

2023



Legislative Reference Bureau

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# DPW-FORESTRY

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## 2023 Proposed Plan and Executive Budget Review

Prepared by: Kathleen Brengosz, Fiscal Planning Specialist  
Budget Hearing: 10:30 am on Thursday, October 13, 2022



**\$11,229,621**

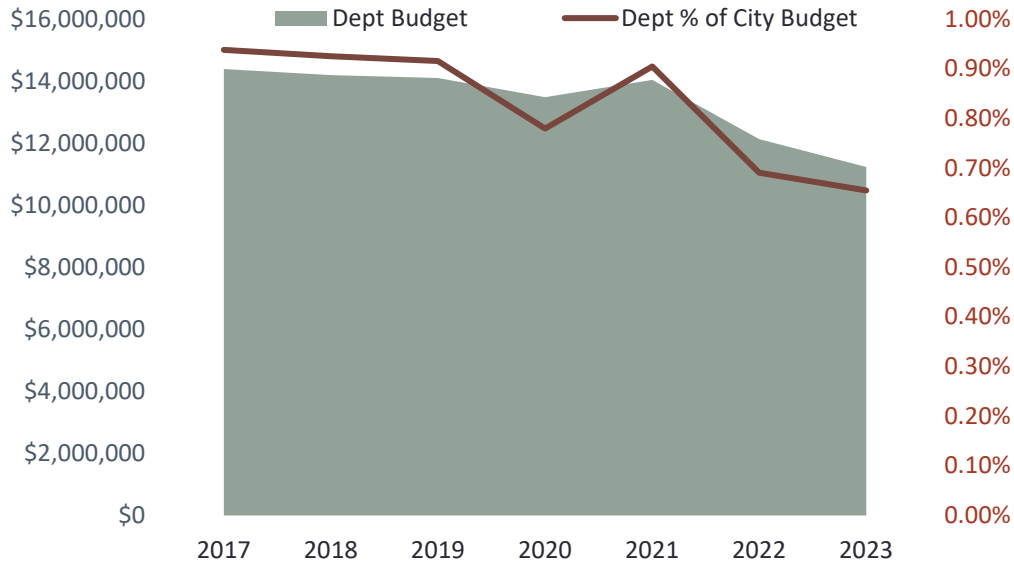
Proposed 2023 Budget

**\$902,806**

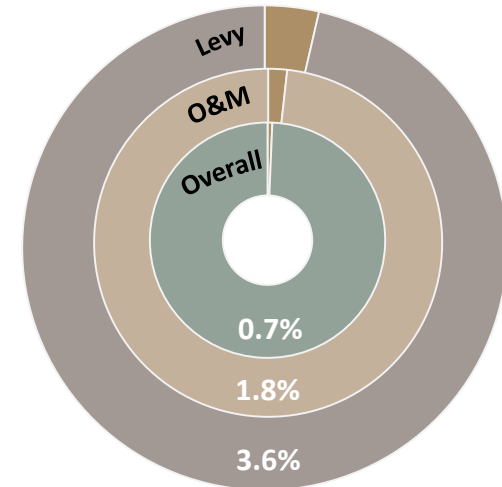
Change in Proposed Budget

**7.4%**

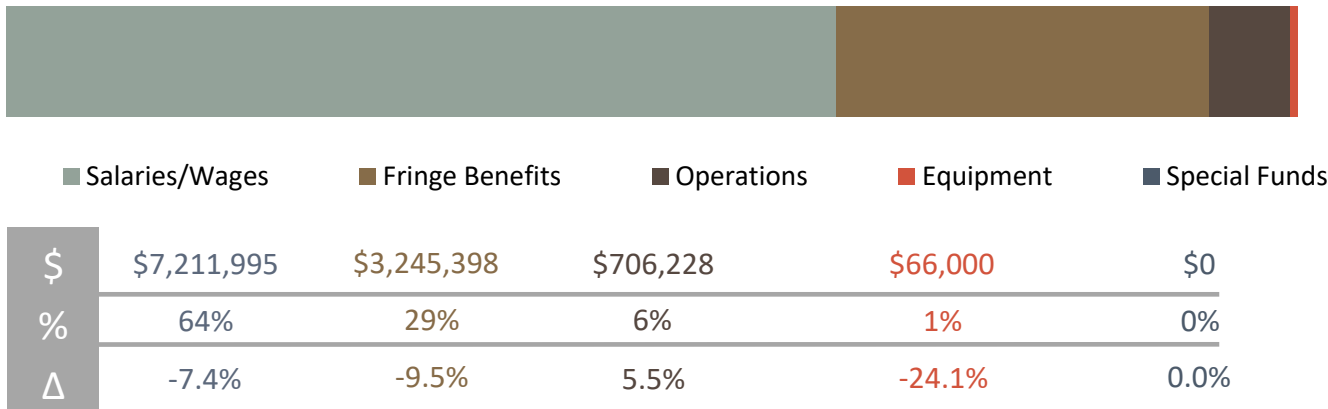
