

**Department of Public Works FY 2023 Operating Budget  
&  
Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund FY 2023 Operating Budget**

**INTRODUCTION**

The Advisory Committee's Capital Subcommittee held a public hearing on March 16th, 2021, at 5:30 p.m., via Zoom to review, discuss, and take public comment on the FY23 operating budget of the Department of Public Works, which includes five department divisions: Engineering/Transportation, Highway/ Sanitation/Fleet Services, Parks and Open Space, Water and Sewer, and Administration. During the hearing the Subcommittee also reviewed, discussed and took public comment on the FY 23 operating budget of the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund as well as the Department's CIP requests. Access to a recording of the meeting can be found [here](#) and the passcode to access it is pTs%5@h.

**ATTENDEES**

Subcommittee member attendees were John Doggett, Pam Lodish, Harry Friedman, Alok Somani and Co-chair Carla Benka; Town staff attendees were Deputy Town Administrator Melissa Goff, DPW Commissioner Erin Gallentine, Director of Parks and Open Space Alexandra Vecchio, Director of Water and Sewer Jay Hersey, Director of Sanitation and Highways Kevin Johnson, Director of Engineering Robert King, and Transportation Administrator Todd Kirrane.

Also in attendance were Select Board members Heather Hamilton and John VanScoyoc; Transportation Board Chair Brian Kane and board members Wendy Friedman and Len Wholey; Park and Recreation Commissioner Nancy O'Connor, Pedestrian Advisory Committee Chairman David Trevvett, Town Meeting members Hugh Mattison (p.5), Sean Lynn-Jones (P.1), Clint Richmond (P. 6), Paul Saner (P.13), Richard Nangle (P.15), Deborah Brown (P.1) and Regina Frawley (P.16); and members of the public Emily Jacobson, Member of the Bicycle Advisory Committee; Gareth Lawson, parent member of Brookline Safe Routes To School (SRTS); Arlene Mattison, President of the Brookline Greenspace Alliance; Karen Mauney-Brodek, James Lee, Abby Swaine, David Kroop, John Bowman, Marian Lazar, Mary Sabolsi, Paul Hsieh, Rebecca Salguero, and Shenali Gaudino.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS**

**FY 2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The DPW provides essential services to Brookline residents. They provide our water, make possible our system of roads, bridges, and sidewalks, and take away our waste. The DPW budget contains six Public Works sub programs: Administration,

Engineering/Transportation, Highway, Sanitation and Fleet Services, Parks and Open Space, and the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund.

Among the accomplishments of the last year have been the following:

- Complete 10-Year DPW Vision and Strategic Plan for FY22-FY32
- Complete the Town's Urban Forest Climate Resiliency Master Plan
- Improved coordination with Building and Planning Departments for all Site Plan Reviews
- Commence the Willow Pond Environmental Restoration Permitting, Design, and Engineering Process
- Complete the Brookline Ice Skating Rink Preliminary Feasibility Study
- Complete the full survey and preliminary assessment for the Washington Street Corridor Project
- Complete Rehabilitation of Winchester Street, Hamilton Road and Columbia Roads
- Complete a full refuse cart audit and update the asset management inventory
- Develop guidelines and implement the Outdoor Dining Program in the public way and design/create two parklets
- Install a section of Low Carbon Concrete Sidewalk at Town Hall
- Complete Phase 4 Improvements to the Sanitary Sewer System Lining Project
- Oversee installation of Audible Pedestrian Signals (APS) and Count Down Timer Upgrades at key crossings
- Complete the Beacon Street Bridal Path Feasibility and Concept Design Study
- Update and begin Implementation of the Transportation and Mobility Plan

## **TEN YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN**

Commissioner Gallentine presented the recently completed Ten Year Strategic Plan that articulates the five Guiding Principles for the DPW. These principles provide the framework to prioritize work activity and budgeting and define the Department's Vision and Mission.

**Vision:** Brookline Department of Public Works provides the foundation for a sustainable, inclusive, connected, vibrant, safe and livable community.

**Mission:** To enhance the quality of life in Brookline as responsible stewards of the public's physical assets, infrastructure and natural resources by providing outstanding service in partnership with the community. We design, build, manage, maintain, protect and improve the Town's utilities (water, sewer, and stormwater), infrastructure and public spaces (public right-of-way, parks, public grounds and civic spaces) with skill, pride, equity, innovation and responsiveness. We provide reliable, cost effective, high-quality services that protect public health, maintain customer confidence and support a prosperous economy.

