



MESM ACADEMY: Working in a Municipality 101



**November 13, 2025
10AM – 11:30AM**

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MESM ACADEMY: Working in a Municipality 101



**November 13, 2025
10AM – 11:30AM**

Today's Lesson

Lesson Questions

- How do municipal governments in Massachusetts function?
- What do I need to know now about municipal financing and capital planning to be successful in my role?

Learning Objectives

- Understand the government structure my municipality is operating under.
- Describe the role of key elected officials and staff in my municipality.
- Describe how local budgets and financing operate at a high level.
- Understand how a local clean energy project can be part of a capital planning process in my municipality.





Introductory Polls

Rate your level of agreement with the following statements:

- I understand the government structure my municipality is operating under.
- I can describe the role of key elected officials and staff in my municipality.
- I understand how local budgets and financing operate at a high level.
- I know how a local clean energy project can be part of a capital planning process in my municipality.

1 = Strongly Disagree
2 = Disagree
3 = Neutral
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree





Introductory Polls

Please respond to the following questions:

- **I work in:**
 - A city, a town, multiple towns, a Regional Planning Agency, Other (write in chat)
- **Does your municipality have a Capital Plan?**
 - Yes, No, I'm not sure
- **Does your municipality have a volunteer group/committee on issues related to climate or energy?**
 - Yes, No, I'm not sure
- **Have you met your City/Town admin yet?**
 - Yes, No



Today's Agenda

Start Time	Duration	Topic
10:00AM	5 mins	Welcome & Lesson Overview
10:05AM	30 mins	Municipal Structure: Cities vs Towns
10:35AM	15 mins	Q&A 1
10:50AM	30 mins	Municipal Financing & Capital Planning
11:20AM	15 mins	Q&A 2

Meet the Instructors



Sean Cronin

**Senior Deputy Commissioner
Division of Local Services**

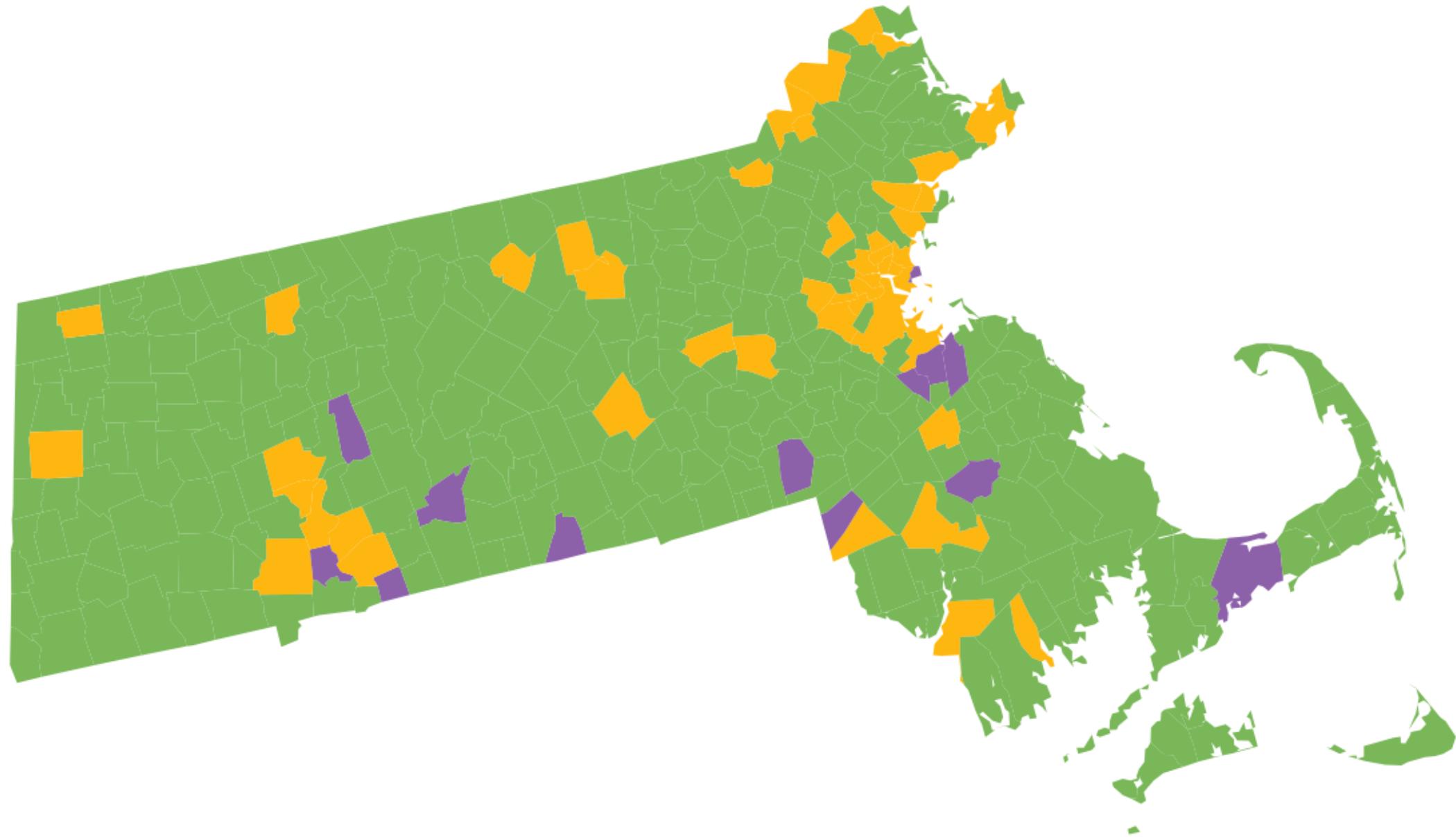


George Proakis

**City Manager
Watertown**

Municipal Government in Massachusetts

- In Massachusetts, we have 351 individual communities:
 - 292 towns
 - 59 cities



■ City

■ Town

■ Town with a city form of government

Mass Municipal Association



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Local Services

Supporting a Commonwealth of Communities

Town Governance

November 13, 2025



Town Government - General

- Municipalities are “creatures of the state” because their existence and all their powers derive from the state legislature
- Dillon's Rule – a legal principle that states that local governments only have powers that are (1) expressly granted by state law, (2) necessarily implied from those granted powers, or (3) essential to the municipality's existence
- Home Rule Amendment – this amendment granted municipalities a degree of separation from the strict limitations of Dillon's Rule by allowing them to exercise any power or function that the state legislature has the authority to delegate, as long as the local action is not inconsistent with state law or the state constitution
- There are 292 towns in MA, defined as having Town Meeting as its legislative body
 - Not cities w/a mayor and/or city manager (45)
 - Not “towns” with a town council form of gov’t (14)
- Towns governed by town charter, by-laws and/or special acts (i.e., Home Rule Petition)



Town Government – Legislative Body

- Legislative Body = Town Meeting
- Open Town Meeting vs. Representative Town Meeting
 - Open = any registered voter can attend and vote (~260)
 - Representative = elected by precinct (~32) [size ranges from 50 to more than 400]
- Standing Committee
 - Various names: Advisory Committee, Finance Committee, Warrant Committee
- Warrant – official agenda for a town meeting, listing all the legislative items that will be voted on
 - Approved by the Select Board, it is issued to call the meeting and must be delivered to residents with sufficient notice
 - Consists of “articles” including:
 - Budget matters (appropriations/bond authorizations)
 - General By-Laws and Zoning By-Law
 - Acceptance of “local options” (ex’s: excise taxes, property tax exemptions, “stretch code”)
 - Home Rule petitions
 - Resolutions
 - Land sale/acquisition
 - Salaries of elected officials



Town Government – Executive Body

- Select Board = chief elected executive and policy-making body
 - 3 or 5 members
- In most cases, hire Town Manager/Town Administrator to make day-to-day operations
- In some cases, directly hire department heads
- Develop, initiate and/or implement policies
 - Financial, HR, administrative, licensing, social media, facility usage, media relations, etc.
- Call certain elections, including Prop 2½ ballot questions
- Appoint certain boards/commissions/committees
- Involved in various aspects of finance
 - Review budget proposals
 - Set tax rates
 - Accept grants, approve the issuance of debt
 - Execute contracts (incl. CBA's) and approve expenditure warrants
- Licensing board
 - Alcohol, CV, lodging house, special permits for events, etc.
- Prepare Warrant for Town Meeting



Town Manager/Town Administrator

- Appointed by the Select Board, serves as the chief administrative officer to oversee daily town operations and implement policies set by elected officials
- Position is not defined in state law and there is no statutory job description for this role beyond a provision in state law allowing towns to appoint an executive secretary or town administrator
- Some town manager positions have fairly modest authority while some have significant authority
 - A “strong town manager” has appointment authority, authority for the direction of the budget and capital plan process and assumption of certain duties previously assigned to the Select Board (e.g., approval of payments)
- Responsibilities are outlined in town charter, by-law and/or a special act and vary across the state. May include:
 - Preparing the town budget and/or capital plan
 - Handling personnel and procurement
 - Appointing department heads
 - Serving as a liaison between the Select Board and citizens
 - Preparing Town Meeting Warrant
 - Bargaining CBA’s



Town Departments, Boards, Commissions

Departments (vary by town)

- Public Safety (Police, Fire, Building)
- Public Health
- DPW (could have independent board)
- Library
- Recreation
- Finance
- IT
- Personnel/HR
- Planning/Community Development
- COA
- Veterans
- Legal
- Town Clerk (likely elected position)

Boards/Commissions (vary by town)

- Finance Committee (Town Meeting)
- Planning Board
- Zoning Board of Appeals
- Preservation/Historic Commission
- Conservation Commission
- Park & Rec Commission
- Board of Health
- Board of Assessors
- Council on Aging
- Personnel/HR Board
- Community Preservation Committee
- Commission for the Arts
- Building Commission
- Audit Committee
- Disability Commission
- Registrars of Voters
- Retirement Board
- Cemetery Commissioners
- Library Trustees



School Department

- Elected School Committee – primary role is governance, including establishing educational goals and policies, approving the budget, and hiring and evaluating the superintendent. Focuses on the "big picture," setting the direction for the school system and ensuring it meets its objectives.
 - Normally 5-9 members
- Superintendent – chief executive officer and educational advisor to the School Committee, responsible for the day-to-day operation and overall management of the school district. This includes financial management, including overseeing and planning the budget and spending once budget is approved.
 - Hires a School Business Manager
- Budget authority – unlike municipal budgets, the school budget is approved by Town Meeting as one number. The School Committee sets the final budget allocations and approves transfers.
- CBA's – contracts with school employees are bargained by, and approved by, the school committee. Unlike town employee CBA's, school CBA's do not need to be approved by Town Meeting.
- Regional Schools – these are districts comprised of two or more municipalities and are separate, independent units of local government. They are governed by a regional school committee, which has representation from each member municipality.
 - Member municipalities are assessed costs by the regional school committee based on an agreement; part of the municipal budget
- It is important that the town and schools have a strong relationship since more than $\frac{1}{2}$ of a municipal budget normally goes for education
 - Also have a number of facilities that need to be maintained and eventually upgraded/replaced and those large capital costs are funded via the municipal budget (i.e., debt service on bonds)

City Forms of Government

- 59 Communities in Massachusetts have a “City” form of government.
- 14 of those municipalities call themselves “town” even though they operate with a “city” form of government
- Population from 675k (Boston) to 12,400 (Palmer)
- 44 of these communities operate with “strong mayor” governments.

