

2021



Legislative Reference Bureau

www.milwaukee.gov/lrb



CITY ATTORNEY

2021 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

Prepared by: Dana Zelazny, Legislative Fiscal Analyst
Budget Hearing: 11:00 a.m. on Friday, October 2, 2020



\$7,199,808

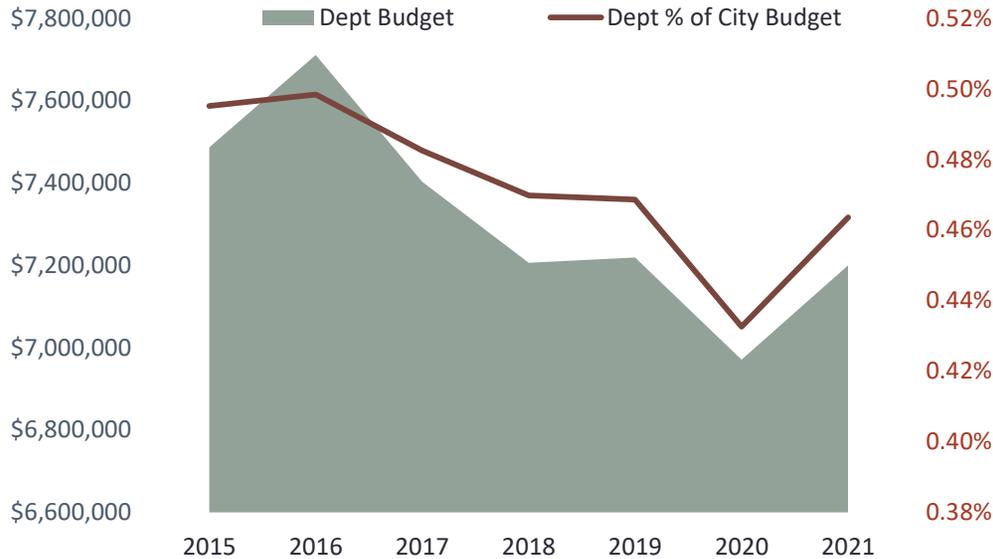
Proposed 2021 Budget

\$228,911

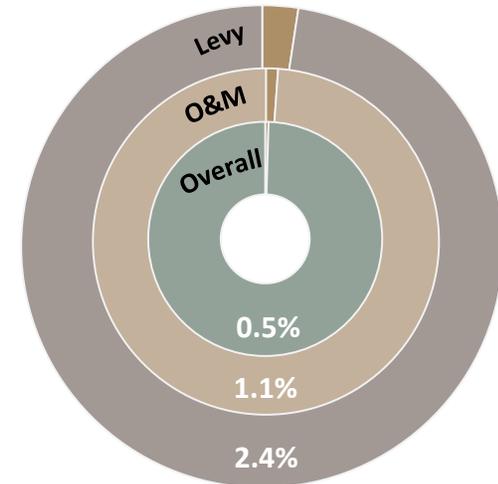
Change in Proposed Budget

3.3%

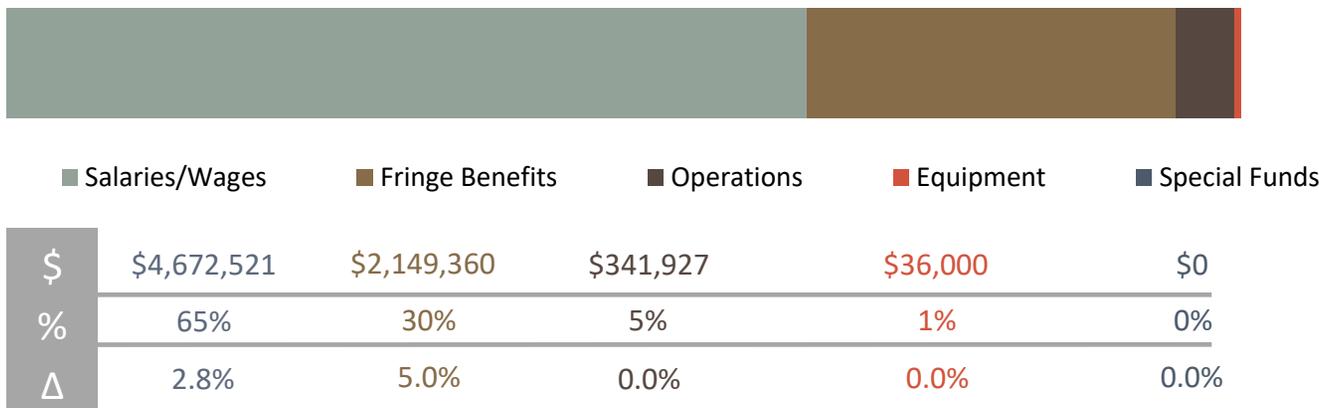
% Change in Proposed Budget



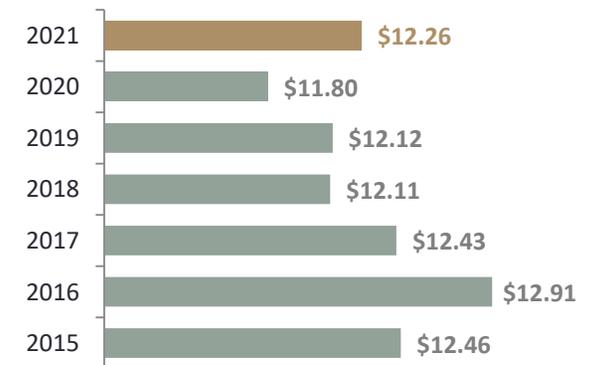
Departmental Budget Impact



Departmental Budget Appropriation Category



Budget per Capita

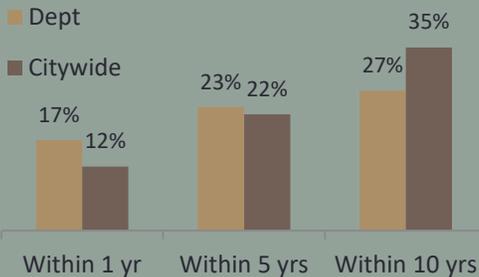


\$395,000