The Strategic Plan with its detailed Guiding Principles and Objectives is included in the packet of information for the Advisory Committee's March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

## FY 23 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In the coming year, the Department plans to achieve the following:

- Create a Communications Strategy & Plan that includes a full update of the DPW Website to provide clear, consistent and reliable information for residents, businesses, contractors and utilities
- Manage the Design & Public Process for the Washington Street Corridor “Complete Streets” Project
- Update and implement an Environmental, Health and Safety Plan with associated department-wide training
- Continue pilot of new weather intelligence software to assist with emergency storm preparations
- Reach substantial completion on the Larz Anderson Park & Cypress Playground Renovation Projects
- Commence multi-modal safety improvements on Davis Avenue, Greenough Street and Tappan Street
- Commence the Robinson and Murphy Playground Renovation Projects
- Reach substantial completion on the Muddy River Restoration and Carlton Street Footbridge Projects
- Commence Phase 5 Improvements to the Sanitary Sewer System
- Begin preliminary conceptual design services associated with the Davis Path Footbridge and Path
- Continue Further Racial Equity and Community Engagement Goals for DPW
- Provide Additional Updates to the Town’s Snow and Ice Management Plan
- Continue roll out of replacement MTUs for Water Meter Readings

## BUDGET SUMMARY

The DPW FY23 operating budget of the six divisions totals \$29,495,405 including the operating portion of the Water and Sewer Enterprise fund but excluding payments to the MWRA. This will be discussed in more detail at the end of this report.

First the DPW FY23 operating budget, excluding the Enterprise fund, is essentially level funded at \$16,747,736 and represents a \$79,501 increase (0.48%) over FY22.

### FY2023 DPW Operating Budget - \$16,747,736

Expenditure Categories	FY21 Actual	FY22 Budget	FY23 Budget	FY22-23 \$Variance	FY22-23 %Variance
SALARIES	8,691,141	8,710,723	8,569,486	-141,237	-1.621%
SERVICES	4,547,936	5,121,628	5,218,510	96,882	1.89%
SUPPLIES	1,251,581	970,261	1,022,885	52,624	5.42%
OTHER	25,573	45,500	45,500	0	0.00%
UTILITIES	1,026,123	1,132,392	1,202,125	69,733	6.16%
BUDGETED CAPITAL	622,329	687,730	689,230	1,500	0.22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16,164,683</b>	<b>16,668,234</b>	<b>16,747,736</b>	<b>79,501</b>	<b>.48%</b>

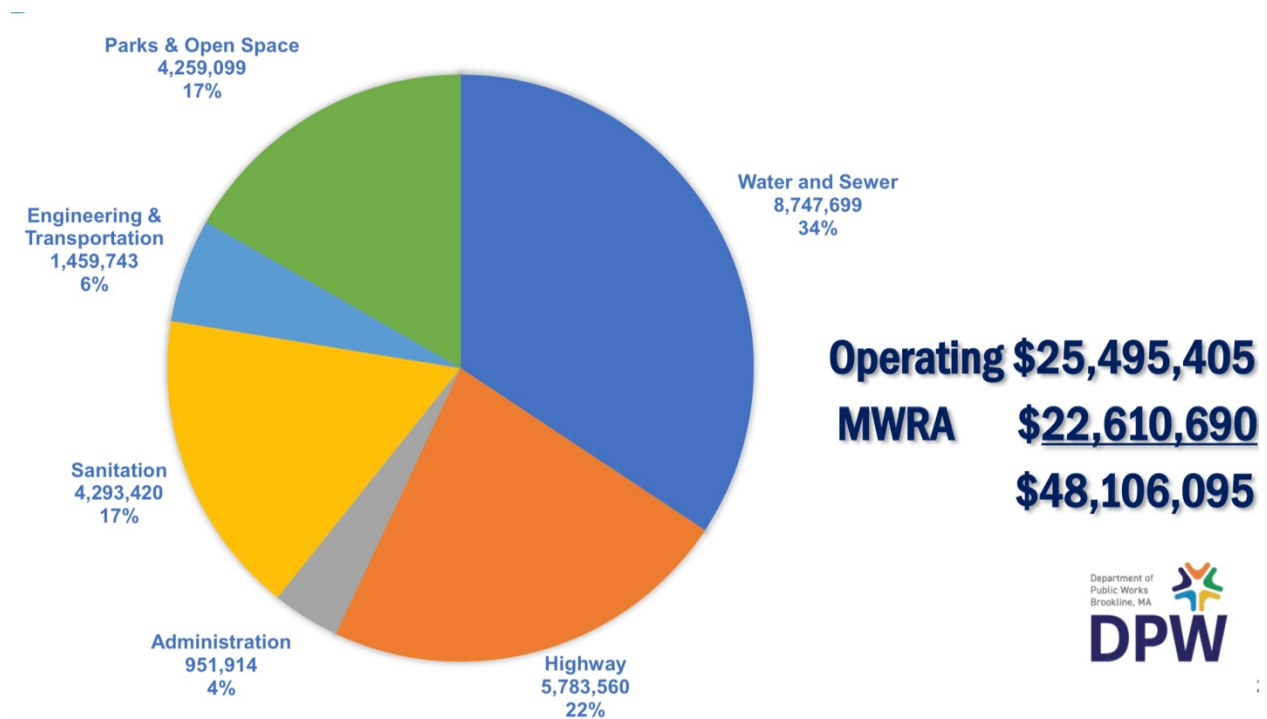
Despite being level funded, the Department has added a number of positions that have other sources of funding as shown in the table below.