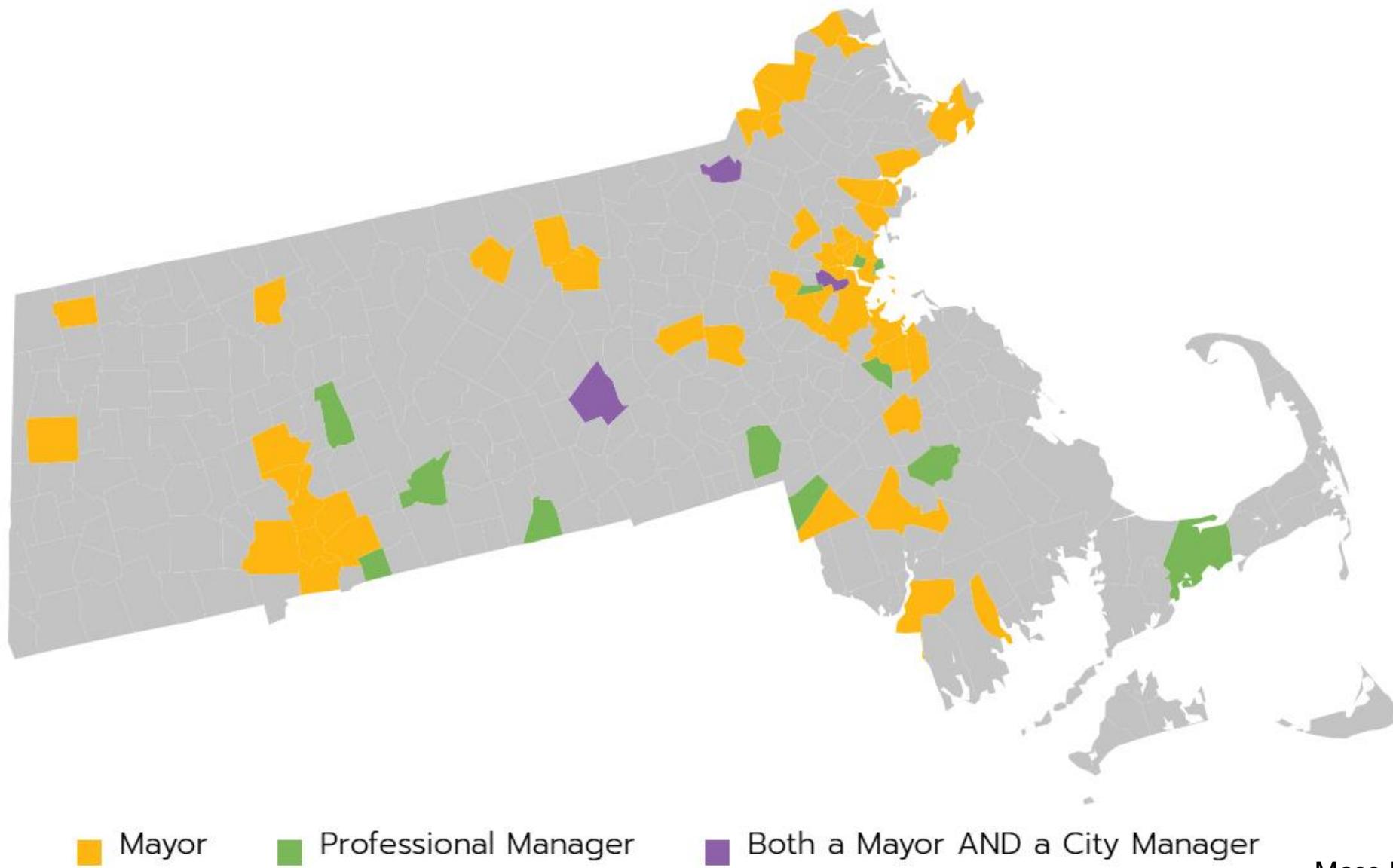
Fourteen communities with a city structure still refer to themselves as a town.

These places are sometimes described as "the city known as the town of X."

They use the term "Town Council" for their legislative body.

- Agawam
- North Attleborough
- Amherst
- Palmer
- Barnstable
- Randolph
- Braintree
- Southbridge
- Bridgewater
- West Springfield
- East Longmeadow
- Weymouth
- Franklin
- Winthrop

City Executive Officers



City Forms of Government

- 59 Communities in Massachusetts have a “City” form of government.
- 14 of those municipalities call themselves “town” even though they operate with a city form of government
 - Watertown did this from 1981 to 2021. The community was officially the City known as the Town of Watertown
- Population from 675k (Boston) to 12,400 (Palmer)
- 44 of these communities operate with “strong mayor” governments.

City Forms of Government

- City form governments with City Manager or Administrator:
 - Worcester
 - Cambridge
 - Lowell
 - Barnstable*
 - Chelsea
 - Amherst*
 - Watertown
 - Randolph*
 - Franklin*
 - North Attleborough*
 - Bridgewater*
 - Winthrop*
 - Southbridge*
 - East Longmeadow*
 - Palmer*

*City that calls itself “town of . . .”

City Forms of Government

- Four “towns” with Mayors:
 - West Springfield
 - Weymouth
 - Agawam
 - Braintree

City Form of Government

- What cities have in common:
 - No town meeting
 - A council that serves as the legislative body in the city
- What cities don't have in common
 - Size of the council and how they are elected (at large or by district) is very different in different cities
 - Setup of chief executive (Mayor or Manager)

Understanding a City's Charter

The Charter serves as the 'constitution' for our local government. It establishes the roles for different participants in government, how elections work, how budgets are created and how laws are passed

Local governments can create charters based on a series of government plans under state law or develop their own charter under the state's constitutional home rule amendment.

A home rule charter requires legislative approval, as local government is a creation of state government.

Watertown's Road to Becoming a City: The 1980 Home Rule Charter

“The overwhelming sentiment in Watertown at this juncture seems to be that the time for “casting away” our present government is at hand. The area of disagreement is not whether change is needed and warranted, but rather what that change should be.”

- 1980 Charter Commission
report

The Chief Executive of Local Government

Mayors vs. City Managers

Role of the City Council

Watertown:
One Example of Council/Manager government

- City Council meets every two weeks (except once in July, August and December)
- Council passes the annual budget
- Council passes ordinances and other measures
- Councilor establishes city policy and gives direction to the manager
- Council hires:
 - City Manager
 - City Auditor
 - Council Clerk
 - Council Analyst

Role of the City Council President

Watertown:
One Example of Council/Manager
government

- The council president:
 - Is the presiding officer of the council
 - Is responsible for council goals and the long-term vision for the city, in collaboration with the city manager and the public
 - Can vote as a councilor, but has no veto power

Role of a City Manager

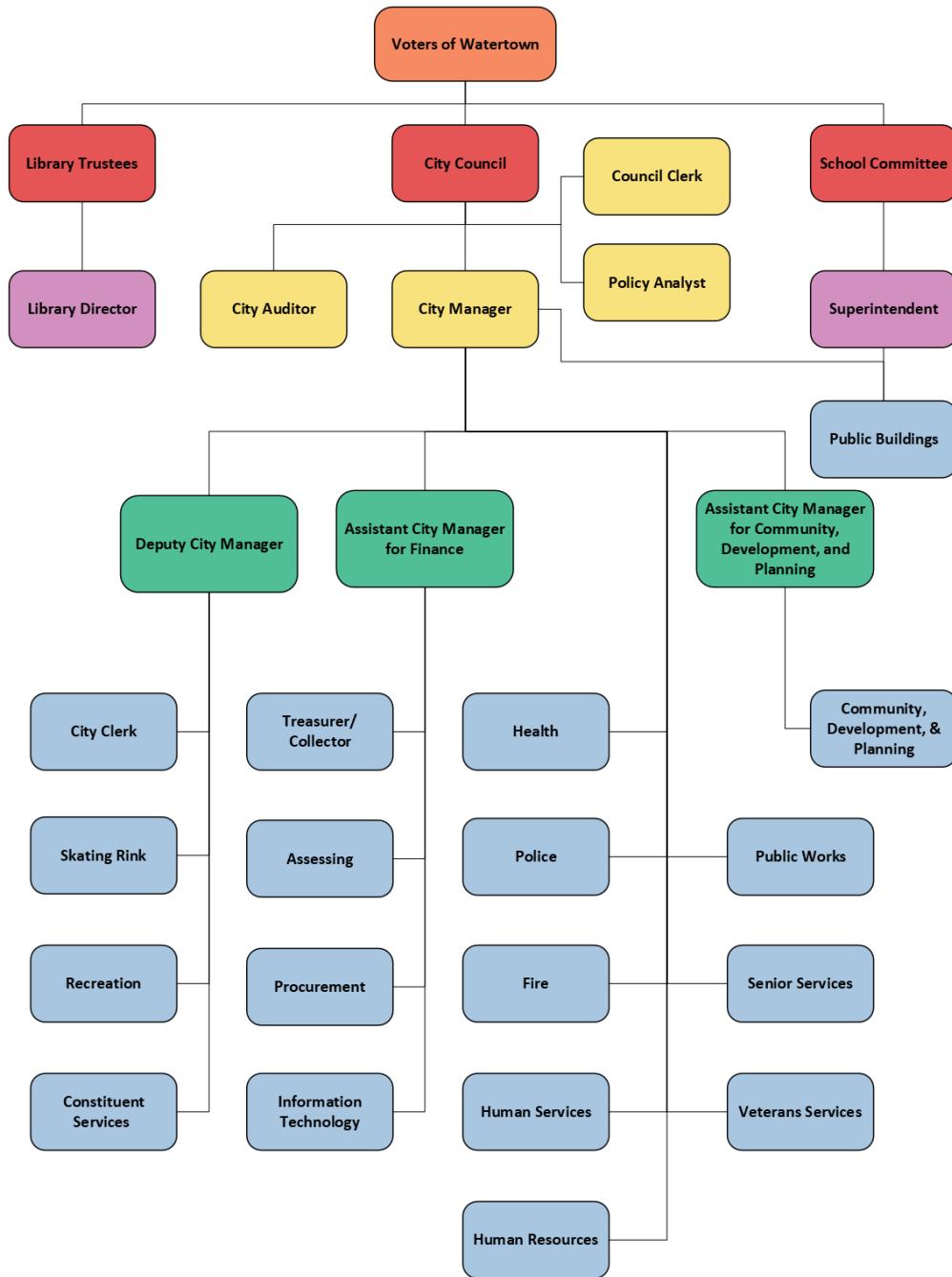
Watertown:
One Example of Council/Manager government