Amount of the 2021 Personnel Cost Adjustment, which represents offsets for vacant positions in the Salary budget. The 2021 amount is about 7% of the total Salary budget and more than double the amount from 2020.

At this level, vacancies may have to be held open for a significant amount of time to meet the department's Salary budget.

Retirement Eligible



0

Change in Positions

0.0%

% Change in Positions

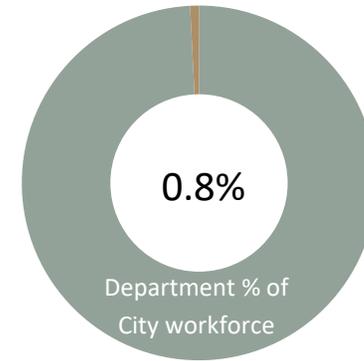
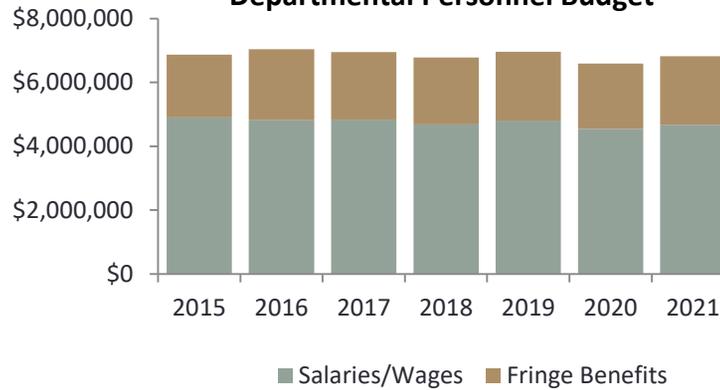
4

Current Vacancies

3

Voluntary Separations

Departmental Personnel Budget

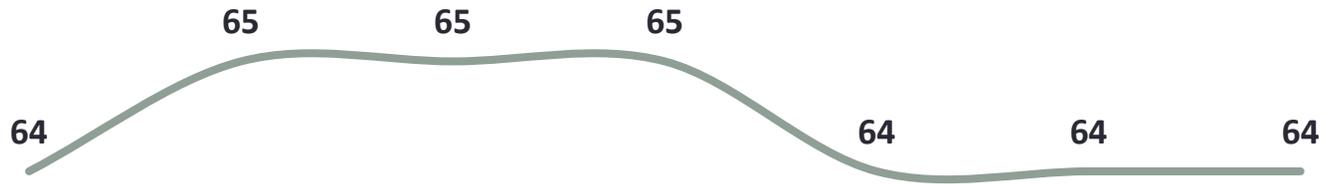


Vacancies

- 2 of 4 Deputy City Attorney positions.
- 1 of 33 Assistant City Attorney positions.
- 1 of 2 Administrative Specialist – Senior positions.