% Change in Proposed Budget



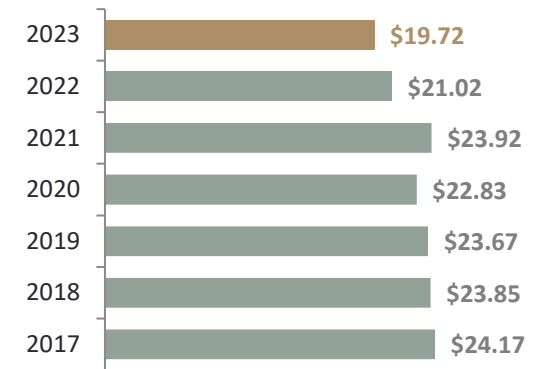
**Departmental Budget Impact**



**Departmental Budget Appropriation Category**



**Budget per Capita**



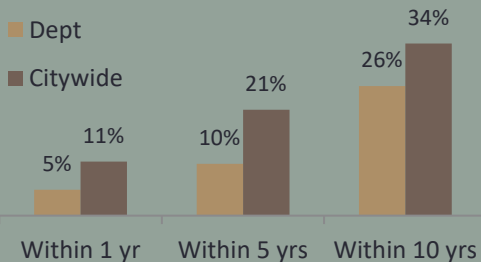
**\$12,158,390**

Requested Budget  
\$928,769 (8.27%) more than  
Proposed Budget.

**5 years**

Inspection cycle for all trees.

**Retirement Eligible**



**-18**

Change in Positions

**-9.4%**

% Change in Positions

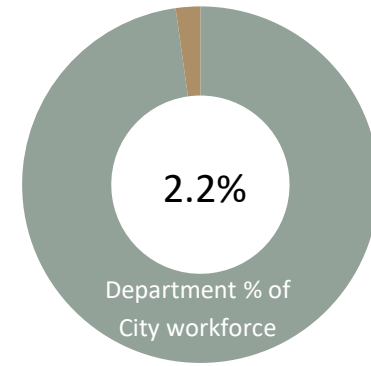
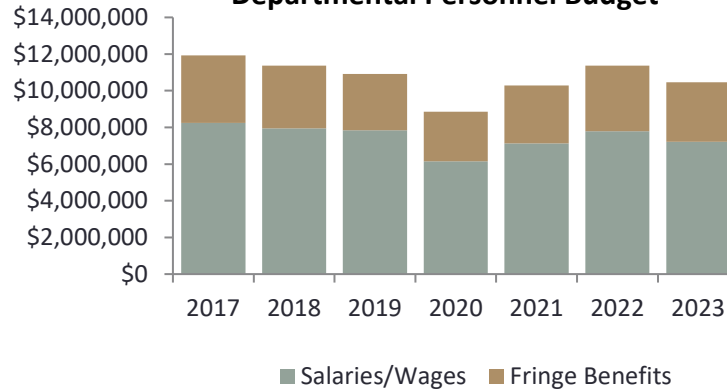
**20**