### Offsets

Position	Budget	Offset
EH&S Officer	\$96,244	Capital Projects/Water/Sewer
Sr. Transportation Eng.	\$96,000	HCA
Civil Engineer IV	\$96,080	Sewer Rehab
Permit Inspector	\$83,698	Roadway Rehab
Motor Equipment Operator II	\$56,522	HCA
Zero Waste Program Manager	\$76,257	Grant
66% Landscape Architect	\$57,395	Capital Projects
OT – Park Patrols	\$30,000	HCA
Signage & Supplies	\$27,000	HCA
<b>Total</b>	<b>619,196</b>	

These positions will help increase the Department’s ability to handle more projects and other increased operational activities.

The five division’s operating budgets plus administration costs totaling \$25,495,405 are compared in the pie chart below. In addition, the Water and Sewer division estimates that the MWRA fees will be \$22,610,690.



The department is also expected to generate revenues of \$4,459,403, a \$399,500 increase over FY 2022. These include refuse fees, as well as parking fees.

## **SUBCOMMITTEE QUESTIONS and PUBLIC COMMENT**

In the written responses to questions from the Subcommittee, Commissioner Gallentine noted that the DPW workload during the pandemic increased significantly because of the increased use of public parks and other public spaces; increased litter and trash in parks and playgrounds; installation of outdoor dining spaces in the public way that required inspections for safety, compliance, and accessibility; increased cafeteria food and litter on school grounds as school lunch periods moved outdoors; and becoming, along with the Police Department, the *de facto* mask enforcement call center. The DPW staff, although understaffed and working with significant constraints, put in extra effort to maintain effective operations. However, many of the department staff feel underappreciated by the Town because their work to meet the needs of the Town during the pandemic generally went unrecognized. In addition, as staff diverted attention to pandemic-driven needs, the delivery of capital projects was in some cases delayed.

Commissioner Gallentine, in response to a question about the impact of resolutions or articles on DPW operations, offered six examples of Town Meeting actions that were either unfunded or inadequately funded. These include the Leaf Blower By-law, the By-law addressing Sidewalk Obstructions; the Residential Sidewalk Snow Removal Policy; the Resolution pertaining to Composting; the Health and Sustainable Transportation Warrant Article (Article 31), and Complete Streets.

While supportive of their intent, the Commissioner noted that without adequate funding, there can be unintended consequences that result from such actions, including pulling staff away from their primary responsibilities to handle inspections, enforcement issues, research, or project management.

Eleven members of the public spoke at the hearing. All were supportive of the budget and the CIP requests and the new position of Transportation Engineer. Safety of streets for pedestrians and bicyclists was the main focus of most people's comments. Additional funding for more staffing, particularly to increase the speed of developing public safety projects, was strongly encouraged. Many voiced concerns about the length of time taken to get safety projects implemented. In addition one speaker voiced concerns that our parks and open spaces are now being more heavily used due to COVID and that the Town needs to increase its investment in parks and other public open spaces.

The Subcommittee submitted many other written questions to the Department, the answers for which are contained in Appendix 1, following the Report on the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund.

### **RECOMMENDATION – FY 23 DPW OPERATING BUDGET**

The Subcommittee, by a vote of 5-0-0, recommends approval of \$16,747,736 for the FY23 DPW operating budget.

## **WATER AND SEWER ENTERPRISE FUND OPERATING BUDGET**

Last fall Director Fred Russell resigned and Environmental Engineer, Jay Hersey, was promoted to the position of Director of the DPW's Water and Sewer Division. For FY23, the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund headcount is budgeted at 42 and there are currently four vacancies.

The top three FY22 accomplishments include:

1. Continuity of service to customers during COVID.
2. Installations of approximately 3,800 linear feet of new 12" redundant water main on Hammond Street.
3. Continuation of the Inflow and Infiltration program contracts to line sewers (90% complete) and seal manholes (60% complete).

The FY23 Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund budget of \$31.4 million represents an increase of ~\$0.67 million to the FY22 budget. \$22.6 million or 72% of the Water and Sewer budget is a payment to MWRA. The budgeted MWRA payment is based on a preliminary assessment. DPW estimates that rates will increase by 3-3.5% and anticipates finalizing the FY23 rate and hosting a public hearing in June 2022 once the final assessment is available.

Of the balance, \$3 million is salary, \$2.5 million is paid to the Town for shared services support (e.g. finance, legal, etc.) and \$1.7 million is debt service. The operating budget is relatively flat year on year except services and utilities increased by ~35% year on year mainly due to inflation, but because each is <1% of the overall budget, the increase does not represent a material impact. The Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund did not have an item on the expansion request.