Staffing

- Mid-year 2020, a vacant Assistant City Attorney position was eliminated and a Chief of Staff position was created. This change will provide greater support for the newly-elected City Attorney.
- The department intends to undertake a staff reorganization in 2021.



Department Positions
2015-2021

\$110,378

Expenditures in 2019 on Outside Counsel and Expert Witness fees.

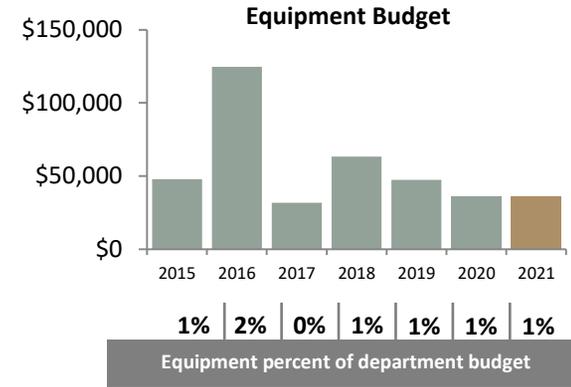
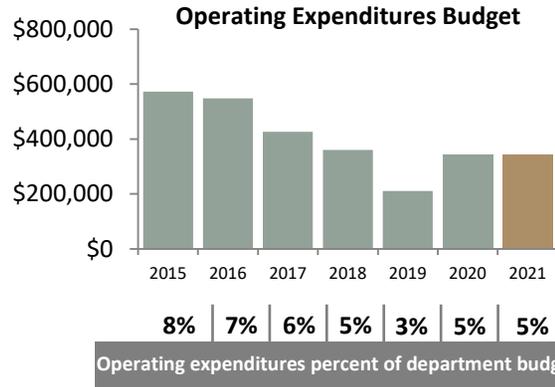
\$13,581,774

2019 expenditures from the Damages and Claims Special Purpose Account. Damages and Claims expenditures totaled \$42.9 million from 2015-2019.

This Special Purpose Account is typically funded at \$1.225 million per year. Unbudgeted Damages and Claims expenditures are paid for through contingent borrowing.

\$881,000

2021 estimated charges for Reimbursed Services; down 7% from 2020.



Revenue

Top 4 areas of Reimbursement Services, 2021 estimates:

- Services to Water \$327,000
- Services to RACM \$285,000
- Services to HACM \$155,800
- Services to ERS \$85,600

Special Purpose Accounts

Damages and Claims (no change from 2020)	\$1,225,000
Insurance Fund (no change from 2020)	\$922,000
Outside Counsel/Expert Witness Fund (decreased \$300,000, or 67%)	\$150,000

Grants

The Department does not anticipate receiving any grant funds.

Capital Requests

This department has no capital funding in the Proposed Budget.

The department did request \$4.7 million in capital funds for a long-delayed remodeling of the City Hall 8th Floor offices.

406

State and Federal Court cases opened in 2019. 500 such cases were closed, while 652 were pending.

253

Number of eviction cases handled in 2019, down from 301 in 2018.

\$ 12.2 million

Expenditures for police-related damages and claims in 2019, including police deaths in custody, misconduct and wrongful convictions. 2020 expenditures to date are \$2 million.

741

Number of liability claims received in 2019, up 9% from 2018; 709 liability claims were closed in 2018.

Diversity Clerkship

For the 4th 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 premises 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 and 2020, the Department was heavily involved in negotiating agreements with the DNC and Host Committee, procurement, arranging for supplemental law enforcement, creating First Amendment zones, licensing and other issues. As the DNC was scaled back, the department continued to work on renegotiating agreements, canceling contracts, federal grant reimbursement, and revising facility leases. On-going issues include a federal grant audit, public records requests and insurance claims.

Evictions Database

The department collaborated with the Department of Neighborhood Services and other stakeholders to establish an evictions database in 2019. The database is used by the department to investigate possible 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.