

Municipal Court

2025 Proposed Executive Budget

Mission: To provide access to justice while safeguarding the legal rights of individuals, protecting the public interest, and striving to enhance public safety.



CITY OF MILWAUKEE
MUNICIPAL COURT



2025 Budget Summary



Description	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
FTEs – O&M	9.75	30.00	20.25	208%
FTEs - Other	20.25	0.00	-20.25	-100%
FTEs - Total	30.00	30.00	0.00	0%
Total Positions Authorized	30	30	0	0%
Salaries & Wages	\$625,632	\$2,412,719	\$1,787,087	286%
Fringe Benefits	281,534	1,085,724	804,190	286%
Operating Expenditures	505,000	466,000	-39,000	-8%
Equipment	6,000	5,000	-1,000	-17%
Special Funds	20,000	15,000	-5,000	-25%
TOTAL	\$1,438,166	\$3,984,443	\$2,546,277	177%
ARPA Salary Allocation	1,300,000	0	-1,300,000	-
ARPA Fringe Allocations	585,000	0	-585,000	-
TOTAL + ARPA	\$3,323,166	\$3,984,443	\$661,277	20%

Positions & Salaries



Description	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
FTEs – O&M	9.75	30	20.25	208%
FTEs - Other	20.25	0	-20.25	-100%
FTEs - Total	30	30	0.00	0%
Total Positions Authorized	30	30	0	0%
Salaries & Wages	\$625,632	\$2,411,420	\$1,785,788	285%
ARPA Salary Allocation	\$1,300,000	0	-1,300,000	-
TOTAL + ARPA	\$1,925,632	\$2,411,420	\$485,788	25%

Operating & Equipment Expenses



Account	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
Operating Expenditures	\$505,000	\$466,000	-\$39,000	-8%
Equipment	\$6,000	\$5,000	-\$1,000	-17%

Special Funds



Account	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
Minor Projects	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$0	0%
Court Hardware Replacement Project	\$15,000	\$10,000	-\$5,000	-33%
TOTAL	\$20,000	\$15,000	-\$5,000	-25%

Special Purpose Accounts



Account	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
Care of Prisoners	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	0%
Municipal Court Intervention Program	\$487,000	\$487,000	\$0	0%
TOTAL	\$488,000	\$488,000	\$0	0%

Revenues



Category	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
Charges for Services	\$1,116,000	\$1,002,000	-114,000	-10%
Fines & Forfeitures	3,001,000	2,500,100	-500,900	-17%
TOTAL	\$4,117,000	\$3,502,100	-\$614,900	-15%

