



Wauwatosa, WI

Committee of the Whole

Meeting Agenda - Final

7725 W. North Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

6:30 PM

Common Council Chambers and Zoom:
<https://servetosa.zoom.us/j/273225010>,
Meeting ID: 273 225 010

HYBRID MEETING INFORMATION

Members of the public may observe the meeting in-person or via Zoom at the link above. To access the Zoom meeting via phone, call 1-312-626-6799 and enter the Meeting ID.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ITEMS

1. Overview of the 2026 Operating Budget

[25-1238](#)

ADJOURNMENT

NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY

Persons with a disability who need assistance to participate in this meeting should call the City Clerk's office at (414) 479-8917 or send an email to tclerk@wauwatosa.net, with as much advance notice as possible.



Wauwatosa, WI

7725 W. North Avenue
Wauwatosa, WI 53213

Staff Report

File #: 25-1238

Agenda Date: 9/30/2025

Agenda #: 1.

Title

Overview of the 2026 Operating Budget

2026 Budget

Executive Budget

Committee of the Whole
September 30, 2025



Agenda



1. Budget overview
2. Budget highlights
3. Upcoming meetings

2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Highlights

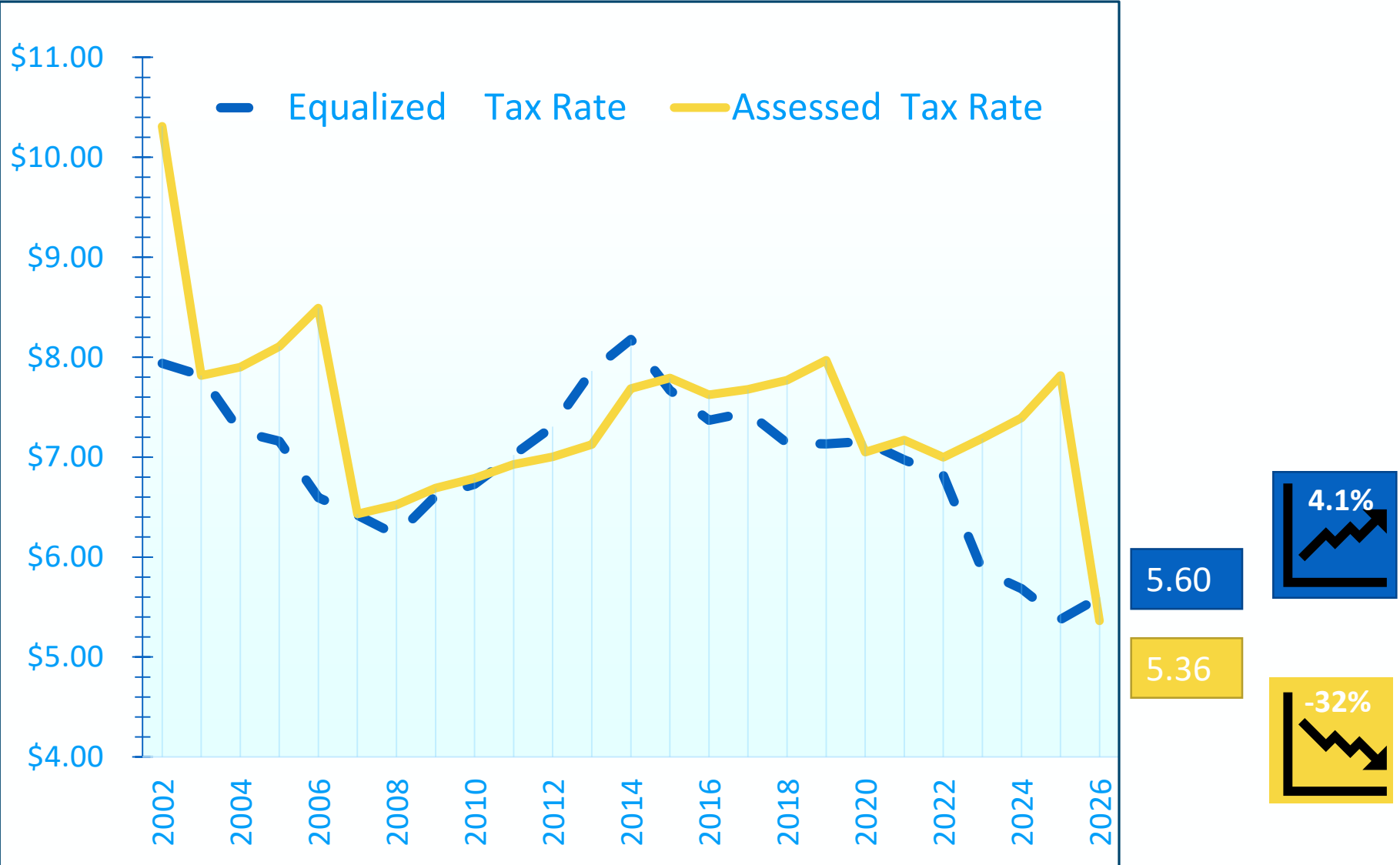


The Budget’s Impacts on Tax Bills

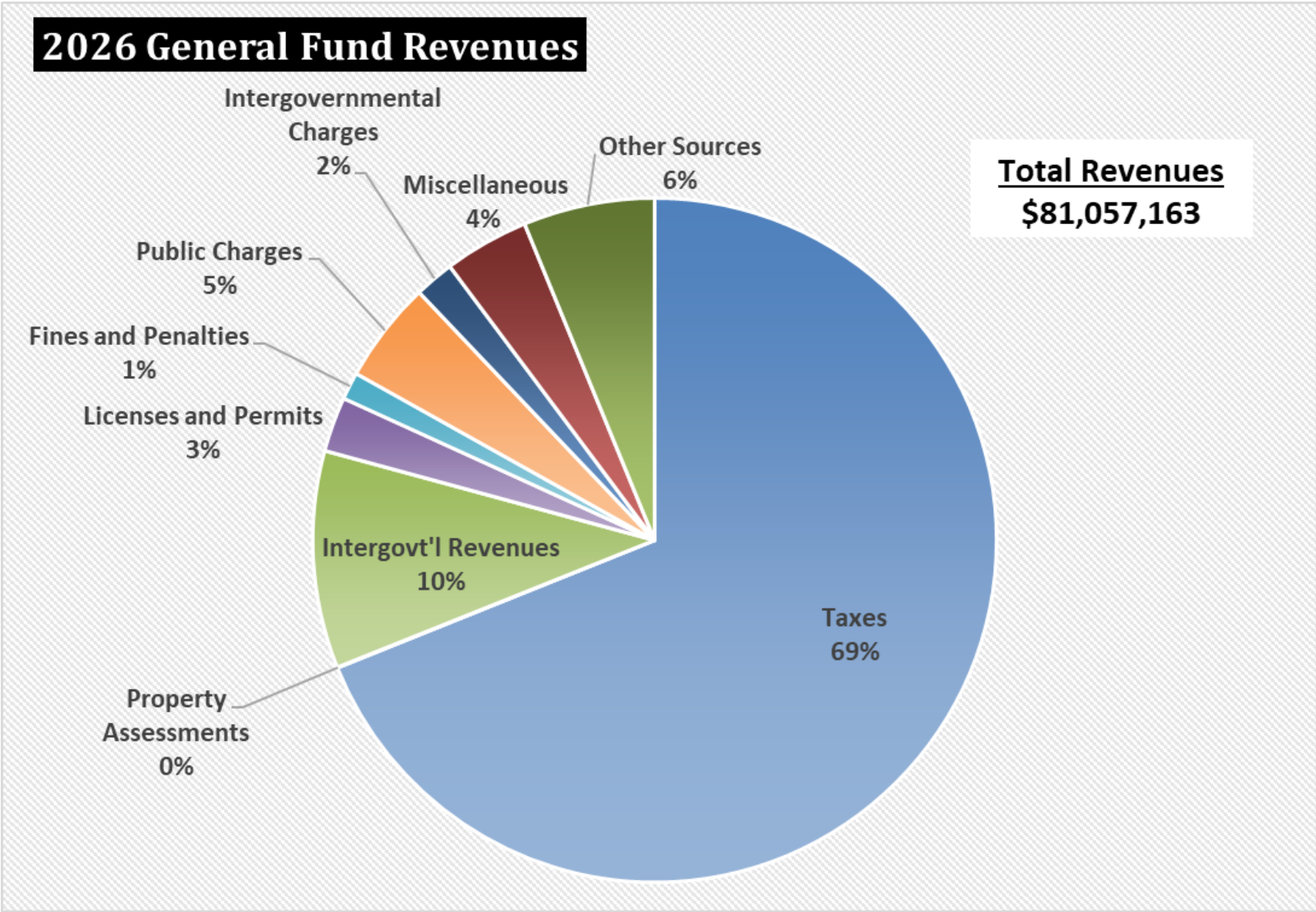
- We expect that the city tax bill for the average Wauwatosa home will increase by 8.21% in 2026.
- This represents a \$176 increase (from \$2,142 to \$2,318) based on the average assessed value of \$420,000.