- Role of the city manager:
 - Appoint and supervise staff
 - Prepare the annual city budget
 - Negotiate agreements with city unions
 - Execute contracts
 - Have jurisdiction over use of city facilities (except school and library)
 - Make policy recommendations to the city council
 - Execute deeds on property
 - Coordinate city communications
 - Publish an annual report

What does a City CEO do all day?

Overview on Goals and Responsibilities

- A lot of meetings
- . . . and a lot of emails and phone calls
- Annual budget
- Interview / selection of staff
- Goal setting sessions
- Check-ins with senior staff groups
- Meetings with constituents
- Preparation for council meetings



City Government Overview

Departments and Multi-member Boards

Superintendents and School Committees

Overview on Goals and Responsibilities

- School Committee also is established by charter – typically elected.
- School Committee hires a Superintendent of Schools
 - Remember: in city governments, typically other staff is hired by the mayor or manager
- Many city government school committees provide a seat for the Mayor and/or Council President. This helps build a link between the school committee and council that is valuable as school budgets and capital planning are developed.

Questions?



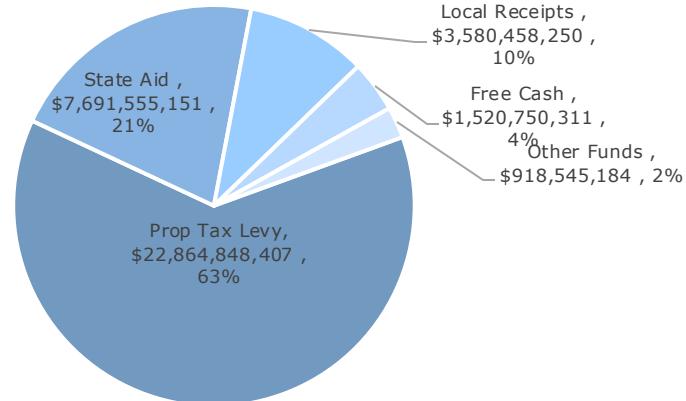


Fundamental Concepts of Municipal Finance in MA & Capital Planning

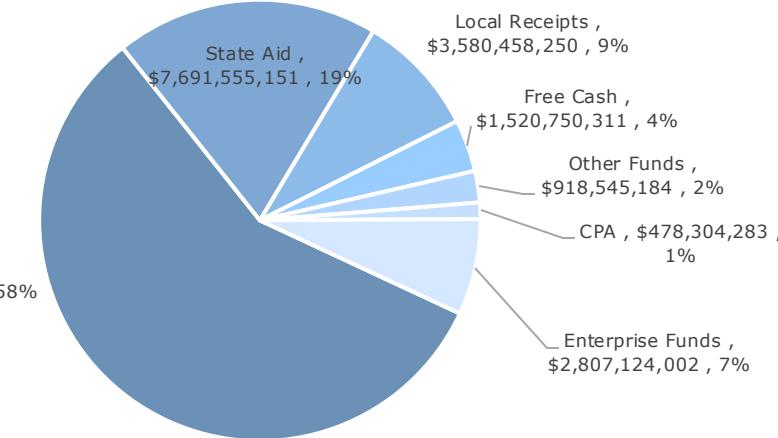


Statewide Local Revenues

Statewide General Fund Revenue Composition - FY2025

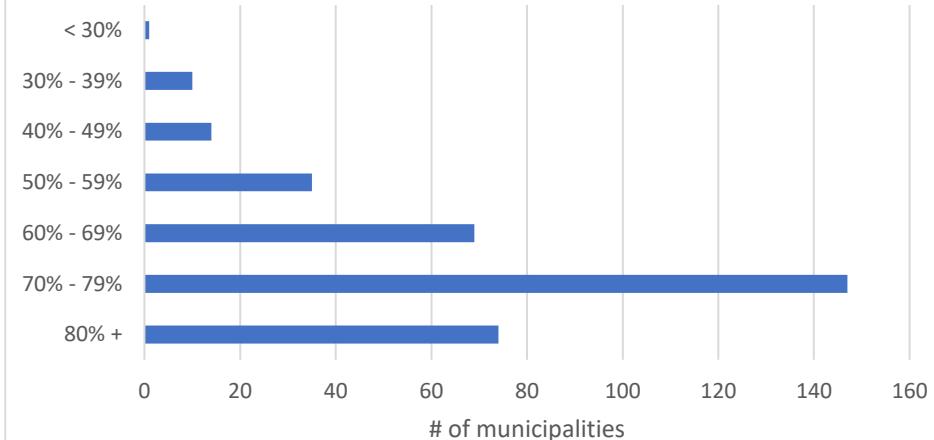


Statewide General Fund Revenue + Enterprise Funds + CPA Composition - FY2025



- While data shows 65% of General Fund revenue comes from Property Taxes, more than 1/3 of municipalities have Property Taxes comprising 75%+ of General Fund revenue
- \$2.4B of Enterprise Funds revenues
 - Water/Sewer, Golf, Airport, Parking, etc.
 - Not available for General Fund expenditures
- \$355M of Community Preservation Act (CPA) monies
 - Not available for General Fund expenditures

Property Taxes as % of Total General Fund Budget





Proposition 2 1/2

Approved by voters via a ballot initiative in 1980

Places annual limits on property taxes

1. Property tax levy cannot exceed 2.5% of the municipality's total assessed property valuation

2. Annual property tax levy cannot increase by more than 2.5%, except for "New Growth"
 - › Can ask local voters to exceed the 2.5% annual growth limit via an "operating override" or a "debt exclusion"



Property Tax Levy Building Blocks

Levy Ceiling

2.5% of total Assessed Value (AV)
ex: 2.5% x \$1B of AV = \$25M

Levy Limit

Formula essentially =
(Prior year Levy Limit X 2.5%) + New Growth + Overrides

Levy

Determined annually as part of budget process



Referenda Questions

Overrides

1. Any Legal Spending Purpose
2. Permanent
3. Amount Limited by Ceiling

Exclusions

1. Only Capital Purchases

2. Temporary



Debt
(Life of Bond)



Capital
(1 Year)

3. No Limit on the Number or Dollar Amount



New Growth

- New growth reflects certain increases in the tax base and becomes a permanent part of the levy limit base:
 - properties that have increased in assessed valuation since the prior year because of development or other changes
 - exempt real property returned to the tax roll
 - new personal property
 - new subdivision parcels and condominium conversions
- New growth does not include market value increases

Example: vacant parcel valued at \$50K in prior year now valued at \$450K because of construction of single family home

- \$400,000 included in New Growth calculation
- if tax rate was \$14.90, \$5,960 in additional revenue



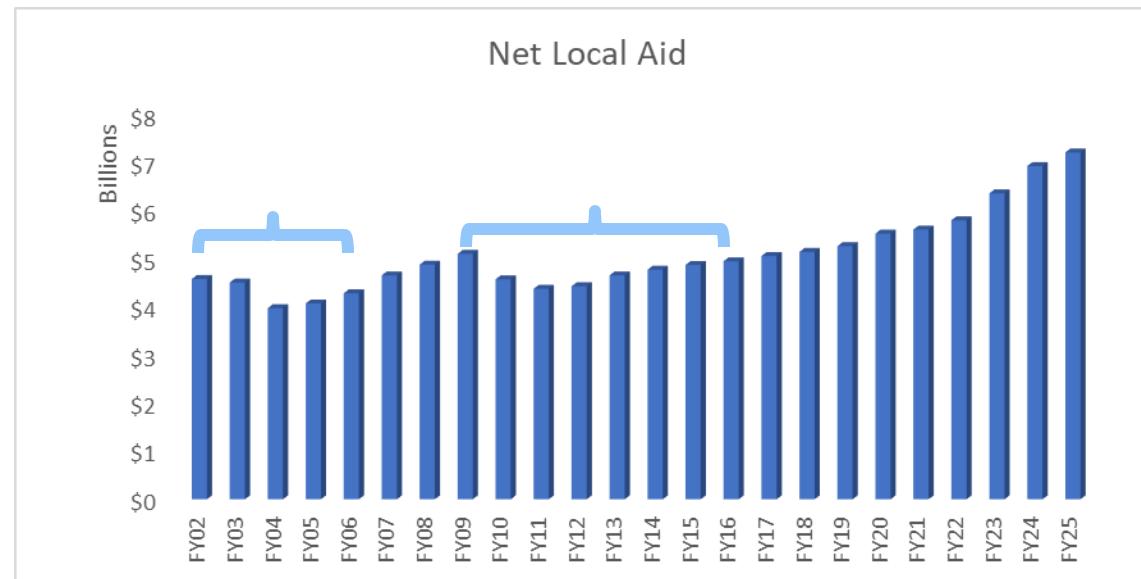
Annual Levy Limit + Ceiling

	<u>FY1</u>	<u>FY2</u>	<u>FY3</u>	<u>FY4</u>	<u>FY5</u>
Prior Year Levy Limit	\$30,000,000	\$31,200,000	\$32,480,000	\$34,817,000	\$36,187,425
2.5% Increase	\$750,000	\$780,000	\$812,000	\$870,425	\$904,686
<u>New Growth</u>	<u>\$450,000</u>	<u>\$500,000</u>	<u>\$525,000</u>	<u>\$500,000</u>	<u>\$450,000</u>
Sub-Total	\$31,200,000	\$32,480,000	\$33,817,000	\$36,187,425	\$37,542,111
<u>Override</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$1,000,000</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>
Levy Limit	\$31,200,000	\$32,480,000	\$34,817,000	\$36,187,425	\$37,542,111
<u>Debt Exclusion</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$2,000,000</u>	<u>\$1,900,000</u>
Max. Allowable Levy	\$31,200,000	\$32,480,000	\$34,817,000	\$38,187,425	\$39,442,111
Assessed Value	\$2,000,000,000	\$2,060,000,000	\$2,080,600,000	\$2,018,182,000	\$1,917,272,900
Levy Ceiling	\$50,000,000	\$51,500,000	\$52,015,000	\$50,454,550	\$47,931,823