Capital Improvement



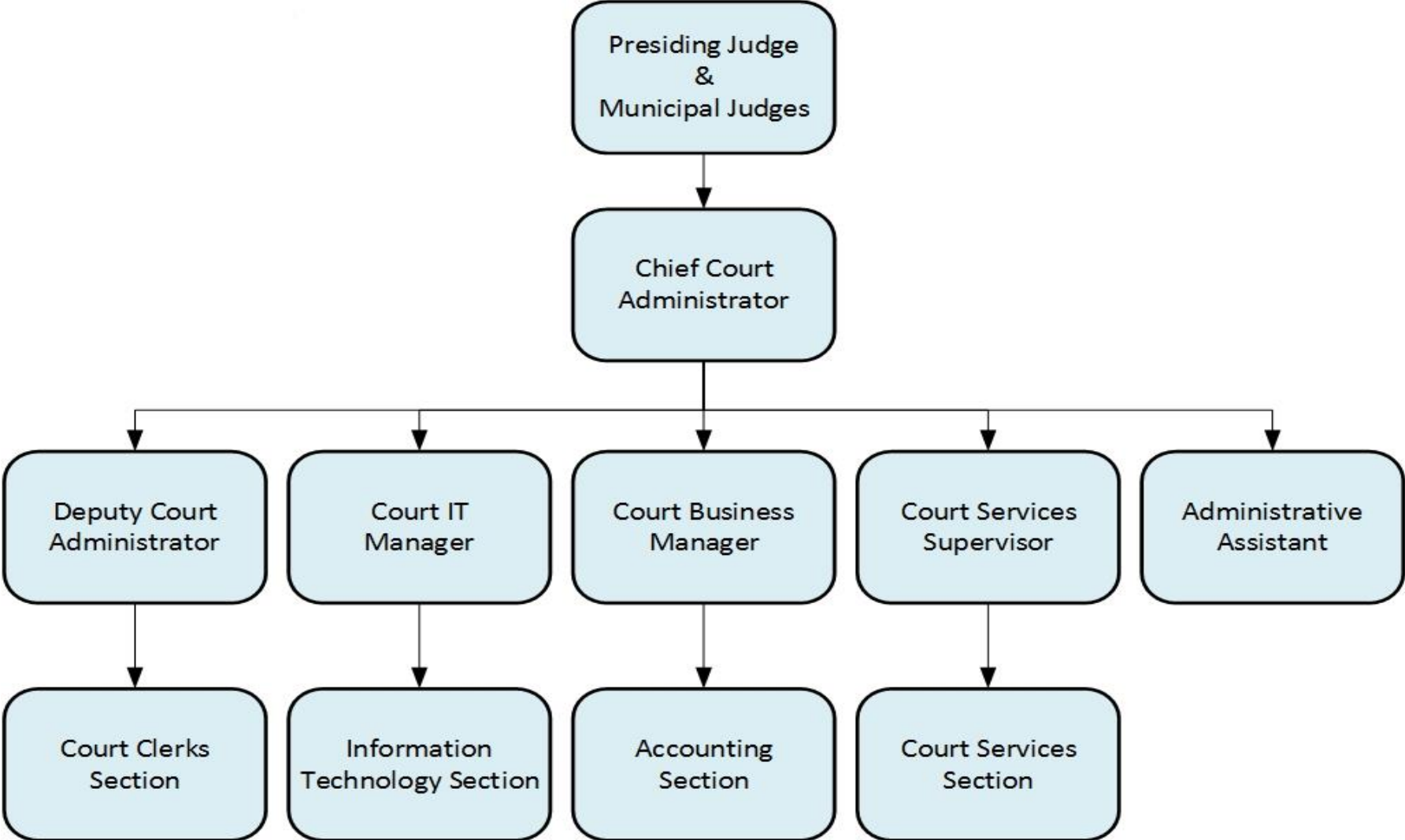
Description	2024 Adopted Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	Amount Change	Percent Change
SQL Migration & Website Project	\$230,000	\$0	-\$230,000	-100%
IT Infrastructure & Courtroom Upgrades	\$0	\$100,000	\$100,000	0%
CMSR	\$530,000	\$0	-\$530,000	-100%
TOTAL	\$530,000	\$100,000	-\$430,000	-81%

Overview



- Municipal courts are governed by state law and municipal ordinance
- Separate, coequal branch of government
- Mission: Impartially adjudicate ordinance violation cases while safeguarding the legal rights of individuals and protecting public interest
- Three elected judges adjudicate alleged violations of municipal ordinances and traffic laws brought to the Court by the City prosecutor
- Courts do not issue citations or prosecute cases – the judges respond to the cases brought to them and the evidence presented by the prosecutor
- Revenues do not drive Court decisions, but they are an important indicator of success in enforcing the Court’s judgments
- Traffic cases are the largest category of cases

Organizational Chart



Demographics



Category	Female	Male	Total	%
Black	6	2	8	28%
White	8	7	15	52%
Hispanic	2	4	6	21%
Asian	0	0	0	0%
American Indian	0	0	0	0%
Total	16	13	29	
%	55%	45%		100%

Service Delivery Model



The Court measures its success by the following objectives and performance measures:

- Fair and reliable adjudication of cases
- Court accessibility to the public
- Effective enforcement of Court judgments
- Accountability for public resources
- Enhanced public trust in the judicial process