The Town eliminated funding for the Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund's reserve fund in FY21 and froze rates so that at the end of FY21, the fund balance stood at \$408k. The reserve fund is currently just over \$500k.

The major goals for FY23 include:

1. Improve meter readings by completing all MTU installs and confirm network reliability.
2. Streamline billing and customer access to billing history.
3. Develop and implement a financial plan for the next 5-10 years.

## RECOMMENDATION

By a vote of 5-0-0, the Subcommittee recommends approval of the following table for the FY 23 Water and Sewer Enterprise Fund:

Expenses	
Salaries	\$3,022,420
Services	\$321,398
Supplies	\$169,220
Other	\$ 327,080
Utilities	\$141,100
Intergovernmental	\$22,610,690
Budgeted Capital	\$527,100
Debt Service	\$1,734,315
Interfund Transfers Out	\$2,505,036
Total	\$31,358,359
Revenues	\$31,358,359

## APPENDIX 1

### Detailed DPW Response to Sub-committee Questions

**Q: Are there any vacancies in the Department of Public Works? Which positions and for how long have they been vacant? Are they affecting operations? Why do you think they have been difficult to fill?**

The Department of Public Works has a total of 166 positions in the FY23 budget. Of the total positions three (3) are currently held unfunded due to the financial impacts of Covid (Highway – Motor Equipment Operator Grade 2, Sanitation - Motor Equipment Operator Grade 2 and Parks - Horticulture Supervisor). Between all of the Divisions the Department of Public Works there are a total of 20 vacancies. The vacancies have been open for a range of two weeks to six months.

Division	Budgeted	Unfunded	Vacant
Administration	9	--	0
Eng. & Transp.	15	--	2
Highway	51	1	10
Sanitation	13	1	0
Parks & OS	36	1	3
Water & Sewer	42	--	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>20</b>

The vacant positions have an impact on the daily operations and services across all Divisions of the Department in the form of delayed or reprogrammed maintenance (parks/schools), longer time to complete services (sanitation route/snow removal), less project oversight (construction, coordination), decrease in the amount of work completed (sidewalk repair/replacement/water system maintenance), inadequate staffing to complete the work and greater resident dissatisfaction. This also leads to increased overtime, increased contractual services, fewer special/in-house improvement or beautification projects (which are generally of great value), and lower staff morale. Some staff feel overworked, stressed and unable to be successful in their jobs.

The positions are difficult to fill due to compensation, commute, a shift away from manual trades and municipal operations, and many available jobs due to the significant amount of retirements, booming construction industry and the pandemic inspired “great resignation”.

**Q: What impact has COVID had on your department’s staffing and services in the past year?**

DPW stood together and was here for the community through the pandemic. I am very proud of the men and women of the Department that remained committed to the Brookline community during this time of great uncertainty, stress and fear. DPW personnel were on site in Brookline every day and worked through changes in cleaning protocol, PPE, operations, 6’ distancing, single occupant vehicles, alternative shifts, changes in their job functions, changes in work and office environments and other accommodations made to keep our staff safe and support the needs of the Town.

What we see now is that staff who worked through the pandemic are starting to feel the weight of the last two years. Many feel under-appreciated by the Town and citizenry of Brookline. The sentiment is that those extra efforts, while understaffed and working with significant constraints, went unrecognized.



Parks, schools, open spaces and the public way have been highly utilized during the pandemic. The community turned to outdoor dining and DPW accommodated. An outdoor dining policy and program was created with a multi-department committee leading to DPW reviewing, approving, and inspecting each restaurant dining area in the public way for safety, compliance and accessibility. DPW also coordinated and installed the safety barricades. This was a new function that was time intensive, but responsive to a new need and helped both the businesses and the residents that utilized these spaces. This program consumed staff time and will in the future as it becomes permanent.

Tents were erected on school grounds and the lunch period moved outdoors. Thousands of students moved lunch periods and many learning periods outside. This led to a significant increase in cafeteria food and litter on the grounds. The Parks and Open Space Division was not staffed to keep up with the trash on the school grounds and therefore the Division saw more complaints in this area.

In addition, the parks became destinations for outdoor dining. Friends and family came together to connect and eat while social distancing outside. Grub Hub became a regular delivery service to parks all over Town. While this was a wonderful and recommended way to connect with others during the pandemic, it too led to challenges of litter and overuse. Unfortunately, as the problem of litter, waste and trash increased so too did the problems with rats and associated calls for services, inspections and enforcement actions.

During the pandemic many people walked or would use their bicycle to commute, exercise, and shop for basic needs. Many people would take the opportunity to take a walk in their neighborhood to see other people and feel connected. The increased use of the sidewalks led to more complaints about obstructions in the public way from construction, objects and vegetation. The increase in complaints was difficult for staff to manage.

DPW, along with the Police Department and Health Department, became the unofficial (and unfortunate) mask enforcement call center. We installed signs about best practices, Town policy, mask regulations and also addressed complaints and calls about people in the public spaces that were not following the signed rules.

