



Appropriations & Oversight Committee

Monday, May 4, 2026, 7:00 PM
 City Council Chamber, 1st Floor
 562 Main Street, Melrose, MA 02176

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Kimberly Vandiver	Vice Chair
Jason Chen	
Cal Finocchiaro	
Maya Jamaledine	
Manjula Karamcheti	
Elizabeth Kowal	
John Obremski	
Christopher Park	
Ryan Williams	
William Bradley Freeman	President, Ex Officio
Devin Romanul	Chair

Meeting was called to order by Chair Romanul at 7:02 PM

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Kim Vandiver	Vice Chair	Present	
Jason Chen	At-Large	Present	
Cal Finocchiaro	Ward 6	Present	
Maya Jamaledine	At-Large	Present	
Manjula Karamcheti	Ward 1	Present	
Elizabeth Kowal	At-Large	Present	
John Obremski	Ward 2	Present	
Christopher Park	Ward 3	Present	
Ryan Williams	At-Large	Present	
William Bradley Freeman	President, Ex Officio	Present	
	Member		
Devin Romanul	Chair	Present	

II. MINUTES APPROVAL

Appropriations & Oversight Committee Meeting April 27, 2026 6:45 PM

Motion to Approve the minutes by unanimous consent without reading made by Chair Romanul
All were in favor and minutes were approved

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
AYES:	Jason Chen, Cal Finocchiaro, Bradley Freeman, Maya Jamaledine, Manjula Karamcheti, Elizabeth Kowal, John Obremski, Christopher Park, Devin Romanul, Kim Vandiver, Ryan Williams

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

When: May 4, 2026 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: Appropriations & Oversight Committee Meeting

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:
<https://cityofmelrose-org.zoom.us/j/91515115255?pwd=6ls9DpDImb2s9LaICczEpmDH9yQtpG.1>
Passcode:806042
Webinar ID: 915 1511 5255

Motion to Open public comment made by Chair Romanul at 7:03 PM

Comments on the floor:
Susan Cain of 123 E Foster St asked for support in passing the DPW truck appropriation request, commenting that allowing trucks to be used at Wyoming Cemetery, especially smaller trucks, causes less damage to the site.
Joe Pelrin of 70 Howard St had questions about the DPW truck funding request. He asked how the city plans to purchase the trucks and are they put out to bid, how many sidewalk snowplows is the city purchasing (one or two), and will the city purchase electric or gas-powered versions. He prefers gas-powered to be used for plowing.

There were no comments via Zoom
Motion to Close public comment made by Chair Romanul at 7:07 PM

IV. APPROPRIATIONS

- A. **(ID # 2026-1150):** Appropriation from Free Cash (account 01-324001) in the amount of \$244,944 to the School Department (#1620) for medicaid reimbursement received in FY25.

Motion to Recommend made by Councilor Finocchiaro
Seconded by Councilor Karamcheti
All were in favor and motion passed

RESULTS:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
TO:	City Council

AYES:	Jason Chen, Cal Finocchiaro, Bradley Freeman, Maya Jamaledine, Manjula Karamcheti, Elizabeth Kowal, John Obremski, Christopher Park, Devin Romanul, Kim Vandiver, Ryan Williams
NAYS:	None

Comments and Discussion:

Ken Kelley commented that the city has several revenue sources besides city appropriations to cover medicaid reimbursements and requests funds from the federal government also.

- B. **(ID # 2026-1147):** Appropriation from Free Cash (account 01-324001) in the amount of \$170,000 to Capital Outlay (#931) to purchase a sidewalk plow.