State Aid to Municipalities

- Outside a municipality's control and dependent on overall economy
- In FY26, ~\$9B of "Cherry Sheet" aid
- Two major programs:
 - Ch. 70 Education Aid = \$7B+
 - Unrestricted General Government Aid (UGGA) = \$1.3B
- Historically, fluctuates with the economy



- After Dot-Com bust, took 5 years to get to previous level of aid
- After Great Recession, took 7 years to get to previous level of aid

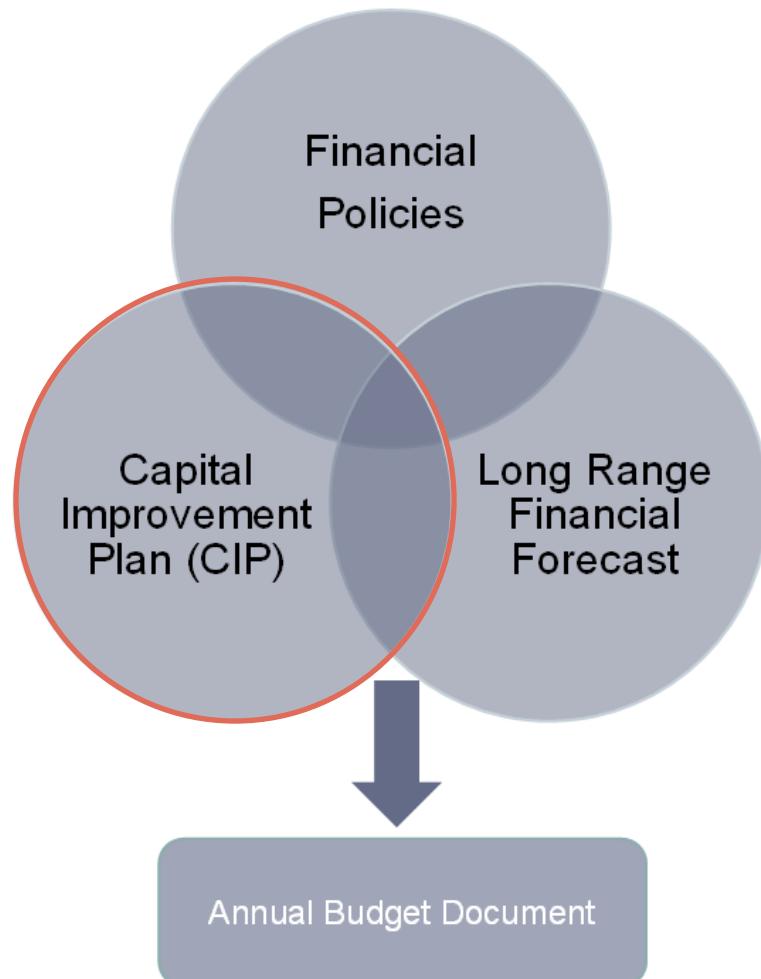


Stresses on Local Budgets

- Property Taxes capped by Proposition 2 ½
- New Growth experience varies greatly across the state
 - Smaller amounts for “bedroom” communities
- Majority of municipalities annually levy property tax to the maximum extent possible
- State Aid is heavily dependent on the economy and is mostly for education
- Local Receipts grow minimally except for economically-sensitive items
 - Can actually decline during economic downturns
- Three major Local Receipt items (MVE, Meals Excise, Lodging Excise) have formulas or percentages set by state law
- Wages + Benefits comprise ~70%+ of a budget
- Pensions and Health Insurance annual budget challenges
- Municipalities limited in financial flexibility

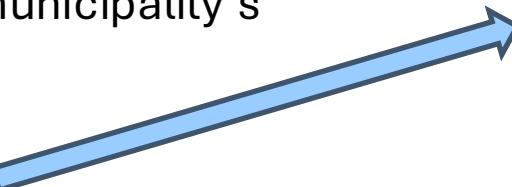


Essential Financial Management Concepts





Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

- A critically important aspect of municipal finance that often isn't given the time and attention it deserves
- Municipalities must maintain its infrastructure
 - Schools, public safety facilities, other municipal buildings
 - Parks, playgrounds, other open spaces
 - Water, sewer systems
 - Streets, sidewalks, bridges, culverts
 - Information Technology
 - Heavy equipment (e.g., fire trucks, DPW trucks)
- Mismanaging debt can cripple a municipality's finances
- Integrate with other master plans 
 - Facilities master plan
 - Open Space Master Plan
 - ADA Transition Plan
 - Housing Development/Economic Development Master Plan
 - IT Master Plan
 - Decarbonization Plan
 - Climate Change Adaptability Plan
 - Vehicle/Heavy Equipment Master Plan
 - Complete Streets Plan
 - Pavement Management Plan
 - Culvert/Bridge Master Plan



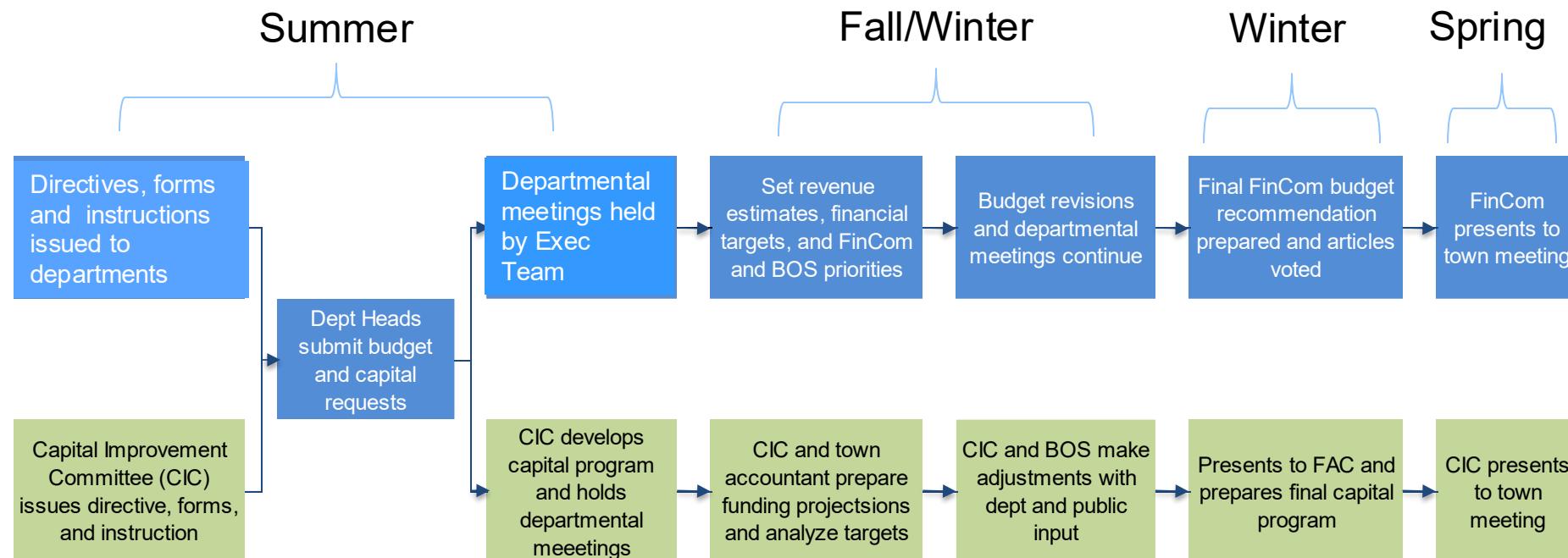
CIP Process & Players

- Adopt a planning process guided by policies
- Prepare/update inventory of existing capital assets
- Solicit, compile and evaluate project requests
- Establish project priority
- Develop a CIP financing plan
- Annually Present the CIP
- Executive team
 - Mayor and CFO
 - Town Administrator/Town Manager and CFO
 - Treasurer
 - Accountant/Auditor
- Other local entities
 - Department Heads (e.g., DPW Dir, Fire Chief, Building Comm)
 - Finance Committee
 - Capital Planning Committee
- External
 - Financial Advisor (FA)
 - Bond counsel