Key Performance Indicators



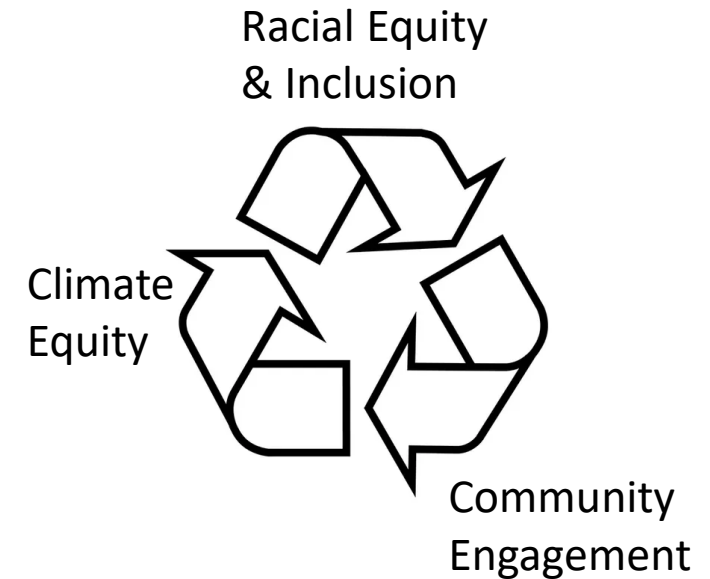
Key Performance Indicators	2023 Actual	2024 Projected	2024 Planned
Writs issued	12,652	11,500	11,000
Motor vehicle dispositions	38,927	30,700	30,000
Number of cases filed	35,892	33,000	35,000
Courtroom appearances	16,664	15,500	15,500
Percentage of appearances	23%	22%	25%
Cases processed	132,985	111,800	111,000
Number of calls answered	46,779	45,000	46,000
Records requests & background checks	1,544	1,700	1,600
Number of enforced driver's license suspensions lifted	8,803	7,581	7,500

Equity

Equity is the foundation of all Courts: We serve everyone who uses the Court and continually strive to reflect this community in our staffing.

Community Engagement, Climate Equity, and Racial Equity are integrally linked – each one supports the efforts of the others.

- The Court:
 - Is represented on the County’s Community Justice Council (CJC).
 - Has relationships throughout the City with organizations serving diverse populations.
 - Supports community engagement efforts, including community court sessions and veterans stand-down events.
 - Provides night court sessions and offers hearings by video conference to provide easier access to the Court and to support the City’s Climate and Equity Plan.