Motion to Recommend made by Councilor Vandiver

Seconded by Councilor Williams

All were in favor and motion passed

RESULTS:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
TO:	City Council
AYES:	Jason Chen, Cal Finocchiaro, Bradley Freeman, Maya Jamaledine, Manjula Karamcheti, Elizabeth Kowal, John Obremski, Christopher Park, Devin Romanul, Kim Vandiver, Ryan Williams
NAYS:	None

Comments and Discussion:

Elena Proakis Ellis explained that the new sidewalk plow would be more versatile than current equipment, allowing for year-round use including cutting brush and maintaining sight lines. The committee discussed the current state of sidewalk plow equipment, with three operational machines from 2016-2018 and one older machine in need of replacement. The committee also touched on potential cost savings from in-house operations versus contracted services, which could amount to significant savings. They explained the current process of purchasing through state contract suppliers and the challenges with used vehicles, including uncertainty about bidding processes for used equipment vendors. The group discussed the possibility of acquiring used equipment from other communities, with them noting that while this approach has been successful in the past, it requires having available funds and going through proper procurement and disposal processes. If approved and if all the requested funds are not used on this purchase, the remainder will be sent back to free cash.

- C. **(ID # 2026-1148):** Appropriation from Free Cash (account 01-324001) in the amount of \$880,000 to Capital Outlay (#931) to purchase DPW Vehicles.

Motion to Recommend made by Councilor Karamcheti

Seconded by Councilor Finocchiaro

All were in favor and motion passed

RESULTS:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
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TO:	City Council
AYES:	Jason Chen, Cal Finocchiaro, Bradley Freeman, Maya Jamaledine, Manjula Karamcheti, Elizabeth Kowal, John Obremski, Christopher Park, Devin Romanul, Kim Vandiver, Ryan Williams
NAYS:	None

Comments and Discussion:

Elena Proakis Ellis presented a request for \$880,000 in free cash to purchase vehicles as part of the capital improvement plan. She explained that the department had been unable to make significant vehicle purchases in recent years due to budget constraints, and noted that industry standards recommend spending approximately \$1.1 million per year on fleet maintenance. The proposed purchases include a new hook lift truck with brine tank capabilities, four new dump trucks, and extended-cab pickups, with the total amount covering not just the vehicles but also necessary equipment and modifications. Elena discussed the importance of maintaining the DPW fleet to handle snow and ice storms effectively, noting that while having a full working fleet would help, the city still relies on private contractors for comprehensive coverage across all wards and streets. Councilor Karamceti expressed support for the fleet replacement requests and inquired about additional needs beyond the current \$780,000-\$795,000 annual requests for years 2 and 3. The discussion highlighted specialized equipment needs, including sidewalk plows and sewer equipment, and that having the right specialized equipment when needed remains crucial. They agreed to consider mutual share agreements with other communities for specialized equipment. The current resources and personnel can manage these additional trucks and there will be storage space for them as the city removes old vehicles that are being replaced.

Motion for Recess to start the City Council meeting made by Chair Romanul at 7:47 PM

Back from recess and meeting was reopened by Chair Ronamul at 7:51 PM

- D. **(ID # 2026-1149):** Appropriation from Free Cash (account 01-324001) in the amount of \$865,000 to DPW-Snow (#431) to close the snow and ice deficit for FY26.

Motion to Recommend made by Councilor Finocchiaro

Seconded by Councilor Karamcheti

All were in favor and motion passed

RESULTS:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
TO:	City Council
AYES:	Jason Chen, Cal Finocchiaro, Bradley Freeman, Maya Jamaledine, Manjula Karamcheti, Elizabeth Kowal, John Obremski, Christopher Park, Devin Romanul, Kim Vandiver, Ryan Williams
NAYS:	None

Comments and Discussion:

Jim Troup explained that the challenging winter, particularly with two 20-inch snowstorms, resulted in higher costs than recent years. The council discussed the significant difference in costs between regular plowing operations and snow removal operations, with snow removal costing around \$40,000

per day due to the need for hired triaxle trucks and additional equipment. Jim explained that snow removal costs are based on hourly labor and require decisions about whether to remove snow from downtown areas, with the option to scale back services for potential savings. Having new city-owned equipment could reduce the contractor plowing hours during future storms. Councilor Vandiver mentioned the WRAP, Winter Road Assistance Program, as another source of funding for snow plowing and removal.