Due to supply chain challenges and labor shortages, it has been difficult to move capital projects forward on the anticipated timeline and schedule. Those projects that were underway required new protocol to be put in place to protect the contractors, employees and public.

Overall, the shift in work to adjust for Covid protocol, reduced staffing due to sick or exposed employees, and new services required or requested during Covid impacted the timeline and deliverables of other routine or scheduled functions.

**Q: The proposed budget shows an increase of approximately .47%, or \$79,501. (\$16,668,234 in FY 22 to \$16,747,736 in FY 23). Can you provide more information regarding the -\$234,815 in Offsets in the Salaries line item? Do you feel this budget adequately covers cost increases due to inflation?**

The DPW budget has been vetted through a process that contemplates all of the demands of the Town, various shortfalls across all Departments, and balances the available funds with the most pressing needs. DPW supports the budget as presented and will work to make the best use of all of these funds for the Town. That said, I think that there is general agreement in the administration that the budget does not (because it cannot) cover increase in cost associated with inflation.

Increase in offsets are due to how Host Community Agreement (HCA) funding of a Motor Equipment Operator Grade II (assigned to trash, litter, graffiti, cleaning of the public way in the area around the dispensaries), Overtime for Park Ranger services (to patrol the parks and open spaces within walking distance of the dispensaries to promote positive behaviors in the parks), supplies and new receptacles. In addition, a new Senior Transportation Engineer will be charged to that account and a new Zero Waste Program Manager will be offset by a program specific grant.

**Q: Does the Town Administrator's FY 23 Budget recommendation reflect the Department's request? If not, what was not funded?**

The Department made requests to restore the budget from the temporary Covid cuts made due to the pandemic over the last two years (\$676,647 plus adjustments for increases in personnel costs), requested funding to cover basic areas that have been historically underfunded and submitted requests based upon service requests, deficiencies and plans/initiatives of the Town. These were largely unfunded due to budget constraints. Once this budget is printed it becomes our budget and we do not advocate for unfunded elements of the budget. However, I in response to this request I provided the expansion requests of the Department so that you can see some of the areas of need or priority identified by DPW.

**Q: In the past year, have there been any Town Meeting-approved resolutions or warrant articles that impact DPW operations and for which the funding necessary for implementation was not provided? If so, what was the shortfall?**

Warrant articles that currently impact DPW operations and are either unfunded or inadequately funded to implement to resident satisfaction include:

Leaf Blower Bylaw  
Sidewalk Obstructions  
Residential Sidewalk Snow Removal Policy  
Composting Resolution

## Warrant Article 31: Health and Sustainable Transportation

Complete Streets – the constraints that the policy places on the traditional pavement management funding is resulting in less roadways getting treated because the impact was never reflected in the form of a budget increase. The new Transportation & Mobility Plan outlined the dollar amount needed to maintain or improve our critical infrastructure condition and shows how it continues to be underfunded.

While all very well intentioned some resolutions are not funded and can create unintended consequences during implementation. We do not have any specific measurements of lost/diverted time or impacts associated with these except that in some cases staff are pulled from their primary responsibilities to handle inspections, enforcement issues, research, or project management and time/costs are added to projects without funding or technical support to do so.

**Q: What have been the significant changes in your department this past year? What, if any, operational concerns do you have? Are there some parts of the operating budget that you believe are underfunded?**

Some positive changes include the addition of an Environmental, Health and Safety Officer that was approved in the FY22 budget. This staff person is completing a full assessment of existing plans, programs, protocol and training. He has started safety talks with the crews, is a resource to the managers, is centralizing our accident investigations, standardizing our training, updating the EH&S Plan for the Department, introducing new training and commencing a safety committee. This is a win across all of the Divisions and has been received well by staff to date. This position is currently funded by Water/Sewer/Capital Projects. A primary focus for the upcoming year will be confined space entry, trench safety and construction site safety. There have also been new leadership added to the Divisions over the past year which is exciting for the Department and the Town.

The expansion requests identify some of the operational concerns identified within each of the Divisions. Some areas of general concern include: Code enforcement and inspectional services, Outdoor Dining and Sidewalk Accessibility, Forestry Preventative Maintenance and Planting, Engineering Services/Contract Administration Oversight, General Maintenance and Management, Community Engagement, and GIS/IT Support.

There are some areas of the budget that are underfunded including fleet replacement, fleet services/supplies, roadway supplies, forestry management, professional/technical services, litter/trash/sanitation and overtime in various areas (sanitation, special events, administrative support etc.)