CIP Process - Timeline

- Town examples





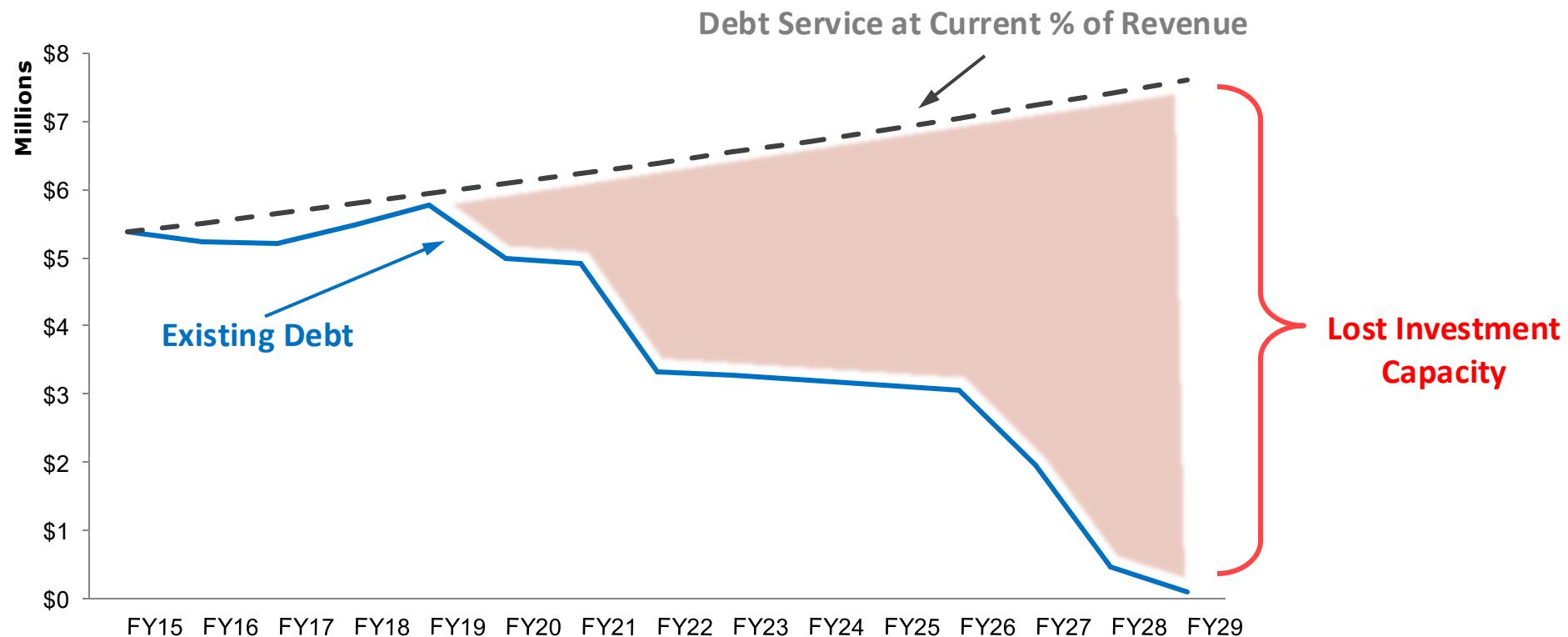
CIP Financing

- Debt (Bonds) – best for major projects with long useful life
 - Debt Exclusion – option to fund projects “outside the budget”
- Pay-Go – best for one-time, limited scope items
 - Tax levy
 - Free Cash
 - Special Purpose Stabilization Fund
 - Other one-time revenues
 - Capital Exclusion
- State/Federal Grants
- Community Preservation Act (CPA)
- Enterprise Funds
 - User fees



Maintain a Steady Balance of Capital Investment

- Because of its critical nature and large financial obligation, municipalities should reinvest decreases in debt service
 - don't use it for "operating budget relief"
 - maintain debt service as a constant percent of revenue
- Lack of reinvestment leads to lost capacity





Debt Exclusion

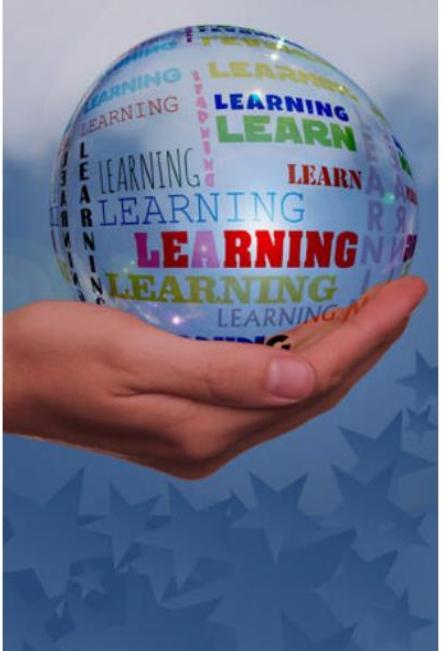
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Municipal Finance Information

- www.mass.gov/dls

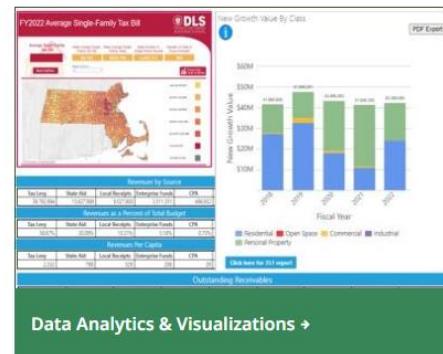
Most Requested



Municipal Finance Training and Resource Center →



Bulletins, Guidelines and Opinions (IGR/BUL/LFO) →



C.S. 1-ER Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Revenue
NOTICE TO ASSESSORS OF ESTIMATED RECEIPTS
General Laws, Chapter 58, Section 25A

Receipt Estimates | Assessments & Charges

B. GENERAL GOVERNMENT:
Distributions and Reimbursements
Unrestricted General Government Aid
Local Share of Racing Taxes
Regional Public Libraries
Veterans Benefits
Exempt: VES and Elderly
State Owned Land
Offset Items - Reserve for Direct Expenditure:
Public Libraries
Sub-Total, All General Government:

4,267,518
0
0
127,426
142,939
140,089
77,634
4,744,606

Cherry sheet & state payment reports →

City & Town

DLS Publications and Financial Tools →



Budget and Capital Planning

Examples from Watertown

George Proakis
City Manager
Watertown, MA

Home Rule Charter

Article 5: Financial Procedures

Annual Budget Schedule:

- October: Preliminary Budget Overview
- November: Council Sets Budget Policy Guidelines
- January: Capital Improvement Plan
- April: Budget Presentations
- May/June: Budget Hearings and Vote

Establishing a Priority and Strategy

City Strategies and Translating into a Budget

- **How do we develop:**
 - Budget priorities
 - Plan for 5+ years into the future when uncertainty might exist.
- **How do we:**
 - Distinguish between ongoing costs that may escalate over time and one-time expenses
- **How do we:**
 - Save reserve funds while ensuring that we are able to fund key city programs

Public Feedback & City Action

What Guides Watertown?

- **What guides Watertown, our Council, and our Executive can be:**
 - Residents in the city voicing their hopes, interests, and concern to the Council and City, leading to action or change.
 - The Council or City Manager determining a new initiative or action item and asking for public engagement on the topic.
 - Commonwealth of Massachusetts recommends or mandates the City to develop an ordinance or policy on an issue or topic.