Current Vacancies

**6**

Voluntary Separations

**Departmental Personnel Budget**



**New Positions**

- 3 Program Assistants

**Eliminated Positions**

- 8 Urban Forestry Specialists
- 3 Urban Forestry Laborers
- 3 Office Assistants

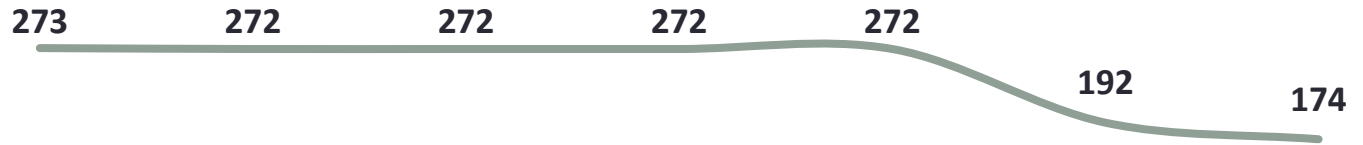
**Transferred Positions\***

- 6 Urban Forestry Technicians
  - 1 Property Maint & Compliance Manager
- \*Moved to DPW Operations – Admin.

**Vacancies**

There are currently 20 vacancies.

Position	Authorized	Vacant
Equipment Mechanic III	2	1
Urban Forestry Crew Leader	21	1
Urban Forestry Specialist	91	13
Urban Forestry Laborer	24	5



**Department Positions  
2017-2023**

83

Number of Urban Forestry Specialist positions, down from 91 in 2022.

2.08

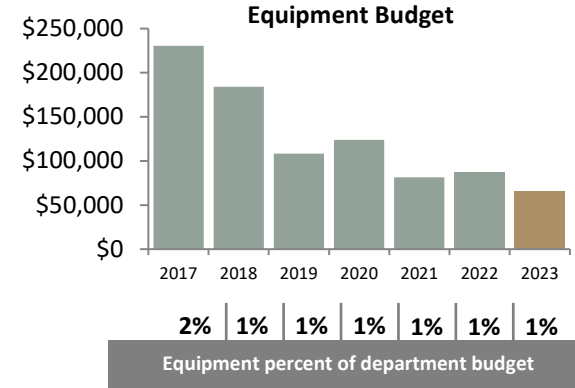
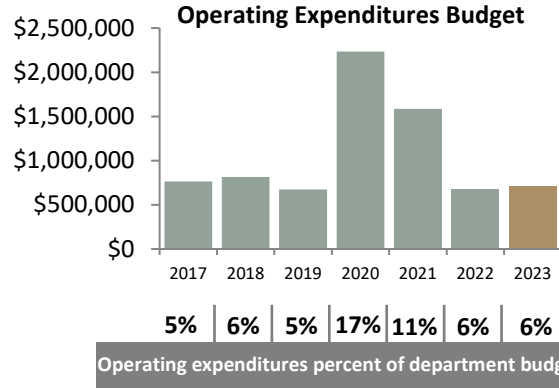
Average work hours per tree in 2022, down from 2.98 in 2020, because only small trees are regularly pruned.

6

The number of mowing cycles for vacant lots proposed for 2023, down from 11 in 2021, and 9 in 2022.

5%

Percent of Forestry’s typical operations expected to be performed by a contracted workforce in 2023.



**Revenue**

Forestry will receive a transfer from the Sewer Maintenance Fund to support tree production, planting and pruning.

Other revenue sources include ordered snow and weed removal and other charges related to street tree removals. Actual revenue from these sources can be highly variable.

**Capital Funding**

Replace Irrigation Taps	\$ 200,000
Tree Planting & Production	\$ 1,200,000
Stump Removal	\$ 1,175,000
Emerald Ash Borer Program	\$ 860,000
Hazardous Tee Removal	\$ 0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,435,000</b>

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

**Special Purpose Accounts**

This department has no special purpose accounts.

**Grants**

Forestry has one on-going grant-funded project to remove and replace 450 ash street trees with alternative species using the 2020 Replacing Ash Trees to Fight Climate Change grant.

Tree removals are on-going The grant was extended to December 31, 2025, due to the continued impacts of COVID-19.

The department will use a \$22,000 grant (\$11,000 grant + \$11,000 City match) to create a robust community tree planting program to address tree equity and improve the tree canopy across the city.