	2026	Amount Changed	Percent Changed
Property Tax Levy	\$53,127,153	\$1,045,526	⬆️ 2.01%
Assessed Value	\$9,908,048,300	\$3,244,030,312	⬆️ 48.7%
Tax rate (est)	\$5.36	\$(2.45)	⬆️ 31.4%

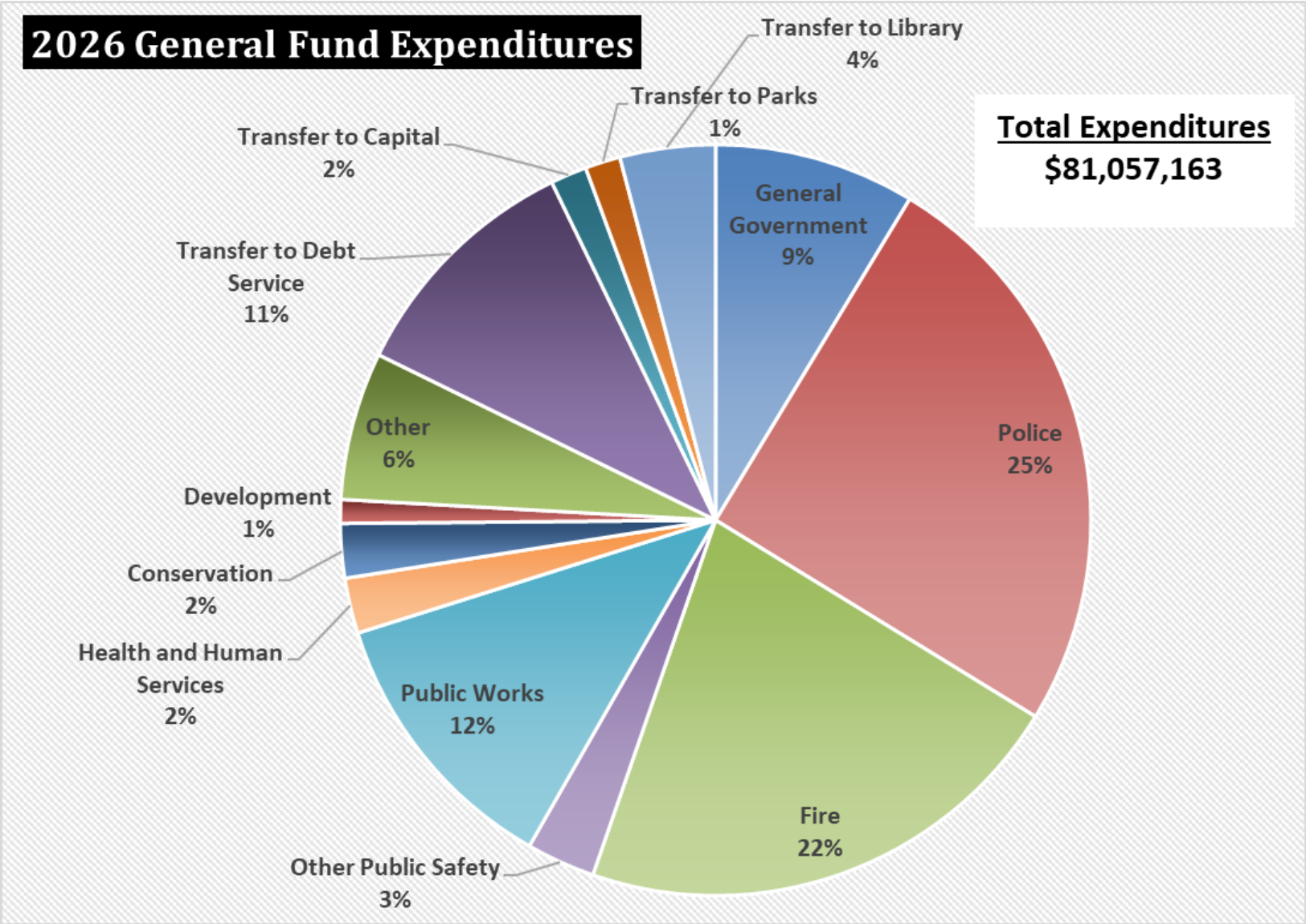
2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Property Tax Rate Over Time



2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET| Expenditures and Revenues



2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Expenditures and Revenues



2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Highlights

The 2026 Budget **does not** reflect any budget considerations from the potential fire merger, flooding, or the Library/City Hall renovation project.