E. **(ID # 2026-1151):** Appropriation from Free Cash (account 01-324001) in the amount of \$10,000 to DPW-Highway (#422) to purchase bike racks.

Motion to Recommend made by Councilor Williams
 Seconded by Councilor Vandiver
 All were in favor and motion passed

RESULTS:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
TO:	City Council
AYES:	Jason Chen, Cal Finocchiaro, Bradley Freeman, Maya Jamaledine, Manjula Karamcheti, Elizabeth Kowal, John Obremski, Christopher Park, Devin Romanul, Kim Vandiver, Ryan Williams
NAYS:	None

Comments and Discussion:
 Elena Proakis Ellis discussed a \$10,000 appropriation for purchasing bike racks across the city, with Councilor Williams leading the discussion on following guidelines and prioritizing locations. The city does not yet have an approved list of their locations but is taking input to complete the plan, and hopes to accommodate multiple types of bicycles. Installation will include cement pads where necessary. They hope to install 8-10 bike racks with this funding.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn by unanimous consent made by Chair Romanul at 8:09 PM
 All were in favor and meeting was adjourned



City Auditor

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 979-4110
Fax - (781) 662-2182

Free Cash Orders for Fiscal Year 2026

“Free cash” is a term used to describe any remaining, unrestricted funds from the previous fiscal years. After it is “certified” by the state, free cash use requires a recommendation from the Mayor and an appropriation from the City Council.

More information on free cash is available on the state’s website (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/free-cash>).

Council Order Item ID	APPRO Amount	Balance of Free Cash	Dep/Fund	Description	Status
	<i>Certified</i>	5,558,450.00			
2026-612	20,020.00	5,538,430.00	Dept - 162	Poll Pads and a label Printer	Approved
2026-614	50,000.00	5,488,430.00	Fund - 2543	Melrose Cultural Council	Approved
2026-615	25,000.00	5,463,430.00	Dept - 121	Chamber and City Event Support	Approved
2026-1147	170,000.00	5,293,430.00	Dept - 423	Sidewalk Plow	
2026-1148	880,000.00	4,413,430.00	Dept- 931	DPW Vehicles	
2026-1149	865,000.00	3,548,430.00	Dept-931	DPW Snow and Ice Deficit	
2026-1150	244,944.00	3,303,486.00	Fund - 1620	School Department	
2026-1151	10,000.00	3,293,486.00	Dept- 422	Bike Racks	

*The first three appropriation requests listed were approved at the 4/6/26 City Council meeting. As requests are submitted by the administration and approved by the City Council, the table above will be updated accordingly and shared with subsequent orders.



MELROSE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

360 LYNN FELLS PARKWAY, MELROSE, MA 02176

TELEPHONE: (781) 662-2000 FAX: (781) 979-2149 WWW.MELROSESCHOOLS.COM

CARI BERMAN, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
KEN KELLEY, DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT - FINANCE

DATE: April 17, 2025
TO: Honorable Mayor Grigoraitis
Cc: Melrose School Committee, Kerri Golden, City CFO
FROM: Ken Kelley, *Deputy Supt. - Finance*
RE: MPS FY26 appropriation funding request consideration

The District is respectfully requesting that the Mayor consider the following funding appropriation request for the Melrose Public Schools (MPS):

The District is respectfully requesting the Medicaid reimbursement transfer for FY26. The Medicaid funds are used as part of the District's year end budget offset funds.

Transfer In Account: 16204 49000
Medicaid reimbursement: \$244,944

Thank you for your consideration.