City of Watertown Annual Budget Fiscal Year 2026

George J. Proakis | City Manager





CITY OF WATERTOWN



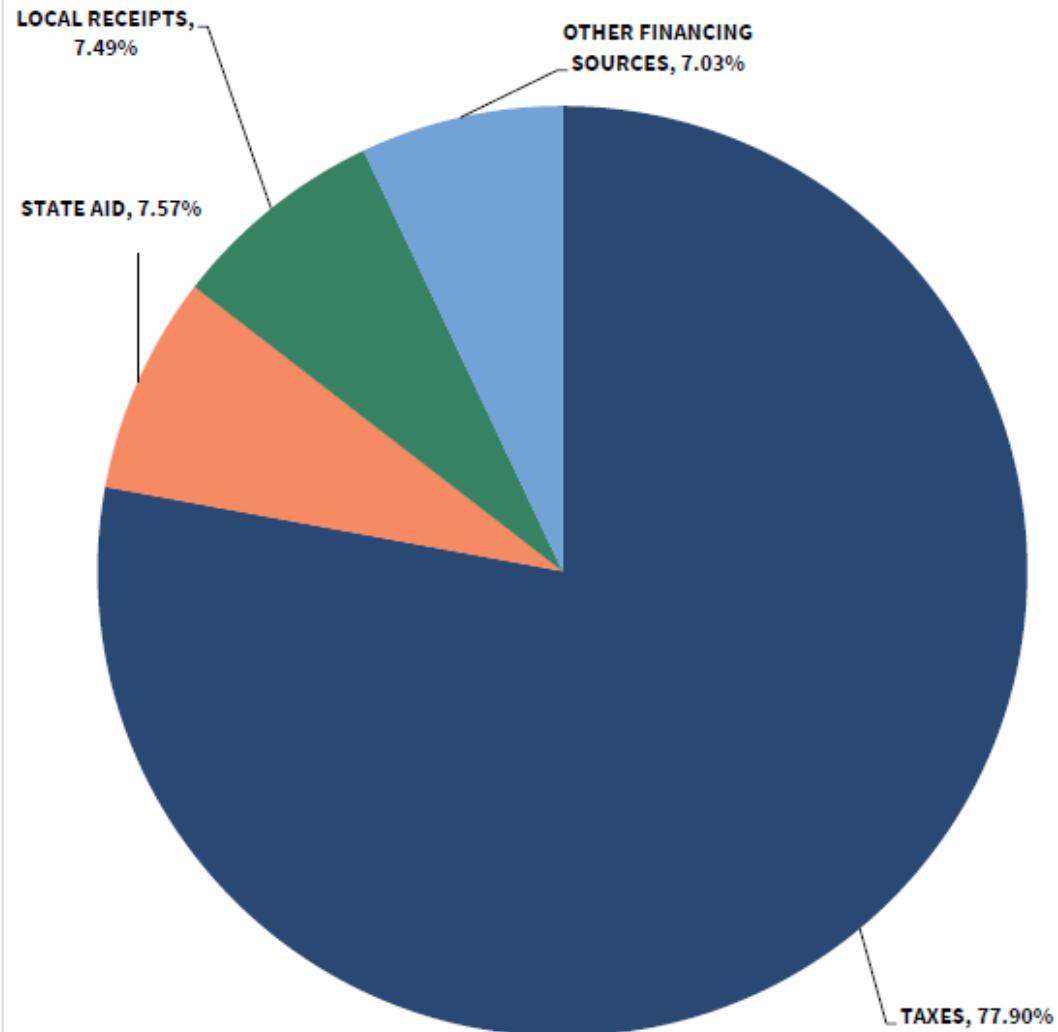
BUDGET POLICY GUIDELINES



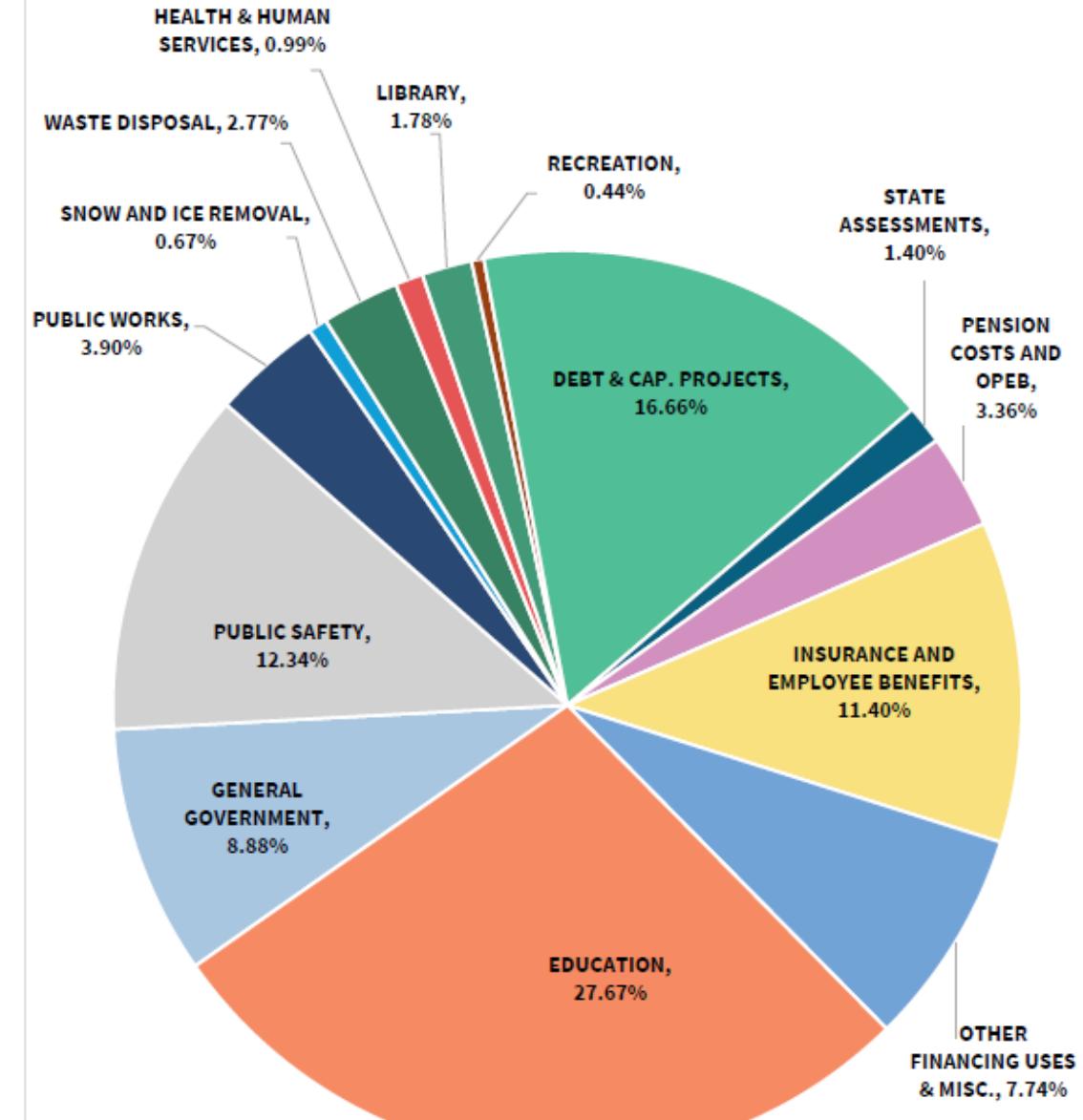
To the extent that resources allow, in light of the financial policies stated above, and adhering to the principle of first identifying cost-savings and/or new revenue, the following program enhancements and, if necessary, new expenditures should receive priority in the FY26 budget. Education program enhancements and expenditures should be considered subsequently in light of the recommendations of the School Committee.

- A. All departmental budgets should prioritize and enhance the ability of the city to implement the strategies and action items in the Climate and Energy Plan.
- B. Provide resources to address the strategies and action items in the Comprehensive Plan and the Watertown Square Area Plan.
- C. Continue to work collaboratively with the Watertown Public Schools on the comprehensive multi-year educational budget that assures sustainable funding for our schools and the successful education of our children and seek to accommodate a 3.5% annual increase for FY26 for the Educational appropriation that will provide level-service funding for our schools.

City of Watertown Fiscal Year 2026 Revenues



City of Watertown Fiscal Year 2026 Expenditures



Community Development and Planning



Mission

The mission of the Department of Community Development and Planning is to address some of the city's greatest challenges by being responsible for planning, developing, overseeing, and coordinating activities that further the city's goals. Through the development of a variety of comprehensive long-range plans, the department helps create a collective vision for the future of the city. The department values engagement with the community as it works to turn policy direction and vision into executable strategies, ordinances, and plans.

Department Description

The Department is led by the Assistant City Manager for Community Development and Planning and consists of three divisions and three teams:

Inspectional Services Division – Accepts permit applications and reviews and issues building, plumbing, and electrical permits. Ensures that all applicable codes are appropriately followed.

Community Design Division – Addresses design-related issues for open spaces, streetscapes, and public art and culture. Coordinates economic development efforts with a focus on small businesses, commercial corridors, and emerging industry clusters.

Planning & Zoning Division – Processes all planning-related permits and addresses housing, transportation, and other City interests. Primary staff to Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Historical Commission, Historic District Commission, Affordable Housing Trust, and Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee.

City Events/Commander's Mansion Team – Oversees community events that foster community engagement and spirit. Administers the marketing, sales, and operations for private events held at the Commander's Mansion.

Sustainability Team – Coordinates efforts to implement the Resilient Watertown Plan, including efforts within City government to reduce impacts and incorporate adaptive strategies, as well as bringing these efforts to the general public.

Zoning & Code Enforcement Team – Provides guidance to property owners regarding compliance with the Zoning Ordinance and other codes, enforces ordinances and board decisions, and provides staff support to the Zoning Board of Appeals.



Fiscal Year 2024/2025 Accomplishments

- Engaged in a citywide effort that led to the adoption of the Watertown Square Area Plan and zoning updates. The plan reimagines Watertown Square and complies with the statutory requirements regarding MBTA communities. This process involved numerous public outreach efforts, a planning charrette, and the drafting of documents.
- Oversaw approval of a new state-designated Cultural District in Watertown which will help coordinate efforts and make grant funds available.
- Launched an economic development newsletter designed to connect and celebrate the Watertown business community, as well as to provide information on state and local resources.
- Worked on planning and construction of numerous open space projects, including Arsenal Park, Saltonstall Park, Lowell Park, Walker Pond, How Park, and Bemis Park.
- Received numerous grants to fund projects across the department.
- Ran a successful 25th Faire on the Square.
- Supported introduction of a Building Emission Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance.

Fiscal Year 2026 Goals

- Rewrite the remainder of the Zoning Ordinance to both update and address ongoing issues. Ensure zoning is consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan per Budget Policy Guideline II.B.
- Begin implementation of the Watertown Square Plan with both engineering and landscape design services, as well as an Urban Revitalization Plan to explore how to best leverage public and private interests to make the Watertown Square Plan a reality, consistent with Budget Policy Guideline II.B.
- Support completion of the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance, for review by the City Council. This will implement a key goal of the Climate and Energy Plan, consistent with Budget Policy Guideline II.A.
- Create additional public art in prominent locations.
- Introduce a number of new and expanded community events.
- Continue to diligently review and enforce our rules, regulations, and codes.

Community Development and Planning Budget



Description	FY 2024 Actual	FY 2025 Original Budget	FY 2025 Revised Budget	FY 2026 Level Service Budget	FY 2026 Additional Funding Requests	FY 2026 Manager Recommendations
0118151 - COMM. DEV. & PLAN. PERSONNEL						
510111 FULL TIME SALARIES	1,521,522	2,371,961	2,371,961	2,278,737	-	2,278,737
510112 PART TIME SALARIES	54,587	65,122	65,122	81,922	-	81,922
510130 OVERTIME	49,624	60,000	60,000	80,000	-	80,000
510143 LONGEVITY	17,195	15,125	15,125	10,000	-	10,000
510146 CPR STIPEND	-	-	-	6,250	-	6,250
510190 CLOTHING	1,500	1,800	1,800	1,800	-	1,800
511111 PRIOR YEAR FULL TIME	26,349	-	-	-	-	-
511130 PRIOR YEAR OVERTIME	386	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL PERSONNEL	1,671,163	2,514,008	2,514,008	2,458,709	-	2,458,709
0118152 - COMM. DEV. & PLAN. EXPENSES						
520240 EQUIPMENT MAINT.	-	550	550	550	-	550
520247 OFFICE EQUIPMENT	1,387	2,200	2,200	2,200	-	2,200
530301 ADVERTISING	1,836	5,000	5,000	5,000	-	5,000
530303 CONTRACT SERVICES	258,057	300,000	300,000	296,000	-	296,000
530304 MAPS & CHARTS	-	1,000	1,000	1,000	-	1,000
530382 TRANSPORTATION SERV.	-	-	-	200,000	100,000	200,000
540421 OFFICE SUPPLIES	2,106	2,750	2,750	2,750	-	2,750
540422 PRINTING AND FORMS	3,693	4,800	4,800	4,800	-	4,800
540425 PROGRAM SUPPLIES	-	3,500	3,500	-	-	-
540427 CULTURAL COUNCIL	-	17,000	17,000	17,000	-	17,000
550511 BOOKS	20	500	500	500	-	500
570710 IN STATE TRAVEL	-	-	-	2,000	-	2,000
570720 OUT OF STATE TRAVEL	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000
570730 DUES & SUBSCRIPT.	2,480	5,000	5,000	6,200	-	6,200
570786 CONFERENCE EXPENSES	-	-	-	2,000	-	2,000
570787 STAFF DEVELOPMENT	7,882	10,000	10,000	5,500	-	5,500
TOTAL EXPENSES	277,461	352,300	352,300	550,500	100,000	550,500
TOTAL - COMM. DEV. & PLAN.	1,948,624	2,866,308	2,866,308	3,009,209	100,000	3,009,209