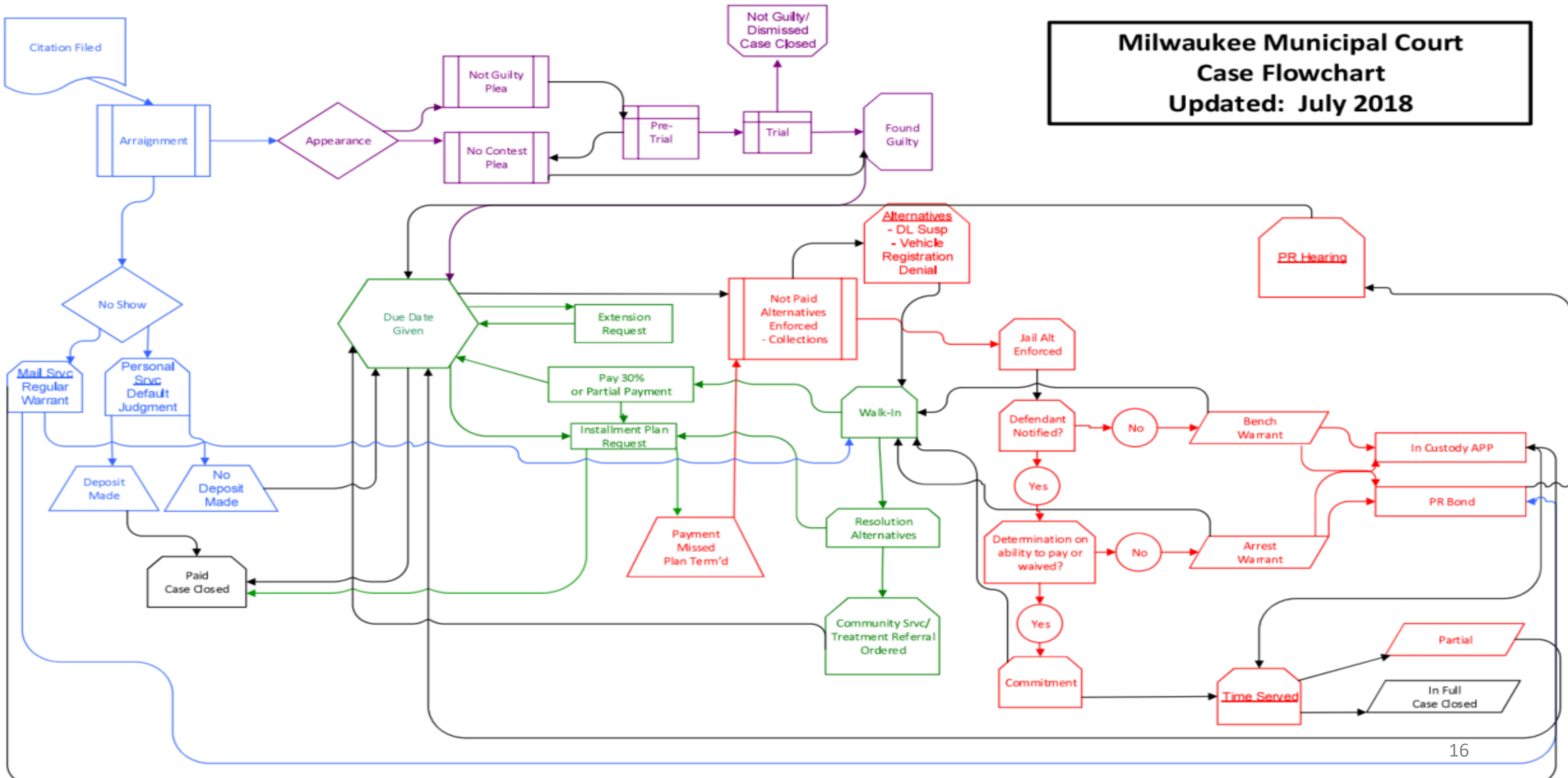


The Adjudication Process: Ideal Case Flow



Citation →	Arraignment →	Pre-trial hearing →	Trial
	Defendant is informed of the charge	Consultation with City Attorney	Not guilty finding: charges dismissed
	Defendant enters a plea (guilty/ not guilty/ no contest)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Settlement 	Guilty: judgment imposed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If guilty or no contest, judgment imposed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If no settlement, next step 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forfeiture
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If not guilty, next step 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Other conditional sentencing