Tax rates and property values are estimates as Board of Review has not yet concluded



2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Highlights



Yard Waste Shifting From Biweekly to Monthly

- Collection will remain from April to October
- During collection, residents can:
 - Drop yard waste at the Drop Off Center for free (previously an \$5 fee)
 - Purchase a yard waste cart to store waste until the next collection (\$85 per cart)

2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Highlights

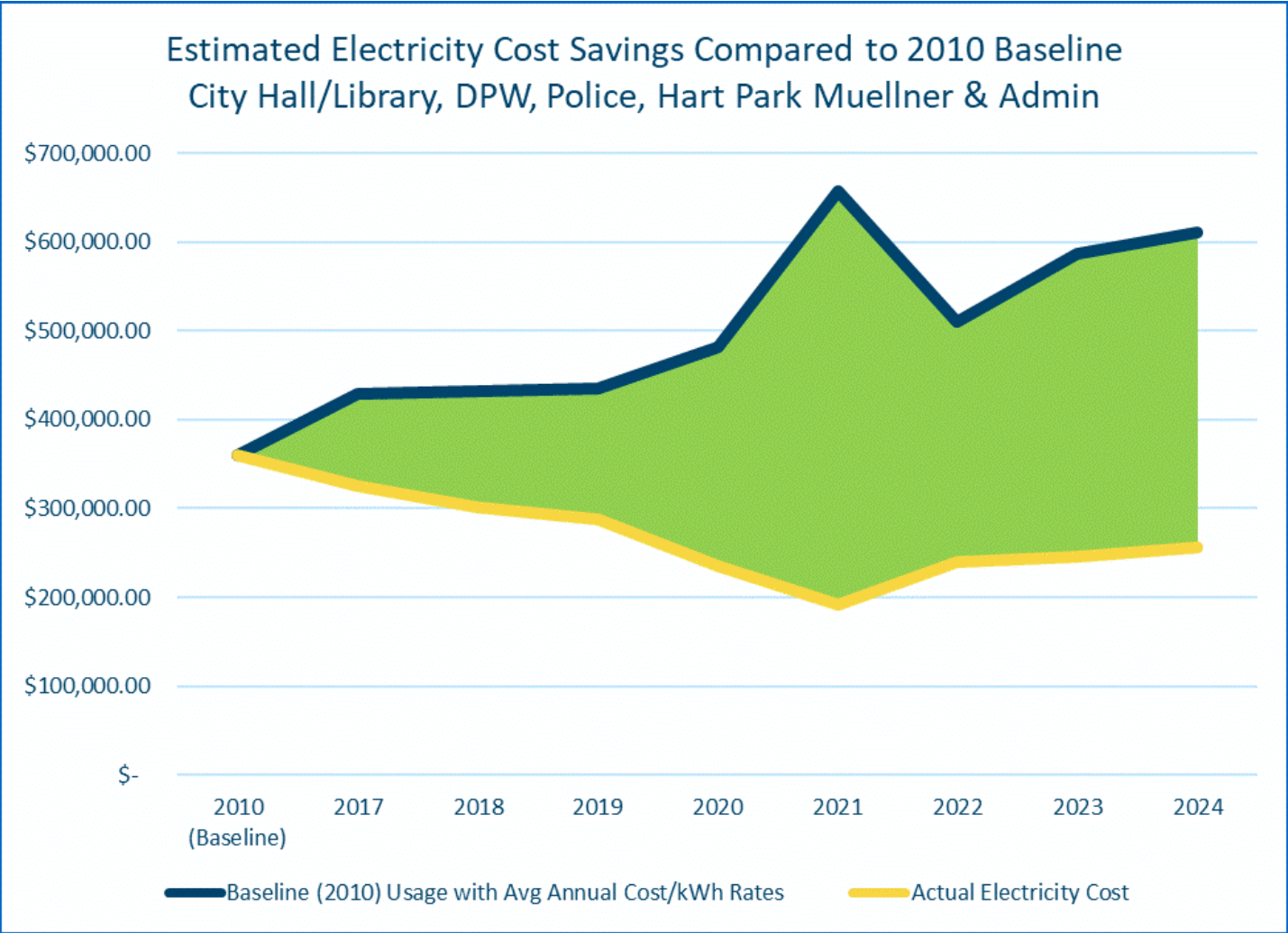


Fire Department Leaves a Position Unfilled

- Saves \$110,000
- Does not require a layoff
- This decision will contribute to more “brownouts”– times when an engine is unavailable because there are not enough firefighters to staff it