City of Watertown Fiscal Year 2026 Expenditure Budget & Comparison



DESCRIPTION	FY 2025 Revised Budget	FY 2026 Proposed Budget	BUDGET CHANGE INCR/(DECR)	% CHANGE
GENERAL GOVERNMENT				
CITY COUNCIL	\$293,268	\$308,768	\$15,500	5.29%
CITY MANAGER	\$1,301,706	\$1,262,142	(\$39,564)	-3.04%
CITY AUDITOR	\$668,145	\$682,990	\$14,845	2.22%
PROCUREMENT	\$607,922	\$597,076	(\$10,846)	-1.78%
CITY ASSESSOR	\$585,377	\$587,034	\$1,657	0.28%
TREASURER/COLLECTOR	\$633,322	\$650,866	\$17,544	2.77%
CITY ATTORNEY	\$275,000	\$300,000	\$25,000	9.09%
HUMAN RESOURCES	\$634,135	\$681,056	\$46,921	7.40%
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	\$2,324,665	\$2,344,257	\$19,592	0.84%
CITY CLERK	\$350,315	\$365,919	\$15,604	4.45%
ELECTIONS	\$210,223	\$222,587	\$12,364	5.88%
COMM. DEV. & PLANNING	\$2,866,308	\$3,009,209	\$142,901	4.99%
CONSTITUENT SERVICES	\$212,186	\$202,779	(\$9,407)	-4.43%
PARKING LOTS & METERS	\$344,504	\$348,288	\$3,784	1.10%
PUBLIC BUILDINGS	\$3,218,844	\$4,398,842	\$1,179,998	36.66%
TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$14,525,920	\$15,961,813	\$1,435,893	9.89%
PUBLIC SAFETY				
POLICE	\$12,711,320	\$13,557,241	\$845,921	6.65%
FIRE	\$13,766,375	\$13,972,260	\$205,885	1.50%
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	\$61,912	\$62,349	\$437	0.71%
TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	\$26,539,607	\$27,591,850	\$1,052,243	3.96%
PUBLIC WORKS				
PUBLIC WORKS	\$8,144,946	\$8,732,868	\$587,922	7.22%
SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$0	0.00%
WASTE DISPOSAL	\$5,751,607	\$6,185,500	\$433,893	7.54%
HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES				
HEALTH	\$1,065,259	\$971,364	(\$93,895)	-8.81%
HUMAN SERVICES	\$0	\$531,635		
SENIOR SERVICES	\$553,078	\$472,582	(\$80,495)	-14.55%
VETERANS	\$261,579	\$239,839	(\$21,740)	-8.31%
TOTAL HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	\$1,879,916	\$2,215,420	\$335,504	17.85%
LIBRARY	\$4,265,650	\$3,991,377	(\$274,273)	-6.43%
RECREATION				
RECREATION DEPT.	\$579,829	\$600,085	\$20,256	3.49%
JOHN A. RYAN SKATING ARENA	\$345,360	\$382,083	\$36,723	10.63%
RECREATION	\$925,189	\$982,168	\$56,979	6.16%
EDUCATION	\$59,704,263	\$61,893,912	\$2,189,649	3.67%
TOTAL DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES	\$123,237,098	\$129,054,908	\$5,817,810	4.72%



EDUCATION	\$59,704,263	\$61,893,912	\$2,189,649	3.67%
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CITY OF WATERTOWN



CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Fiscal Year 2026-2030



	C	D	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R
1		TOTALS	FY '26		FY '27		FY '28		FY '29		FY '30	
2	Administration Building											
3	Administration Building Improvements/Renovations	217.0	25.0	TR	45.0	TR	47.0	TR	49.0	TR	51.0	TR
4	Replace Carpets	45.0	45.0	TR								
5	Paint Hallway/Offices	50.0	50.0	TR								
6	Additional Roof/Masonry	300.0	300.0	BR								
7	Upgrade Fire Sprinkler System Design/Install	790.0							90.0	BR	700.0	BR
8	Security & Accessability Improv	660.0			60.0	BR	600.0	BR				
9	Lighting & Electrical Upgrades	300.0					300.0	BR				
10	Building Retocommissioning Study & HVAC	2,225.0					325.0	BR	1,900.0	BR		
11												
12	PARKER ANNEX											
13	Move of Departments	100.0	100.0	TR								
14	Parker Annex Building Improvement/Renovations	270.0	50.0	TR	52.0	TR	54.0	TR	56.0	TR	58.0	TR
15	Parker 2nd Floor Renovations	230.0	230.0	BR								
16	Parker ADA/Code Update Requirements	4,528.0	2,106.0	BR	875.0	BR	1,547.0	BR				
17	Retrocommissioning Study	75.0	75.0	BR								
18	Retrocommissioning Upgrades	1,600.0	800.0	BR	800.0	BR						
19	Parker Roof Design/Replacement	1,210.0			110.0	BR	1,100.0	BR				
20	Parker Window Design Replacement	3,300.0							300.0	TBD	3,000.0	TBD
21	Masonry Additional Costs	350.0	350.0	BR								
22												
23	MISC BUILDING PROJECTS											
24	Energy Efficiency Projects	250.0	50.0	ER	50.0	ER	50.0	ER	50.0	ER	50.0	ER
25	Former Police Facility	1,000.0							1,000.0	TBD		
26	Multi-Service Center Renovation	500.0							500.0	TBD		
27	Renovation/Reuse former North Branch	1,100.0					1,100.0	TBD				
28	Geothermal Upgrades	5,500.0							500.0	TBD	5,000.0	TBD
29	ADMINISTRATION & PARKER SUBTOTAL	24,600.0	4,181.0		1,992.0		5,123.0		4,445.0		8,859.0	
30												
31	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT											
32	Monument Restoration & Replacement	75.0	15.0	TR	15.0	TR	15.0	TR	15.0	TR	15.0	TR
33	Public Art	235.0	40.0	TR	45.0	TR	50.0	TR	50.0	TR	50.0	TR
34	Commander's Mansion	150.0	30.0	TR	30.0	TR	30.0	TR	30.0	TR	30.0	TR
35	Watertown Sq Transportation Charges	15,000.0					5,000.0	TBD	5,000.0	TBD	5,000.0	TBD



298										
299	COSTS BY SOURCE OF FUNDS									
300	GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS									
301	(EQUIPMENT)	16,827.2	4,217.0	BE	3,825.0	BE	3,148.2	BE	3,140.0	BE
302	(REMODELING)	124,522.0	29,520.0	BR	33,885.0	BR	42,932.0	BR	7,400.0	BR
303	(STREET)	25,000.0	4,600.0	STB	4,800.0	STB	5,000.0	STB	5,200.0	STB
304	(SIDEWALK)	3,125.0	575.0	SWB	600.0	SWB	625.0	SWB	650.0	SWB
305	SUBTOTAL GENERAL OBLIGATION BONDS	169,474.2	38,912.0		43,110.0		51,705.2		16,390.0	
306										
307	CHAPTER 90 FUNDS	5,700.0	1,140.0	C9	1,140.0	C9	1,140.0	C9	1,140.0	C9
310	SCHOOL TO BE DETERMINED	5,780.0	1,285.0	STBD	1,785.0	STBD	910.0	STBD	1,500.0	STBD
311	TAX REVENUE	19,185.9	3,724.8	TR	3,749.1	TR	3,890.8	TR	3,923.8	TR
312	SCHOOL APPROPRIATION	500.0	100.0	SA	100.0	SA	100.0	SA	100.0	SA
313	TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROG.	15,000.0	7,500.0	TIP	7,500.0	TIP	0.0	TIP	0.0	TIP
314	Energy Rebate Revenue	250.0	50.0	ER	50.0	ER	50.0	ER	50.0	ER
315	TO BE DETERMINED	57,200.0	2,500.0	TBD	1,950.0	TBD	7,100.0	TBD	7,450.0	TBD
316	SUBTOTAL OTHER	103,615.9	16,299.8		16,274.1		13,190.8		14,163.8	
317	GRAND TOTAL	273,090.1	55,211.8		59,384.1		64,896.0		30,553.8	