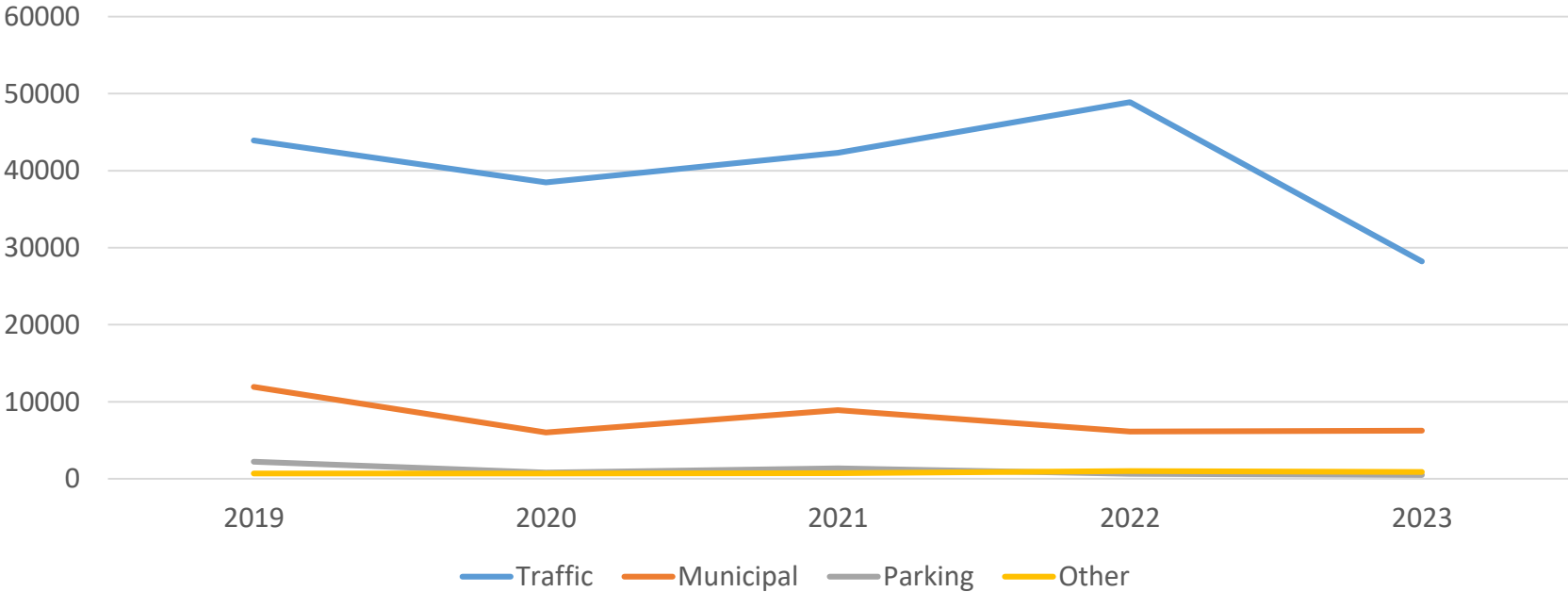
Anatomy of a Case



Case Filings with the Court: 2019-2023



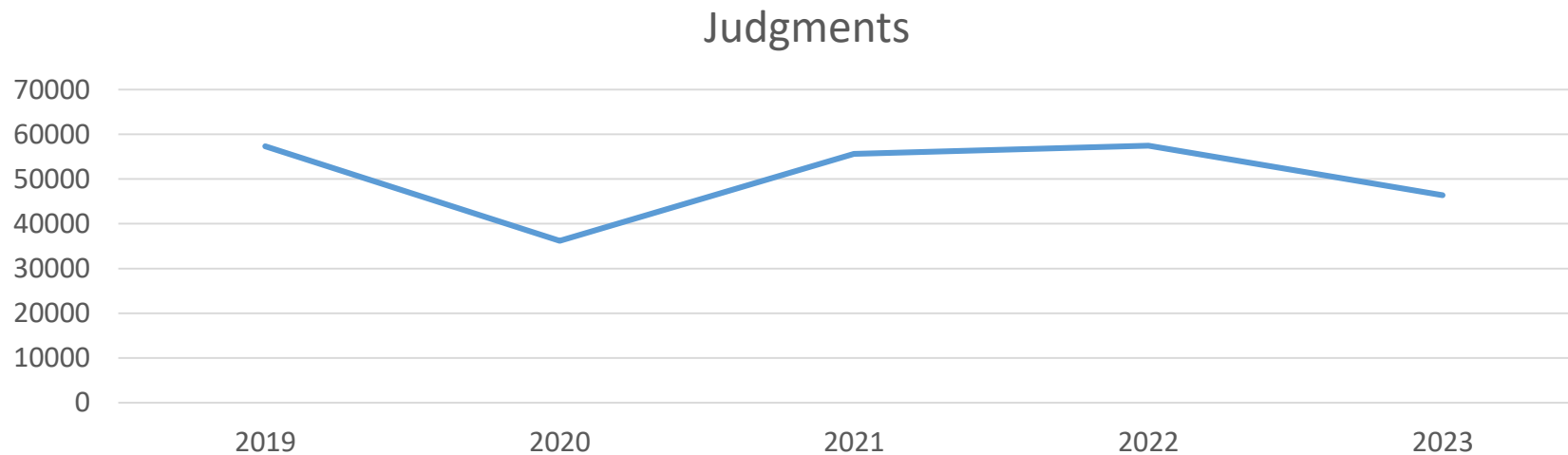
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Traffic	43,919	38,461	42,329	48,877	28,221
Municipal	11,944	6,007	8,925	6,144	6,261
Parking	2,205	805	1,358	644	515
Other	691	710	735	1,023	895
TOTAL	58,759	45,983	53,347	56,688	35,892