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
Administration-Engineering-Water-Sewer-Facilities
Parks-Forestry-Highway-Sanitation-Cemetery-Fleet

Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., BCEE
Director of Public Works

City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 665-0142
E-mail: eproakis@cityofmelrose.org

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Jennifer Grigoraitis
Melrose City Council

From: Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., Director of Public Works

cc: Kerriann Golden, CFO/Auditor
Lauren Grymek, Chief of Staff
James Troup, Deputy DPW Director – Administration & Finance
Matt Spinale, DPW Operations Manager

Date: April 17, 2026

Re: **DPW Sidewalk Plow Purchase – Free Cash Request**

The Department of Public Works requests \$170,000 to purchase an additional sidewalk plow. During this winter (FY26), the City's sidewalk plows had consistent problems during storms, resulting in only three of four plows operational during any given storm event when sidewalk plowing was required. This caused DPW crews to get behind in sidewalk and corner clearing, with more drivers available than equipment, and with four established sidewalk plowing routes that each require equipment.

The proposed vehicle is estimated to cost \$170,000 and can eventually also be used for summer operations with the purchase of additional attachments in future years.

The Department of Public Works hereby requests \$170,000 of free cash to add one new, more reliable sidewalk plow to our fleet. The funds will be deposited into a dedicated account set up by the Auditor's Office (019313-551002).

Thank you for your consideration of this critical equipment.



City Auditor

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CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
*Administration-Engineering-Water-Sewer-Facilities
Parks-Forestry-Highway-Sanitation-Cemetery-Fleet*

Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., BCEE
Director of Public Works

City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 665-0142
E-mail: eproakis@cityofmelrose.org

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Jennifer Grigoraitis
Melrose City Council

From: Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., Director of Public Works

cc: Kerriann Golden, CFO/Auditor
Lauren Grymek, Chief of Staff
James Troup, Deputy DPW Director – Administration & Finance
Matt Spinale, DPW Operations Manager

Date: April 17, 2026

Re: **DPW Vehicle Replacement – Free Cash Request**

The Department of Public Works requests \$880,000 to replace vehicles that are beyond their useful life and are required to provide essential services to the City. Vehicles proposed for replacement are outlined in the attached report and include the Year 1 vehicles listed. The proposed vehicles include:

- One heavy duty hook-lift style dump truck that can be used with a liquid brine tank in winter and a dump body in summer. We propose in Year 2 (FY28) to request funds to purchase a clam shell catch basin cleaning assembly to further build the utility of this vehicle for year-round use, as compared to the existing truck which is used only in winter operations. There are presently no reliable electric or hybrid options for this truck. The estimated FY27 cost is \$300,000.
- Four one-ton dump trucks and two pickup trucks, in place of five one-ton dump trucks. These trucks will be for the Parks, Forestry, Cemetery, and Highway Divisions. Electric or hybrid vehicles will be considered for the smaller pickup trucks, depending on whether they will be used for snow operations. The estimated cost for these vehicles is \$110,000 each for the four one-ton trucks and \$70,000 each for the two pickup trucks, for a total of \$580,000.

The Department of Public Works therefore requests \$880,000 of free cash to replace these critical vehicles. The funds will be deposited into a dedicated account set up by the Auditor's Office (019313-551002).

Thank you for your consideration of this critical equipment.



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
*Administration-Engineering-Water-Sewer-Facilities
Parks-Forestry-Highway-Sanitation-Cemetery-Fleet*

Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., BCEE
Director of Public Works

**City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 665-0142
E-mail: eproakis@cityofmelrose.org**

To: Jennifer Grigoraitis, Mayor
Kerri Golden, CFO/Auditor
Date: February 6, 2026
From: Elena Proakis Ellis, Director of Public Works
CC: Jim Troup, Deputy Director Administration and Finance
Matt Spinale, Operations Manager
Derek Lanphere, Operations General Foreman

RE: Vehicle Condition and Replacement Request

The Department of Public Works has updated our vehicle replacement program to reflect vehicles that have been replaced in the last several years and our current needs. We are at a critical point with trucks that are failing and are in dire need of replacement. By the end of our recent large snowstorm, eighteen vehicles used for snow and ice response were out of service. One week later, we still have eleven of those vehicles down. The following trucks are recommended for replacement as soon as possible and have been programmed into a three-year replacement plan.