**Q: Were you able to accomplish your FY22 objectives? If not, what were some of the identifiable barriers? What were three key successes for the department in the past year?**

A long list of goals and accomplishments by Division is provided in the budget book and a highlight of goals and accomplishments is provided in the presentation. There are a lot of ambitious goals that the Department is looking to achieve. If I had to list three key successes over the course of the year it would be:

Building a new team of Division Directors  
Completing a 10- Year Strategic Master Plan for the Department  
Hiring an Environmental, Health and Safety Officer and building that program

We were largely able to accomplish, or at a minimum further, our FY22 objectives. There are some projects that have been delayed due to Covid, supply demand or staffing challenges, but a lot was accomplished and new priorities arose over the course of the year that the Department took on as well.

**Q: What are the best ways to measure your department's success in terms of effectiveness and efficiency?**

There are several ways that the Department reviews its' effectiveness and efficiency. On a broad scale we are increasing our use of People GIS to track work orders, fleet inventory, and work requests. This is helpful in tracking the thousands of work order requests that we receive each year. This tool, along with BrookOnLine, enables us to look at where the requests are coming in and our response time to complete those work requests. We can also evaluate any particular category of request that is coming in and where we may need to focus more attention.

Within each Division there are project budgets and schedules, pavement assessment tools such as the Pavement Condition Index completed approximately every three years, grant reporting requirements, and best practices goals that we seek to achieve using various data sets that we have.

Communication is an area where we have sought to make improvements with press releases, surveys, emails, social media and signage. With improved communication we have seen some improvement in an overall understand of who we are and what DPW is able to do with available resources. Improved communication is leading to more understanding and/or greater customer satisfaction in some cases.

Another measure that we have noted over the past year is improved turn-around time for site plan reviews. This is due to starting to put the site plan review process on line and holding regular staff meetings to review plan sets efficiently and effectively as a team.

We are also looking to increase the number of traffic signals that are ADA/PROWAG complaint to vision impaired pedestrians. These numbers area measurable and demonstrate our success in the program roll out.

**Q: What do you see as the three most important measurable objectives for the department in the coming year?**

As noted in our budget there are many objectives within the DPW and all of the Divisions. Each has a host of projects that will be in various stages of planning, design, engineering, or construction. Our ability to stay on schedule and budget is a measurement that we all look to when internally evaluating our success.

As a Department, I would point back to the Environmental, Health and Safety Plan, Training Programs, and Safety Committee being measurable objectives. We will be able to look at number of plans created, number of trainings performed, and number of employees in attendance. We can also look at outcomes in terms of compliance, work zones and best practices.

With an increase in staffing the Department will look to lane miles/sidewalk miles and ADA ramps rehabilitated through preservation or replacement and note those that included complete streets elements. Actual completion of the work will depend upon available funding.

The Parks and Open Space Division is implementing a pilot community engagement tool kit and pilot program. They will be measuring and evaluating community engagement success.

The Division will measure the increase in the number of traffic signals that are ADA/PROWAG compliant for vision impaired pedestrians in the coming year.

In fall 2024 the DPW is up for accreditation renewal. A fresh look at updating all of our plans, programs and policies and comparing them to best practices across the nation will be another measurement process and opportunity.

**Q: Has your department received any grants (or rebates)?**

The Department has successfully sought and received several grants over the last year.

NAME	TYPE	ENTITY	AMOUNT	PURPOSE
Brookline Shared Mobility	Construction	MassDOT Shared Streets & Spaces	\$199,835	Construct curb extensions for extension Blue Bike stations on Beacon @ 1200 Beacon, High @ Cypress, Cypress @ Clark Playground and a new Station + 15 bikes on Harvard @ Stedman
Brookline Shared Mobility	Construction	MassDOT Shared Streets & Spaces	\$199,200	Construct curb extensions for extension Blue Bike stations on Harvard @ Marion, Harvard @ Thorndike, and a new Station + 15 bikes on Beacon @ 1600 Beacon
Accessibility Improvements	Construction	HUD/CDBG	\$150,000	Installation of APS Push buttons and count down timers at various intersections
Accessibility Improvements	Construction	Mass Office of Disability	\$18,382	Installation of APS Push buttons and count down timers at the intersection of Harvard Street @ Stedman/Williams
Beacon Street Bottleneck Mitigation	Consultant Fees & Construction	MassDOT	\$200,000	Re-time the Beacon Street corridor to provide better service to all modes including pedestrians, bikes, micro-mobility, MBTA C-line, and motorists and install new camera detection
Lincoln School SRTS Improvement Plan	Consultant Fees & Construction	MassDOT/SRTS	\$674,670	Install the approved complete streets plan for Chestnut Street (Kendall to Walnut) and a raised intersection at Lincoln Driveway & Kennard Road
Webster St Lot DC Fast Charge	Construction	MassDEP EVIP	\$86,400	Partial coverage for purchase and install 2 DC Fast Chargers in the Webster Street lot
Accessibility Improvements (Tentative)	Construction	HUD/CDBG	\$120,000	Installation of APS Push buttons and count down timers at various intersections
Zero Waste Program	Staff, Supplies, Services	Foundation	\$325,000	Hire a Zero Waste Program Manager and associated supplies for a 3 year period
Recycling Grant	Waste Reduction, Reuse, Recycling	DEP	\$59,000	Recycling materials, education, supplies and services
Parklet Construction with Teens	Design and Construction	Brookline Community Foundation	\$2,500	Work with teens to build an outdoor public parklet in Washington Square Commercial Area
Art Utility Box Pilot	Planning, Design and Supplies	Brookline Commission for the Arts	\$1,201	Develop a design and process to pilot a painted utility box program in a public park
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,036,188</b>	