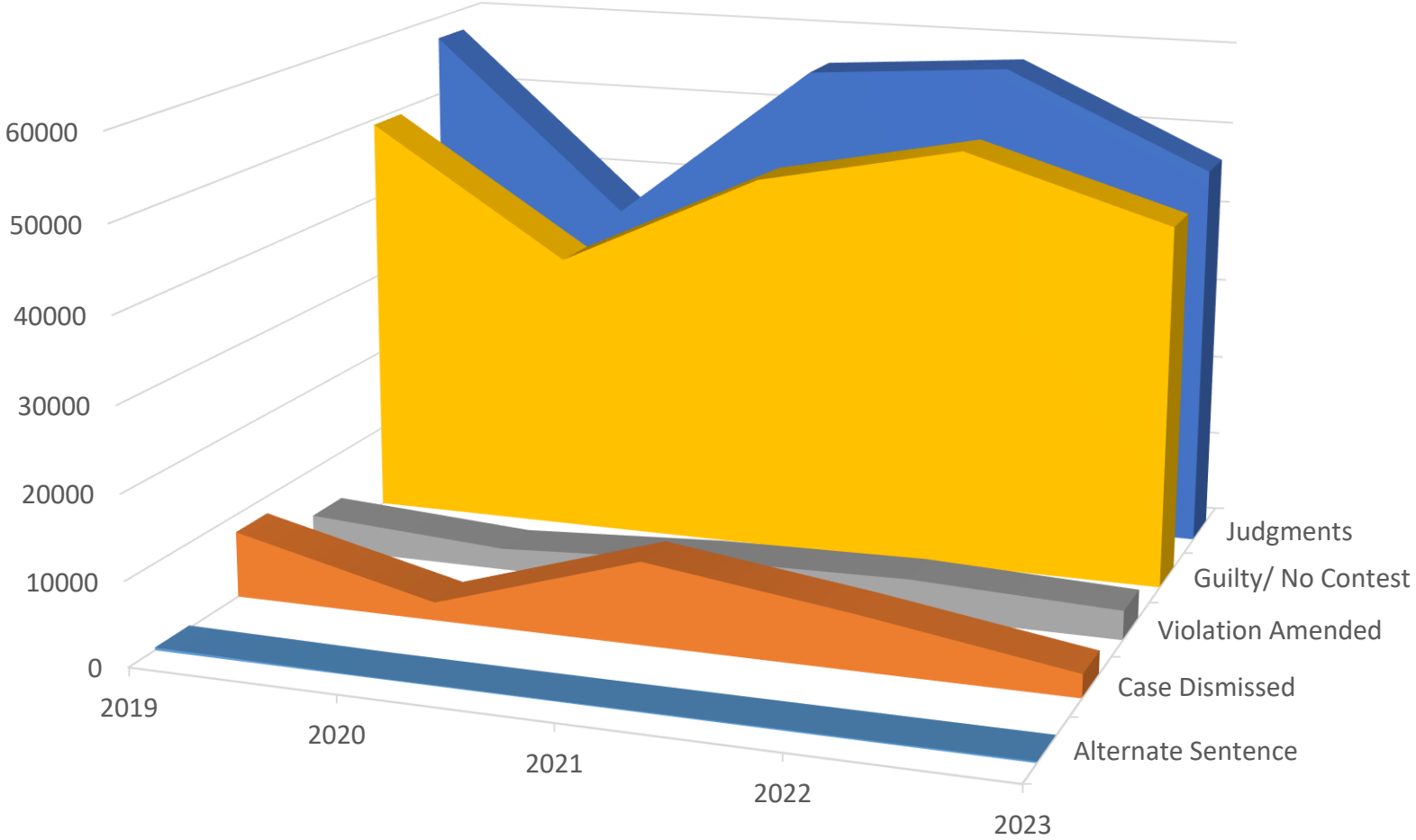
Judgments & Penalties: 2019-2023



	Judgments	Dismissed	Guilty/ No Contest	Violation Amended	Alternate Sentence
2019	57,285	7,929	49,334	4,119	322
2020	36,173	2,156	34,005	2,601	108
2021	55,626	9,870	45,745	3,942	112
2022	57,457	6,572	50,872	4,404	155
2023	46,399	2,772	43,619	3,487	188