Trash Packer

Truck 26 - 2004 International Packer - 120,000 Miles - Sanitation Division (yard waste/municipal waste)



Condition: Rotted body, hydraulic lines in need of replacement, rotted hopper, currently out of service

Replacement Cost: \$340,000

Additional Notes: This vehicle is critical to the department's day-to-day operations. It is used for curbside yard waste pickup and occasionally for municipal barrel collection. Replacement of this vehicle has been determined to be more cost-effective over its life cycle than outsourcing yard waste pickup or continuing to repair this unreliable and old vehicle. The DPW has identified a suitable replacement vehicle that is immediately available from a state-contract vendor. A winch will be included on the new vehicle to provide redundancy for municipal and school building dumpster collection.

Heavy Duty Trucks

Truck 21 - 1999 International Dump – 78,000 Miles - Highway Division (out of service)



Condition: Cracked frame, rotted floor, failed inspection.

Replacement Cost: \$350,000 - Ford F650 or F700 (non CDL)

Additional Information: This truck is proposed to be replaced with a hook lift truck with a brine tank instead, to expand the City's capacity to use liquid brine. Other attachments could include a dump body and a salter. We would also like to purchase a catch basin cleaning clamshell for this truck, which would cost approximately an additional \$100,000 and could be added in a later year. This proposed replacement will allow the City more versatility and year-round usage of this truck. The existing truck has traditionally been used predominantly for winter operations, with minimal utility in other seasons.

Truck 29 - 1997 International – 35,000 Miles - Highway Division (snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floor, failing frame, difficulty passing annual inspection

Replacement Cost: \$230,000

Light Dump Trucks

Truck 33 - 2012 Chevy 3500 Dump w/Liftgate – 70,000 Miles - Parks & Forestry Division (also used for snow operations)



Condition: Rotted holes in floor, difficulty passing inspection

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Additional Information: This is the primary vehicle used for pulling the landscape trailer and for parks maintenance.

Truck 35 - 2011 Chevy 3500 Dump – 53,000 Miles - Parks & Forestry Division (also used for snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floor, difficulty passing inspection

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Truck 38 - 2012 Chevy 3500 Dump – 70,000 Miles - Parks & Forestry Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floor, difficulty passing inspection.

Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Truck 47 - 2011 Chevy 3500 - 52,000 Miles – Cemetery Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted bed.
Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Truck 48 - 2009 Chevy 3500 - 58,000 Miles – Cemetery Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted body and bed, difficulty passing inspections.
Replacement Cost: \$110,000

Truck 56 – 2006 Ford F350 SD – 75,000 Miles – Facilities Division Utility Body (snow operations)



Condition: Normal wear – 20 years old, rusted components
Replacement Cost: \$80,000 to \$110,000

Truck 58 – 2008 Ford F350 SD – 33,000 Miles – Facilities Division (also snow operations)



Conditions: Rusting floor, normal wear of 18 year old vehicle
Replacement Cost: \$80,000 to \$110,000

Pickup Trucks

Truck 59 – 2007 Chevy Colorado – 48,000 miles – Facilities Building Systems Supervisor



Conditions: Rusted

body, normal wear of 19 year old vehicle
Replacement Cost: \$65,000

Additional Information: Could be considered for replacement with an electric vehicle, though it is normally stored at Melrose High School where charging capability presently does not exist

Specialty Equipment

Truck 50 - 1997 Case Backhoe – Cemetery Division (also snow operations)



Condition: Rotted floors, primary vehicle for all cemetery operations.
Replacement Cost: \$210,000

Truck 77 - 1997 Volvo L90 C Loader - Highway Division (snow operations)



