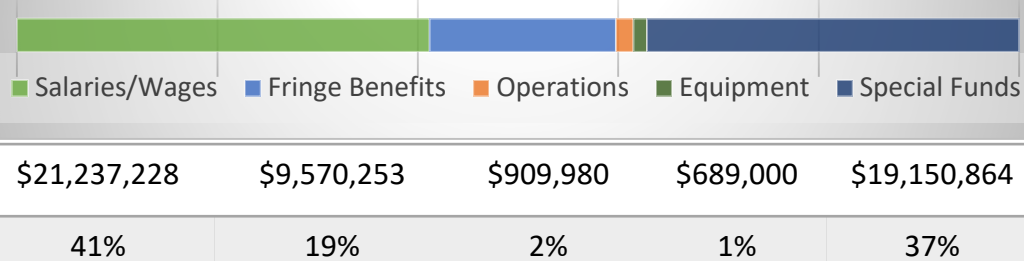
Total Departmental Budget



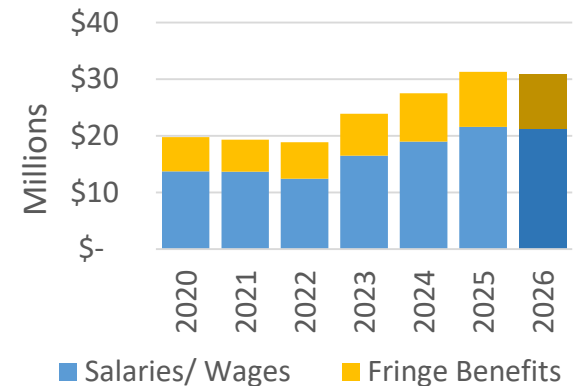
Comparative Funding



Levy Departmental Budget Appropriation by Category



Personnel Budget



DPW – Sanitation

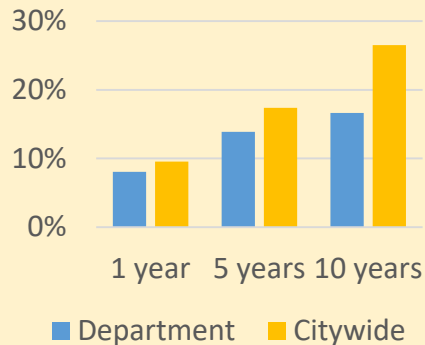
-1.3%

Change in Salaries and Wages
from 2025 Budget.

-\$290,621

Change in Salaries and Wages
from 2025 Budget.

Retirement Eligible



-10

Change in Positions

-3%

% Change in Positions

67

Current Vacancies

20

Voluntary Separations
In 2025

Staffing Update

New Positions

Position	#
Equipment Operator 3	27

Eliminated Positions

Position	#
City Laborer	36
Sanitation Supervisor (Aux)	1

Net Change in Positions -10

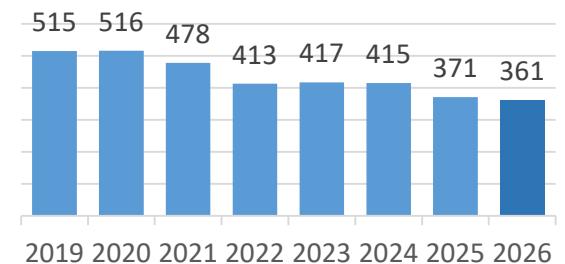
The 2025 Budget shifted positions into the lower paying title of City Laborer primarily as a cost savings measure. The Proposed shift in 2026 back to Equipment Operators reflects the department's conclusion that higher numbers of Equipment Operators are needed to serve the department's operational needs. The department continues to evaluate the right balance between Laborer and Operator positions.

Staffing Vacancies

There are 67 vacancies in 4 titles in Sanitation, up from 43 vacancies in 4 titles at this time last year.

Position	Vacant
Equipment Operator (There were 39 vacancies last year)	48
City Laborer	16
Sanitation Supervisor	2
Yard Attendant	1

Department Positions



\$2.5 million

Proposed increase
in revenue for 2026.

27.9 Years

Proposed cart replacement
schedule based on
2025 Proposed funding,
1.7 years longer than
in the 2025 Budget.
DPW recommends a 15-year
replacement cycle.

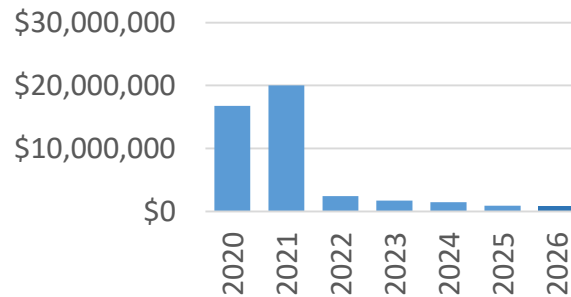
77%

Percent of Sanitation's
revenue generated by
the Solid Waste Fee.

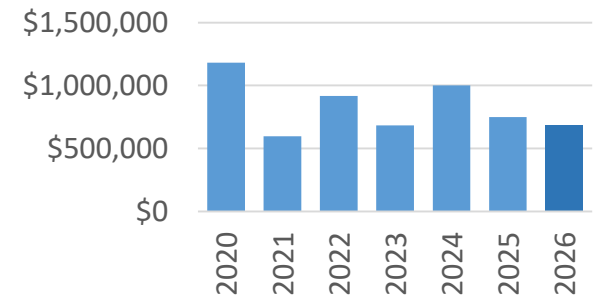
\$12.4 million

2026 Proposed Budget
for tipping fees,
which are funded through
the Waste Disposal special fund.

Operating Expenditures Budget



Equipment Budget



Revenue

Solid Waste Fee	\$50,555,000
Extra Cart Fee	\$1,868,000
Apartment Garbage Fee	\$32,000
Sale of Recyclables	\$1,350,000
Snow and Ice Fee	\$11,662,000
Total	\$65,467,000

Special Purpose Accounts

This department has no special purpose accounts.