**Service will be covered by neighboring engines and mutual aid agreements, ensuring emergency response coverage is maintained.*

2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Highlights



Savings Through Energy Efficiency

- Investments in energy efficiency and solar saved over \$2 million since 2017.
- We continue our strategy to make smart purchases and incremental investments that drive long-term energy savings.

2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Highlights

Technology Investments in Public Safety

- The proposed additional \$170,000 in the 2026 budget is part of a 10-year contract with Axon, one of the few providers of body-worn camera systems – critical tools in transparent policing.
- A second drone would support our law enforcement through extended operations, large events, and other critical needs.



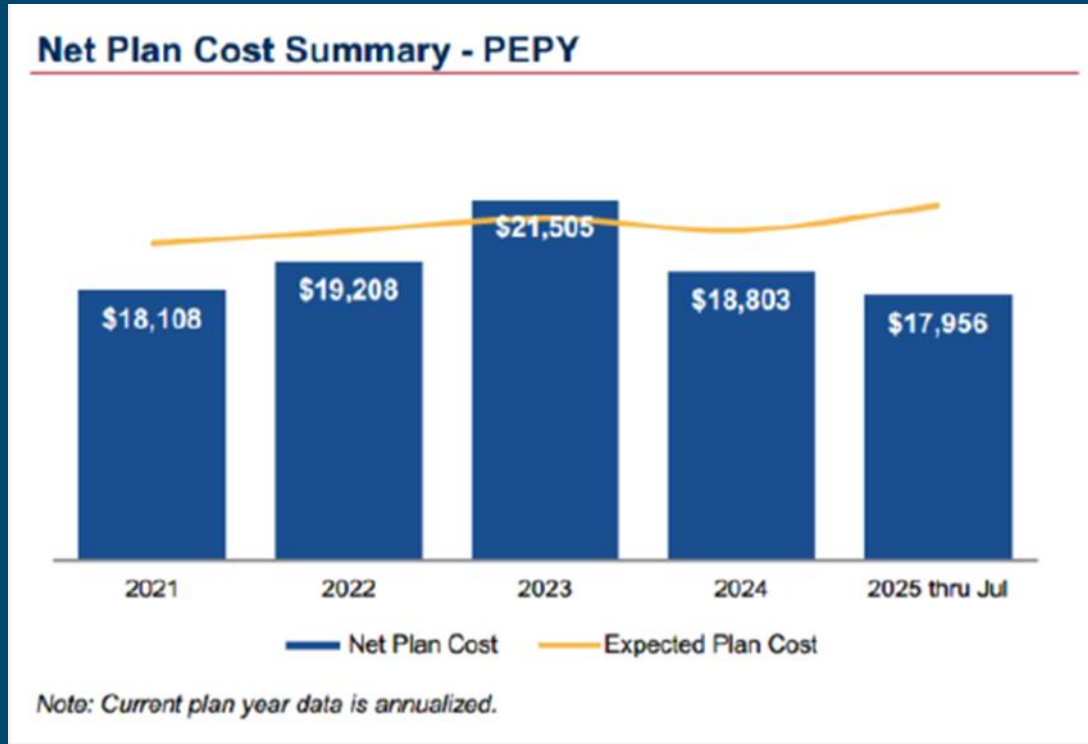
2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Highlights



Adding Library Service

- We check out more items per FTE staff than all but three libraries in Wisconsin. In 2024, **871,541 items** were checked out, nearly a record for our library.
- We have expanded circulation desk staff hours to meet ongoing customer demand.
- The Library requested two additional Librarians to enhance service and meet customer demand, but we were unable to fund these positions.