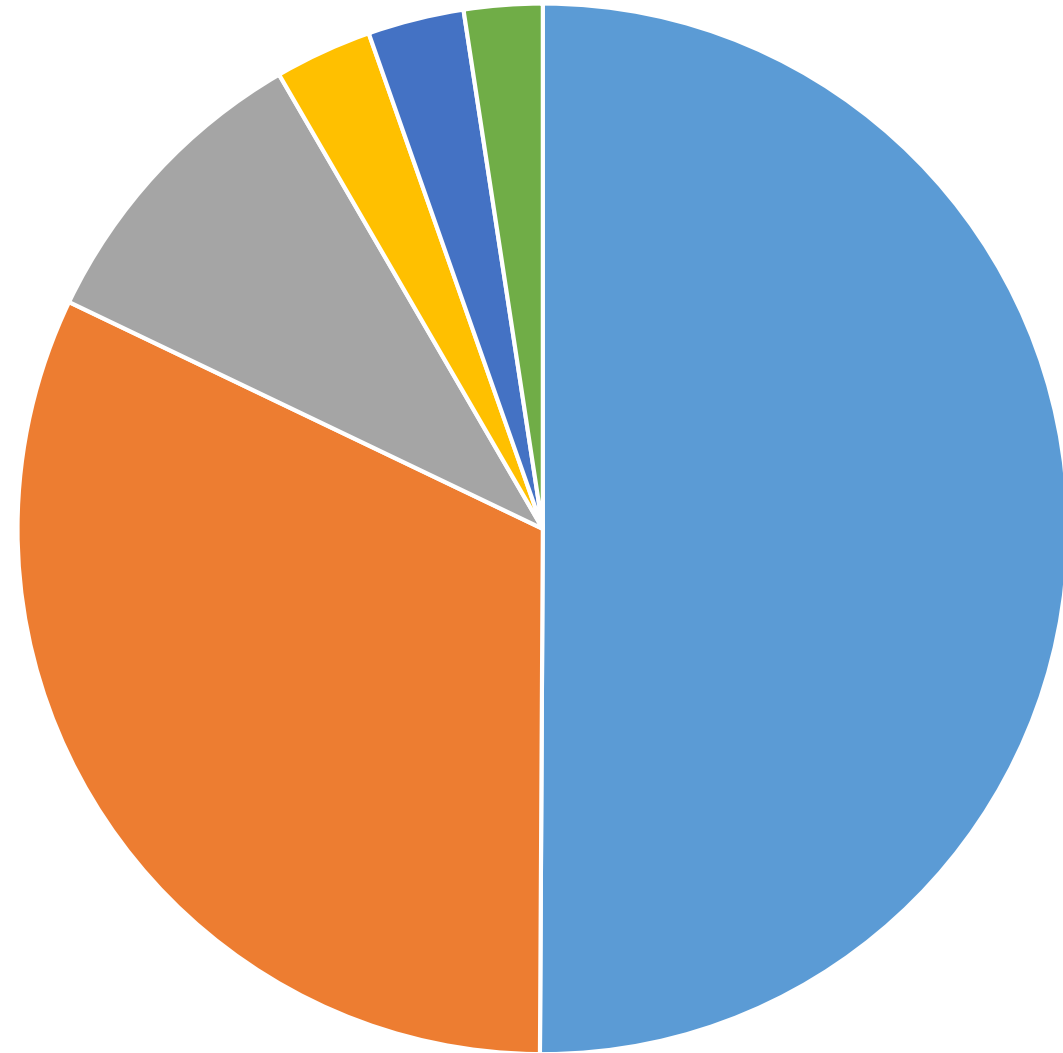
Outcomes (based on year of judgment): 2019-2023



■ Alternate Sentence ■ Case Dismissed ■ Violation Amended ■ Guilty/ No Contest ■ Judgments

Duration of a Case: 2023 Judgments

Number of Judgments	46,399	%
3 months	23,240	50%
6 months	14,856	32%
1 year	4,418	10%
2 years	1,390	3%
5 years	1,375	3%
5+ years	1,120	2%