**Q: Are there needs that you would like addressed in the department’s operating budget in the coming 3-5 years?**

The priority needs are addressed in the Expansion Requests and will be revisited each year, but it would also be a strategic addition to have a Chief of Staff in Constituent Services and Performance Measures to oversee all Department communication, customer service protocol, community outreach, data analysis and presentation, metrics development and assessment and reporting both internally and externally. Someone that would help standardize and optimize the customer experience while simultaneously helping streamline communication for the Department and develop and manage a program for supporting performance metrics. All with a goal of maximizing Department efficiency and effectiveness.

**Q: Can you summarize the Department of Public Works 10-Year Strategic Plan and provide projected cost of its implementation at the end of ten years? Is the 10-Year strategic plan available on the DPW pages of the Town’s website? If not, could you please email a copy to the Subcommittee?**

A copy of the DPW Strategic Plan 2022-2032 has been provided. The document was created by the Commissioner and Directors to provide a common roadmap for all five Divisions. It establishes a collective vision and mission, explains who we are and what we do, it describes each of our five business units, and establishes five guiding principles with objectives and actions to support the principals. It also introduces the core values necessary for the Department to succeed. This document is used to set goals for the Department and to refer to when establishing the budget and annual objectives. It is not an itemized list of projects with costs. Some of the initiatives could be supported by multiple projects, some by a single project, some are achieved by

strong collaboration or communication. Some are just ways to think about current projects a little differently. It is a guiding document that will help keep us focused on ways in which we can most successfully achieve these goals together for the community. Below are the Vision and Mission of the Department:

**VISION** Brookline Department of Public Works provides the foundation for a sustainable, inclusive, connected, vibrant, safe and livable community.

**MISSION** To enhance the quality of life in Brookline as responsible stewards of the public's physical assets, infrastructure and natural resources by providing outstanding service in partnership with the community. We design, build, manage, maintain, protect and improve the Town's utilities (water, sewer, and stormwater), infrastructure and public spaces (public right-of-way, parks, public grounds and civic spaces) with skill, pride, equity, innovation and responsiveness. We provide reliable, cost effective, high-quality services that protect public health, maintain customer confidence and support a prosperous economy.

**Q: Are changes being considered for the Solid Waste Management Program? What is the current contamination rate and has any consideration been given to moving away from single stream recycling in order to reduce that number?**

I am truly excited to share that we have added a Zero Waste Program Manager position that is grant funded for three years. This position will work with the Solid Waste Advisory Committee and staff to develop a program to reduce solid waste, improve recycling, maximize reuse, advocate for supporting policy, educate and communicate about consumer responsibility, and support composting in schools and residences. This position will also seek grants to support the program. The program will support our environmental sustainability goals, climate action goals, and hopefully cost avoidance goals in the future as we more thoughtfully and intentionally manage waste.

The current contamination rate reported by Casella at their last inspection was 5%. Brookline continues to have one of the lowest contamination rates in Massachusetts. Brookline is not considering a move away from single stream recycling as the contamination rate in our community is low and more significantly most contractors will only pick-up single stream as that is how they are currently equipped to collect it.

**Q: In the performance indicators (Town Financial Plan FY 23 p100), FY2021 actuals for solid waste are 540 tons compared to a reported actual FY2020 of 8,334. Is this a typo?**

Yes. The actual number was 8540. It is being updated and will be posted online. Thank you for identifying that.

**Q: Is the recycled waste being reused, stored or sold? If so, what are the different disposal tons and percentages? If sold, do we receive any financial off-set to the cost of removal?**

The recycling is being sold. The Town receives a financial off-set when the ACR is higher than \$98.00. The facilities sort through the materials and provide a chart of our percentages. The facilities are not storing any materials right now. Everything is being sold for a profit with the exception of glass. They are taking glass, but are taking a loss on that. It is generally being used as road base material.

**Q: The solid waste and recycled waste costs per ton (\$320 vs. \$350 per ton for recycled waste) are estimated to be the same for FY22 as FY23. Is this accurate?**

Casella believe that the recycling market will be strong for the coming year. As of right now we are around \$333 average per ton for processing and collection. The ACR this past month was \$76.30.