2,064

Street trees removed to date in 2022.

36.2%

Percentage of Norway Maple trees in the street tree inventory.

2,531

Street trees removed in 2020. On average 2% of trees are removed and replaced each year.

3,447

Street trees planted in 2021.

**Tree Pruning**

In 2021, the department began a new tree maintenance program. The department will inspect all trees every 5 years. Trees that are smaller than 12” in diameter will be pruned every 5 years. Trees that are larger than 12” in diameter will be pruned as needed and as scheduling allows.

This maintenance program replaced the previous program which pruned all trees on a regular cycle. Since 2005, when the pruning cycle was 5 years, the pruning cycle has lengthened each year as resources did not keep up with demand. By 2020 the pruning cycle was effectively 12 years.

Storm damage incidents have trended upward as the pruning cycle was extended.

**Training Crew**

The 4th cohort of Arborist Apprentices began training on August 31, 2022. The cohort started with 14 members and now has 11 Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentices.

There is currently a total of 30 apprentices training in the 4 active cohorts.

No start date has been set for the next cohort.

**Compliance & Property Management.**

The Proposed Budget moves 7 positions from Forestry to the DPW Operations-Administration Section to create a new Compliance and Property Management Unit. The new unit also includes 8 inspectors from Sanitation.

The purpose is to consolidate code enforcement activities into a distinct functional unit. Combining code enforcement activities will allow for cross training between Forestry and Sanitation inspectors. Operationally, no significant changes to how code enforcement is done in the 2 sections are expected in 2023. However, combining the functions into a unique budgetary unit is a first step towards consolidating the 2 sets of inspectors.

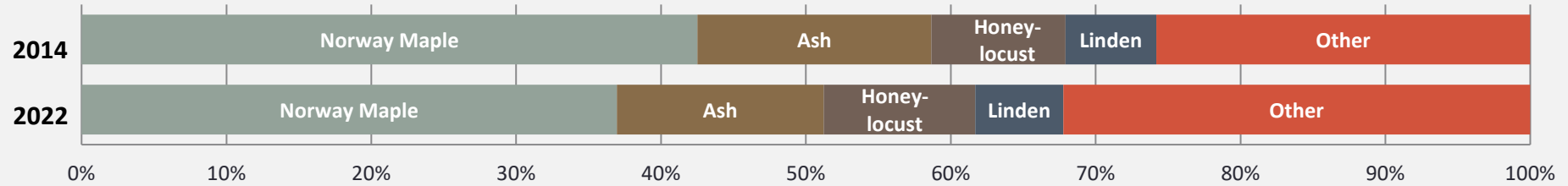
**Impact of Staff Reduction**

The reduction of 8 Urban Forestry Specialists and 3 Urban Forestry Laborers will likely impact signature beds, green house operations and nursery operations.

Staffing in Forestry would likely be concentrated towards the maintenance, removal and planting of trees. There may be delays in tree removals and emergency tree response.

In addition, reduced staffing will impact City snow and ice control operations.

### Change in Street Tree Distribution



#### Stumping

Forestry carried over 2,800 stumps into 2022. The expected 2022 year-end backlog is about 3,700 stumps. The department estimates that it can remove approximately 1,200 stumps each year with its existing staff. The Proposed Budget includes \$1.2 million for contracted stump removal to augment work done by City staff.

The historic average backlog of about 400 stumps began to grow around 2010. Reductions in Urban Forestry FTE's, reductions in funding for seasonal employees, vacancies, participation in snow and ice control operations, and COVID-related delays are contributing factors. A summer storm in 2021 caused the unexpected loss of 600 trees, adding to the backlog.

#### Workforce Development Grant

Forestry anticipates receiving a Forestry Workforce Development and Training grant in the amount of \$22,000 (\$11,000 grantor share, \$11,000 City match) to assist in funding the development and implementation of an Electrical Hazard Awareness Training Program for all Forestry employees. The training may include First Aid/CPR and Aerial Rescue Training. The grant will also provide Teaching Methods and Technology – Apprentice training/certification for a limited number of staff to expand Forestry's ability to provide qualified instructors for the Urban Forestry Arborist Apprentice Program.