Grants

This department has \$1,650,000 of grant and aid funding, the same amount as in 2024 and 2025.

Capital Programs and Projects

Transfer Station Scales \$110,000

Unfunded 2025 Capital Requests:

Transfer Station \$7,100,000

27.5%

Percentage of solid waste diverted from landfills via recycling and composting.

4

Number of refuse packers that will be purchased with revenue from the Solid Waste Fee.

+187

Change in the number of households paying to have extra garbage carts from 2024 to 2025.

This is the second year in a row that cart requests have increased.

9

Number of retirees expected to return for snow and ice operations this season, about the same as last season.

Material Recycling Facility (MRF)

A fire at the MRF on May 31, 2023, damaged the facility beyond repair. The intergovernmental collaboration agreement between the City and Waukesha County related to the operation of a joint MRF was mutually terminated in 2025.

The City will not pursue a new publicly owned MRF at this time. Instead, DPW is seeking to build a third solid waste and recyclables transfer station as part of the solution to replace capacity to receive material directly from route trucks. DPW-Sanitation made a \$7.1 million capital request for the facility. The request is not funded in the 2026 Proposed Budget.

The \$9.4 million that the City received in insurance proceeds from the loss of the MRF will be utilized for the replacement of the Municipal Services Building at 1540 W. Canal Street.

Year-Round Recycling Schedule

In 2026 recycling collection will be scheduled every 10 work days year-round for all households. Starting this winter, residents will need to place their recycling cart at the curb or alley-line on designated dates

Onboard Garbage Truck Work Order System

The onboard work order system for the department's vehicles has been implemented.

In May, 2024, a contract was signed with Rubicon Technologies Inc., which has since been acquired by Routeware Inc.

After a soft launch of the RouteWare SmartCity operating platform at the in April, 2025, the system became fully operational at the end of June, 2025.

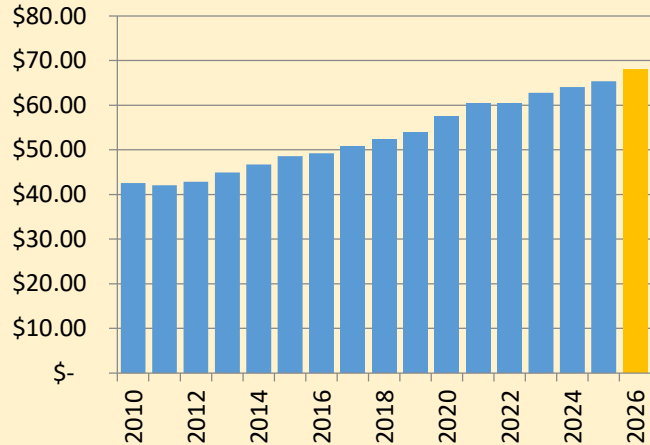
All garbage and recycling cart collections are performed using the system with digital maps, navigation and service verification replacing paper maps and paper work order lists. Work continues on GIS adjustments and other technical setup improvements.

Snow Routes

To improve the efficiency of snow removal operations, in 2024 the routes for snow removal in the Central area were redesigned to align each route's arterial and residential streets. They were also adjusted so the average lane miles would be more equal. Residential street sections were limited to 2 miles per route.

In 2025 snow routes in the North area were rerouted. The South area has been re-routed for the 2025-2026 snow season.

Solid Waste Fee



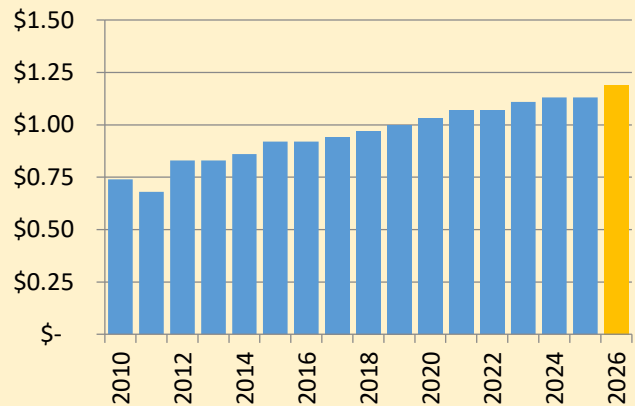
Street Sweeping

Currently, most of the area outside of the combined sewer area is swept once per month while most of the combined sewer area is targeted to be swept twice per month. The downtown area (roughly from Juneau to Canal and 6th to Lake Michigan) is targeted to be swept weekly.

In 2026, the department will target the same sweeping frequencies. However, actual sweeping frequency is expected to vary based on staffing availability.

With the new pay scale for drivers, the department anticipates more stability in staffing. However, training resources are limited, which has caused a backlog of training needs for employees on special equipment such as street sweepers. The training backlog is expected to be resolved as employee retention improves.

Snow & Ice Control Fee (per frontage footage)



Special Funds

Fund	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2026 Proposed
Salt Supply	2,578,293	\$2,467,578	\$2,753,130	\$2,705,280
Waste Disposal	15,626,738	\$15,639,718	\$16,518,000	\$16,445,584

The purchase of salt and the cost of waste disposal are Sanitation's 2 largest operating expenses.

Landfill tonnage costs are budgeted at a rate of \$50.44 per ton, a slight decrease from 2025. Since 2020, the tipping rate has increased by 12%.