For judgments rendered in 2023, the amount of time lapsed from date of filing

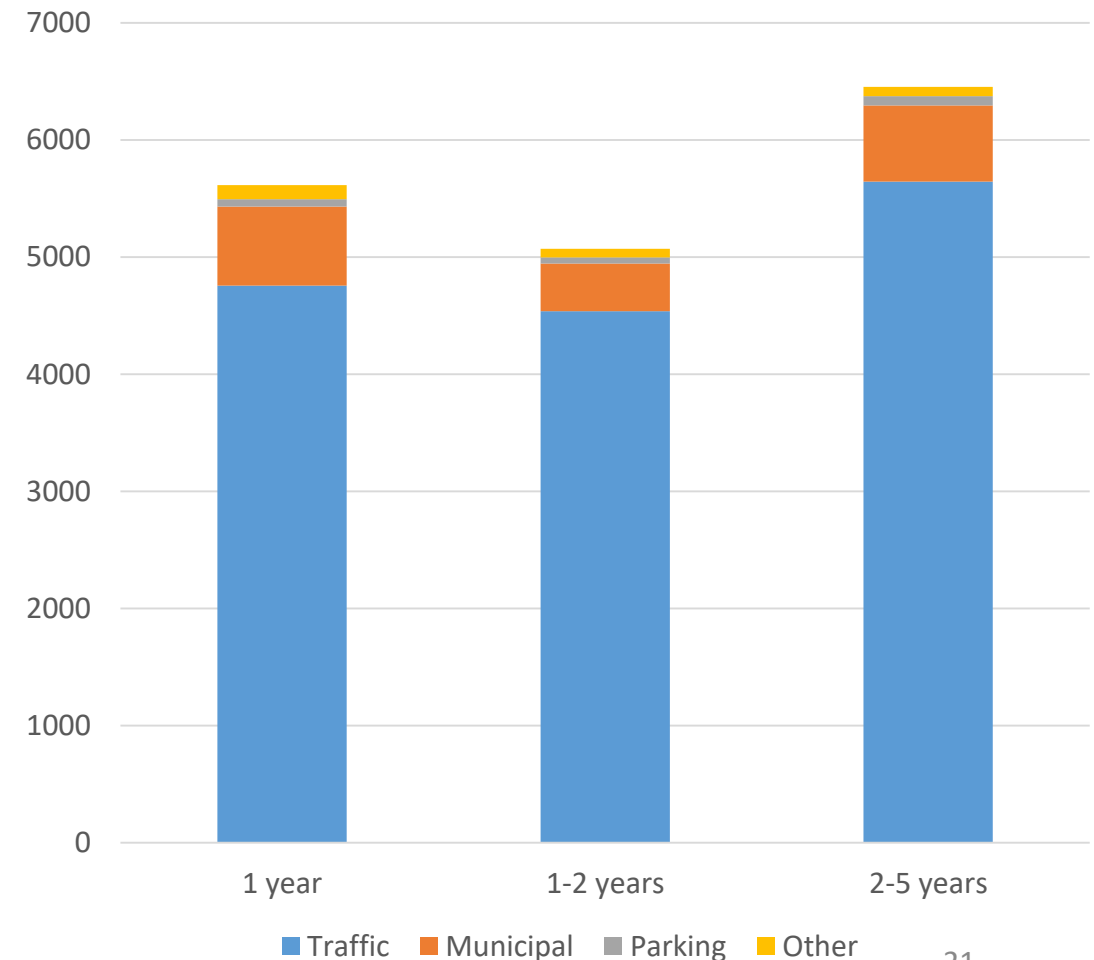
Recidivism: Defendants with Judgments in 2023



27,793 Defendants in 2023	Municipal	Traffic	Parking	Other	TOTAL
< 1 year	677	4,756	61	122	5,616
1 – 2 years	408	4,538	50	76	5,072
2 – 5 years	649	5,645	80	79	6,453
TOTAL*	1,727	11,253	151	228	13,359

* The total number of defendants is based on the number that returned within the entire timeframe. For example, the same defendant may have returned within 1 year and again within 2 – 5 years. Accordingly, that person would appear twice on the table, but only be counted once in the total.

Defendants with Judgments in 2023 who Returned within 1 to 5 years



Innovations



- Notices are under review for decreasing mailing volume and cost
- In 2025, the Municipal Court will partner with the Library to provide increased access via Zoom
 - Pilot program
 - March 1 for 3 months
 - Soft launch
 - Reserve dedicated rooms and a laptop
 - 4 branch locations:
 - Atkinson
 - Center St.
 - Mitchell St.
 - Washington Park

2025 Challenges



- Location affects appearance rates
 - Access to parking
 - Community trust/ fear of arrest when reporting to Police Administration Building
- Service impacts from budget reductions
 - General Office Expense Reduction (\$240,000 requested/\$215,000 proposed). This account is for mailing expenses. The Court is statutorily required to mail certain notices. If citations increase, as anticipated with the influx of new officers hired in MPD, the Court will not be able to meet its statutory obligation.
 - Professional Services (\$65,000 requested/\$60,000 proposed). This account is for cleaning costs. The contract is \$5,500 per month/ \$66,000 for the year. This proposed amount is \$6,000 less than the contract.
 - Information Technology Services (\$80,000 requested/\$65,000 proposed). This decrease will reduce funds for support and maintenance on aging equipment and software, thus increasing risk for interruptions in Court hearings and case administration.
 - Court Hardware Replacement Project (\$15,000 requested/\$10,000 proposed). This fund covers the continual need to replace various aging hardware on an as-needed basis. This reduction limits the ability to address such needs that are often unanticipated.