5	MT. AUBURN ST NON PARTICIPATORY FUNDS	BR	25	\$	500,000	\$	100,000	\$	22,500	\$	100,000	\$	18,000	\$	100,000	\$	13,500	\$	100,000	\$	9,000	\$	100,000	\$	4,500
5	HIGHWAY (CONNECTOR/LONGER STREETS)	BTB	25	\$	2,200,000	\$	440,000	\$	99,000	\$	440,000	\$	79,200	\$	440,000	\$	59,400	\$	440,000	\$	39,000	\$	440,000	\$	19,000
5	HIGHWAY RECONSTR BONDS	BTB	25	\$	2,200,000	\$	440,000	\$	99,000	\$	440,000	\$	79,200	\$	440,000	\$	59,400	\$	440,000	\$	39,000	\$	440,000	\$	19,000
5	SIDEWALK RECONSTR BONDS	SWB	25	\$	550,000	\$	110,000	\$	24,750	\$	110,000	\$	18,000	\$	110,000	\$	14,050	\$	110,000	\$	9,900	\$	110,000	\$	4,950
				\$	5,450,000	\$	1,090,000	\$	242,330	\$	1,090,000	\$	198,200	\$	1,090,000	\$	147,150	\$	1,090,000	\$	98,100	\$	1,090,000	\$	49,050
5	DISTRICT: SECURITY SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS	BR	25	\$	95,000	\$	19,000	\$	4,275	\$	19,000	\$	3,420	\$	19,000	\$	2,595	\$	19,000	\$	1,710	\$	19,000	\$	855
				\$	95,000	\$	19,000	\$	4,275	\$	19,000	\$	3,420	\$	19,000	\$	2,595	\$	19,000	\$	1,710	\$	19,000	\$	855
5	ADMIN BLDG: ROOF SHINGLE REPLACEMENT/ROOF REFURBISH	BR	26	\$	300,000					\$	60,000	\$	13,500	\$	60,000	\$	10,000	\$	60,000	\$	8,100	\$	60,000	\$	5,400
10	PARKER: 2ND FLOOR RENOVATIONS	BR	26	\$	230,000					\$	23,000	\$	10,250	\$	23,000	\$	9,315	\$	23,000	\$	8,280	\$	23,000	\$	7,245
15	PARKER: ADA/CODE UPDATE REQUIREMENTS	BR	26	\$	2,106,000					\$	140,400	\$	94,770	\$	140,400	\$	66,452	\$	140,400	\$	82,134	\$	140,400	\$	75,016
5	PARKER: RETRORECOMMISIONING STUDY	BR	26	\$	75,000					\$	15,000	\$	3,375	\$	15,000	\$	2,700	\$	15,000	\$	2,025	\$	15,000	\$	1,250
10	PARKER: RETRORECOMMISIONING UPGRADES	BR	26	\$	800,000					\$	80,000	\$	16,000	\$	80,000	\$	32,400	\$	80,000	\$	26,800	\$	80,000	\$	25,200
10	PARKER BUILDING: MASONRY ADDITIONAL COSTS	BR	26	\$	350,000					\$	35,000	\$	15,750	\$	35,000	\$	14,175	\$	35,000	\$	12,000	\$	35,000	\$	11,025
10	COP: HOW PARK PHASE 1	BR	26	\$	650,000					\$	65,000	\$	29,250	\$	65,000	\$	26,325	\$	65,000	\$	23,400	\$	65,000	\$	20,475
15	COP: VICTORY TRACK, FIELD & CRT RENO-Phase II	BR	26	\$	11,000,000					\$	733,333	\$	495,000	\$	733,333	\$	402,000	\$	733,333	\$	428,000	\$	733,333	\$	388,000
5	RSC: ADDS	BR	26	\$	40,000					\$	8,000	\$	1,000	\$	8,000	\$	1,440	\$	8,000	\$	1,000	\$	8,000	\$	720
5	IT: INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	BR	26	\$	200,000					\$	40,000	\$	9,000	\$	40,000	\$	7,200	\$	40,000	\$	5,400	\$	40,000	\$	5,000
5	IT: PERMITTING/TRANSPARENCY DASHBOARDS	BR	26	\$	150,000					\$	30,000	\$	6,750	\$	30,000	\$	5,400	\$	30,000	\$	4,050	\$	30,000	\$	2,700
5	IT: DOCUMENT SCANNING	BR	26	\$	200,000					\$	40,000	\$	9,000	\$	40,000	\$	7,200	\$	40,000	\$	5,400	\$	40,000	\$	5,000
5	IT: PARKER ANNEX TECHNOLOGY	BR	26	\$	50,000					\$	10,000	\$	2,250	\$	10,000	\$	1,000	\$	10,000	\$	1,350	\$	10,000	\$	900
5	IT: DIGITAL EQUITY & BROADBAND	BR	26	\$	150,000					\$	30,000	\$	6,750	\$	30,000	\$	5,400	\$	30,000	\$	4,050	\$	30,000	\$	2,700
5	FIRE: EAST END STATION HVAC/PLUMBING	BR	26	\$	120,000					\$	25,200	\$	5,670	\$	25,200	\$	4,536	\$	25,200	\$	3,402	\$	25,200	\$	2,266
5	FIRE: EAST END STATION PAINTING-CARPET-LIGHTING	BR	26	\$	121,000					\$	34,200	\$	5,445	\$	34,200	\$	4,358	\$	34,200	\$	3,267	\$	34,200	\$	2,178
10	FIRE: PROTECTIVE OUTER GEAR	BR	26	\$	450,000					\$	45,000	\$	10,250	\$	45,000	\$	10,225	\$	45,000	\$	10,200	\$	45,000	\$	14,175
5	POLICE: VIDEO SYSTEM SECURITY REPLACEMENT	BR	26	\$	40,000					\$	9,000	\$	2,100	\$	9,000	\$	1,728	\$	9,000	\$	1,388	\$	9,000	\$	864
5	POLICE: SECURITY SWITCH REPLACEMENT	BR	26	\$	34,000					\$	8,000	\$	1,530	\$	8,000	\$	1,224	\$	8,000	\$	910	\$	8,000	\$	612
10	POLICE: LEVEL 3 EV CHARGING STATION INSTALL	BR	26	\$	1,585,000					\$	150,000	\$	71,325	\$	150,000	\$	64,193	\$	150,000	\$	57,066	\$	150,000	\$	49,928
5	FLEET: TRAFFIC SUPERVISOR VEHICLE (C#10)	BR	26	\$	80,000					\$	10,000	\$	3,000	\$	10,000	\$	2,000	\$	10,000	\$	1,160	\$	10,000	\$	1,440
10	Hwy: HOT BOX #49	BR	26	\$	300,000					\$	30,000	\$	13,500	\$	30,000	\$	12,150	\$	30,000	\$	10,000	\$	30,000	\$	9,450
10	SNOWBLOW: 4X4 SANDER (#37)	BR	26	\$	320,000					\$	32,000	\$	14,400	\$	32,000	\$	12,960	\$	32,000	\$	11,524	\$	32,000	\$	10,000
5	CEMETARY: DUMP TRUCK #202	BR	26	\$	100,000					\$	20,000	\$	4,500	\$	20,000	\$	3,000	\$	20,000	\$	2,700	\$	20,000	\$	1,000
5	PARKS & FORESTRY: CHIPPED BODY #74	BR	26	\$	200,000					\$	40,000	\$	9,000	\$	40,000	\$	7,200	\$	40,000	\$	5,400	\$	40,000	\$	3,000
5	PUB BLDG: SIDEWALK SNOWBLOWER	BR	26	\$	60,000					\$	12,000	\$	2,700	\$	12,000	\$	2,100	\$	12,000	\$	1,620	\$	12,000	\$	1,000
5	PUB BLDG: EQUIPMENT INVENTORY SYST	BR	26	\$	150,000					\$	30,000	\$	6,750	\$	30,000	\$	5,400	\$	30,000	\$	4,050	\$	30,000	\$	2,700
15	PUB. BLDG: ROOF REPLACEMENT/SOLAR & SOLAR CANOPY DPW PKG LOT	BR	26	\$	2,000,000					\$	133,333	\$	90,000	\$	133,333	\$	64,000	\$	133,333	\$	70,000	\$	133,333	\$	72,000
5	PUB. BLDG: ADD EV STATIONS	BR	26	\$	90,000					\$	18,000	\$	4,050	\$	18,000	\$	3,240	\$	18,000	\$	2,430	\$	18,000	\$	1,620
5	PUB. BLDG: DPW GARAGE FANS & DOORS	BR	26	\$	200,000					\$	40,000	\$	9,000	\$	40,000	\$	7,200	\$	40,000	\$	5,400	\$	40,000	\$	3,000
5	RINK: REBUILD OF COMPRESSORS	BR	26	\$	25,000					\$	5,000	\$	1,125	\$	5,000	\$	900	\$	5,000	\$	675	\$	5,000	\$	450
5	RINK: UPGRADE INTERNAL LIGHTING TO LED	BR	26	\$	30,000					\$	6,000	\$	1,350	\$	6,000	\$	1,000	\$	6,000	\$	810	\$	6,000	\$	540
				\$	22,320,000	\$	-	-	-	\$	1,981,307	\$	1,004,400	\$	1,981,307	\$	915,039	\$	1,981,307	\$	626,017	\$	1,981,307	\$	756,918
30	NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL	BR	26	\$	10,000,000					\$	333,333	\$	450,000	\$	333,333	\$	435,000	\$	333,333	\$	420,000	\$	333,333	\$	405,000
				\$	10,000,000	\$	-	-	-	\$	333,333	\$	450,000	\$	333,333	\$	435,000	\$	333,333	\$	420,000	\$	333,333	\$	405,000
5	MT. AUBURN ST NON PARTICIPATORY FUNDS	BR	26	\$	500,000					\$	100,000	\$	22,500	\$	100,000	\$	18,000	\$	100,000	\$	13,500	\$	100,000	\$	9,000
5	STREETS & SIDEWALKS: ORNAMENTAL STREET LIGHTING	BR	26	\$	300,000					\$	60,000	\$	13,500	\$	60,000	\$	10,000	\$	60,000	\$	8,100	\$	60,000	\$	5,400
5	HIGHWAY (CONNECTOR/THROUGHWAYS)	BTB	26	\$	2,300,000					\$	480,000	\$	103,500	\$	480,000	\$	82,000	\$	480,000	\$	62,100	\$	480,000	\$	41,400
5	HIGHWAY RECONSTR	BTB	26	\$	2,300,000					\$	480,000	\$	103,500	\$	480,000	\$	82,000	\$	480,000	\$	62,100	\$	480,000	\$	41,400
5	STREETS & SIDEWALKS: UNDERGROUND DUCT	BR	26	\$	300,000					\$	60,000	\$	13,500	\$	60,000	\$	10,000	\$	60,000	\$	8,100	\$	60,000	\$	5,400
5	SIDEWALK RECONSTR	SWB	26	\$	575,000					\$	115,000	\$	25,075	\$	115,000	\$	20,700	\$	115,000	\$	15,025	\$	115,000	\$	10,350
				\$	627,500	\$	-	-	-	\$	1,255,000	\$	282,375	\$	1,255,000	\$	225,900	\$	1,255,000	\$	169,425	\$	1,255,000	\$	112,950
5	PHILLIPS: MASONRY REPAIRS	BR	27	\$	222,000					\$	44,400	\$	9,900	\$	44,400	\$	7,992	\$	44,400	\$	5,984	\$	44,400	\$	3,996
5	DISTRICT: SECURITY SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS	BR	27	\$	95,000					\$	19,000	\$	4,275	\$	19,000	\$	3,420	\$	19,000	\$	2,595	\$	19,000	\$	1,710
				\$	317,000	\$	-	-	-	\$	63,400	\$	14,205	\$	63,400	\$	11,412	\$	63,400	\$	8,229	\$	63,400	\$	5,706
15	ADMIN: SECURITY & ACCESSABILITY IMPROV	BR	27	\$	80,000					\$	4,000	\$	2,700	\$	4,000	\$	2,520	\$	4,000	\$	4,000	\$	4,000	\$	2,340

Closing Thoughts

- **To understand local government, first find and understand:**
 - The community's charter
 - The form of government
 - Who appoints key positions
 - How the budget is developed
 - How capital planning is developed
 - Annual schedule for planning and budgeting
 - How municipal and school officials work together

Questions?



Next Steps

- Please take 1-2 mins to please complete the anonymous evaluation form (link in chat)

Upcoming Events:

- **November 19:** Peer Learning Network: Grant Writing Discussion with Jillian
- **December 2:** Building Systems 101 Training
- **December 3:** Optional Office Hours
- **December 16:** Building Decarbonization & Energy Efficiency Strategies Training



Thank you!