Conditions: Rotted body and in need of tires. Engine overhaul needed.
Replacement Cost: \$250,000

Truck 64 – 1997 Ford F350 Utility-Boom Bucket Truck – 46,000 miles – Highway Division



Conditions: Rusted frame, normal wear for 29 year old truck
Replacement Cost: \$150,000

Vehicle 1 – 2008 Chevrolet Trailblazer SUV – 102,800 miles – Engineering Division

Condition: Rotted body and needed engine overhaul that was cost-prohibitive. Retired vehicle and disposed of as surplus. No photos are available.

Replacement Cost: \$50,000

Additional Information: Can be replaced with an electric vehicle, since charging is available at City Hall and this vehicle does not perform snow or other 24/7 operations. The Engineering Division is presently operating with no City vehicles.

Vehicle 40 – 2004 Chevrolet 1500 Cargo Van – 150,000 miles – Facilities Van

Condition: Vehicle was inoperable so was taken out of service and disposed of as surplus. No photos are available.

Replacement Cost: \$70,000

Additional Information: Could be replaced with a Transit-type van or similar.

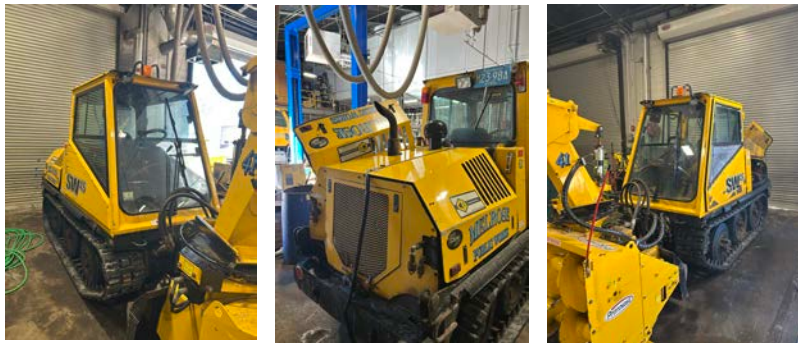
HB-2 – 2012 Falcon Asphalt Hotbox – Highway Division



Conditions: Inoperable

Replacement Cost: \$40,000

Vehicle 62 – 2008 Prinoth (Bombardier) SW 4S Sidewalk Plow – Snow Operations



Conditions: Intermittently out-of-service during last several storms

Replacement Cost: \$190,000

Additional Information: Proposed to be replaced with a trackless machine with various attachments that will make it a useable vehicle year-round, rather than dedicated only to snow and ice response.

Vehicle 23 – 2016 Freightliner 114SD Vactor – 19,000 miles – Sewer Division



Conditions: Several components of suction and tank mechanisms have experienced failure in the last few years, sometimes costing upwards of \$25,000 to \$30,000 for individual repairs.

Replacement Cost: \$650,000

Additional Information: The DPW uses the Vactor for both clearing sewer blockages and for vacuum excavation. Excavation can be harder on the equipment but minimizes the risk of damage to surrounding

utilities when digging in tight locations. The DPW is proposing to consider replacing this truck with a model that has a slightly smaller chassis but an equivalent tank size.

Summary

As shown above, the conditions of the vehicles compromise the safety of our staff and jeopardize the levels of services that our residents have come to expect from the DPW. We have exceeded the expected life of these vehicles on both miles and age. Some vehicles present safety concerns with large holes in the floors, potentially allowing exhaust to enter the cabs of those vehicles. Our personnel have welded floors back in and made temporary repairs, but continuing to repair these severely deteriorated vehicles is not practical or cost effective. Snow operations have become increasingly challenging due to a lack of functioning vehicles; in the recent large storm, we had four employees who were unable to perform their jobs by the end of the storm event due to a lack of operational vehicles for them to drive. As noted above, of 18 vehicles that were rendered inoperable during the storm event, eleven continue to be out-of-service, awaiting repairs by our mechanics.