2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Compensation & Benefits



- 3% COLA for non-represented employees
- WRS Rate from 6.95% to 7.2%
- No plan design changes to healthcare
- We anticipate a 4% increase to healthcare premiums

2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Timeline

October 7, 2025: Financial Affairs Committee

Departmental review of the budget

October 14, 2025: Financial Affairs Committee

Departmental review of the budget (continued)

October 21, 2025: Financial Affairs Committee

Amendments and potential adoption of the operating budget

October 28, 2025: Committee of the Whole

Overview of the capital budget and a public hearing for the operating budget

November 4, 2025: Financial Affairs Committee

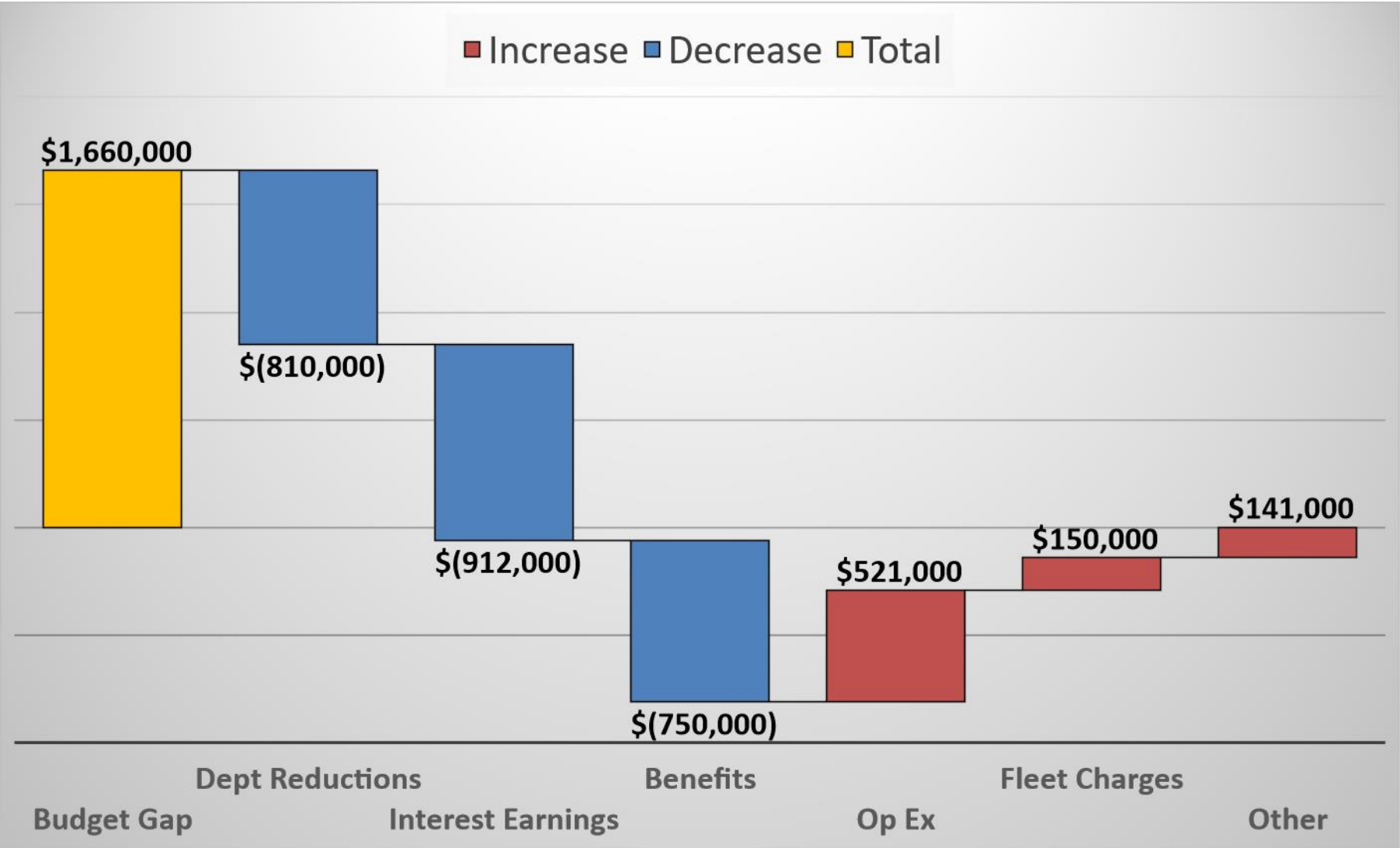
Amendments of the capital budget

November 18, 2025: Common Council

Potential budget adoption



2026 EXECUTIVE BUDGET | Budget Gap Map



Questions?