**Q: The Sanitation Division's budget for FY 23 shows no significant changes from the FY 22 budget. What are the assumptions behind the projected decrease in solid waste tonnage and increase in recycling tonnage? Is there a program in place or contemplated to increase the solid waste diversion percentage? If so, would there need to be additional budget appropriations to cover the cost differential of ~\$30/ton?**

One of the goals is to decrease solid waste tonnage by increasing composting. Composting is estimated to be 30% of the solid waste stream. There is now a grant funded position that is going to measure, quantify, educate and promote composting through Black Earth, as a partner of the Town, and is pushing out composting at all of the schools. This individual is part of a SWAC/Town committee researching mandatory composting per a resolution voted last year at Town Meeting. This will be assessed and presented next year with proposed budget and operation implications.

We are looking for a slight rebalancing of the waste/recycling numbers as daily activities return to normal in FY23 post pandemic. In addition to composting, we are looking to increase efforts regarding recycling, reuse, consumer purchasing, and cardboard management, all within the current program offerings. In addition, we have consulted with the recycling market expert at Casella who is predicting a more favorable market for recycling in the upcoming year. This will help defray contract costs. For this reason, we have kept contractual services level funded. We are, however, looking to adjust for personnel, town expenses and COLA increases.

**Q: How are the current recycling streams (glass, plastic, aluminum etc.) being treated – reused, stored, burnt or otherwise disposed of? If recycled waste is currently stored, burnt or buried, should we consider decreasing the diversion percentage?**



None of the recycling is being burnt or buried, it is being sold as a post-consumer commodity. The trash is being burnt at a waste to energy plant.

The recycling disposal rate is predicated by the recycled market (ACR). As of today we decreased the per ton cost due to a stronger market.

**Q: When a decision was made several years ago to adopt a Complete Streets design for a number of the Town's roadways to ensure safety for all users, it was predicted that this approach would require more time in terms of planning and more money in terms of implementation. Has there been sufficient experience with Complete Streets to compile any data in this regard? Assuming the costs have increased, what is the current thinking to address those increased costs without slowing down the Complete Streets schedule?**

Complete streets does require both more cost and more time. The impact is reflected in the updated Transportation & Mobility Plan cost estimates.

Not only the Engineering and Transportation Division, but the entire Department share in the importance of Complete Streets as it relates to the Town's roadway and sidewalk improvements. All of the proposed roadway improvements projects go through a complete analysis to determine what (if any) measures should be included on a project going through design and then ultimately constructed.

The reality is that (while critical) improvements like this cost substantially more than a typical roadway and sidewalk improvement project. This increase in cost on a typical project reduces the number of roadway/sidewalk projects that can be completed each year.

The added public process, Transportation Board review and approval, and design time (which takes significant staff time) continue to add to the length of time it takes to complete projects. This added time could be mitigated through the use of consultants or additional staff, but that also requires appropriate funding.

**Q: Can you provide more information on Goal 2 of the Parks and Open Space Division? "Establish data-driven metrics on various digital engagement platforms to ensure the Department is reaching new members of the public in new and innovative way."**

The Parks and Open Space Division has established Community Engagement and Outreach Tools for public design review processes. This is a multi-year process that is looking at citizen engagement before, during and after a public design review process. To better understand how residents get their information and choose to participate in community events, the Parks and Open Space Division is working on a project to better understand how people heard about the event (via a simple survey) and ask how they would LIKE to hear about future Parks and Open Space events & updates. After collecting a year of baseline data, the Division is going to establish appropriate

quantifiable targets for how many people it will engage and reach via social media, Soofa signage, paper signage (at school & town buildings), other media and through the Town's website. This is happening in tandem with the actual Design Review Process goals.

This effort also includes leveraging community partner networks, e-news, etc...with a goal of better understanding the viewership of these digital communications and who they are helping us reach (and if it is different than our own tools).

**Q: What are DPW's Equity Goals and how are they being implemented?**

Guiding Principle 4 of the Department's Strategic Plan reads:

Demonstrate inclusion, equity and engagement values in our management of public assets, services and employment practices.

The Department are helping to increase opportunities for WMBE for construction and professional services by meeting with companies and offering small contracts under \$10,000 for them to gain experience and for the Town to increase the vendors that it can call on for needed services.

The Department is also working with the Purchasing Division on the partnership with Qwally to help minority owned businesses break into the public bidding/municipal sector.

We intentionally think about the benefits of a diverse work force in our hiring practices. We are reaching out to affinity groups and BECMA to extend our reach when hiring for vacant positions and also using references of staff employees.

In addition to the objectives in the Strategic Plan, the Department is working on a set of goals specifically focused on racial equity. The Racial Equity consultant will join DPW over the summer to review our progress and help refine the goals to be most effective, impactful and meaningful.

**Q: How does DPW facilitate the access of children and adults with limited English proficiency to DPW's programs and other services?**

The Parks and Open Space Division translated a recent door hanger for front yard tree planting into different languages. In addition, during the pandemic various signs posted at the parks were translated into various languages. The website is set up to work with google translate so that it can translate into any language. The park rules and regulations has a link on the signage to the overall rules that can be translated into any language.