Recommended replacement intervals for fleet vehicles were taken from the report by Matrix Consulting Group specifically evaluating Melrose’s fleet, as well as Fleet Counselor Services, a nationally recognized consulting firm.

Vehicle Type	Recommended Useful Life (Fleet Counselor Services Data)	Age of City Vehicles*	Estimated Replacement Cost
Packer – Yard Waste	12 years or 9,000 hours	#26 – 21 years	\$340,000
Heavy Dump Trucks	12 years or 120,000 miles	#21 – 27 years/OOS #29 – 29 years**	\$300,000 \$290,000
Light Dump Trucks	12 years or 120,000 miles	#33 – 14 years #35 – 15 years** #38 – 17 years** #47 – 15 years #48 – 17 years #56 – 20 years** #58 – 18 years**	\$110,000
Pickup Trucks	10 years or 120,000 miles	#59 – 19 years	\$65,000
Backhoe - Cemetery	15 years or 9,000 hours	#50 – 29 years**	\$210,000
Loader	15 years or 10,000 hours	#77 – 29 years**	\$250,000
Bucket Truck – Highway	12 years or 120,000 miles	#64 – 29 years	\$150,000
DPW Engineering	10 years	#1 – 18 years/OOS	\$50,000
DPW Facilities Van	10 years	#40 – 22 years/OOS	\$70,000
Hotbox	15 years	HB-2 – 14 years/OOS	\$40,000
Sidewalk Bombardier	15 years	#62 – 18 years**	\$190,000
Vactor	12 years	#23 – 10 years	\$650,000
TOTAL 3-year cost			\$3,315,000
Average annual cost			\$1,105,000/year
Average annual cost	(excluding sewer vehicle)		\$888,333/year

*OOS = Out of Service

**Experienced failure during January 25, 2026 storm

The Melrose DPW fleet vehicles shown above represent approximately \$3.315M in short-term needs. Please note that this list does not include non-DPW fleet needs, such as the Fire Department, Police Department, Council on Aging, Inspectional Services, etc., who also operate vehicles within the City's fleet.

The proposed expenditure of \$1,105,000 per year shown in the table above is very closely in line with Matrix Consulting Group's estimated replacement need of \$1,134,222 annually for Melrose's fleet. When eliminating the cost of the Vactor truck, which would be paid using the Sewer Enterprise Fund, the total annual need is approximately \$888,000. The three-year needs have been broken down into the following proposed plan:

IMMEDIATE:

The following request is being made concurrent with this memorandum:

- A replacement for yard waste/refuse truck #26 has been submitted, for which Capital Stabilization funds are being requested in February 2026. The estimated cost of replacement is \$340,000.

YEAR 1:

For this year's free cash request, DPW recommends replacing the following Public Works vehicles:

- Heavy Dump Truck (#21, already out of service) – proposed to be replaced with a hook lift truck with a brine tank, dump body, and catch basin cleaning clamshell assembly. The estimated cost, including the various style body attachments, is \$300,000.
- Light Dump Trucks (#33, #35, #38, #47 and #48) – we propose replacing these with four one-ton pickup trucks and two smaller pickup trucks. Electric or hybrid vehicles will be considered for the two pickup trucks, depending on whether they will be used for snow operations. The estimated cost for these vehicles is \$110,000 each for the four one-ton trucks and \$70,000 for the two pickup trucks, for a total of \$580,000.

This results in a total free cash request of \$880,000 from the general fund. Sustainable options will be explored for one pickup truck if it is determined it will not be used for snow plowing, consistent with the City's EV-first policy.

In addition, the DPW is pursuing replacement of the Sewer Division's Vactor truck. This specialized equipment has an estimated cost of \$650,000. A budgetary line item has been carried in the Sewer Enterprise Fund of \$80,000 per year, intended to be used toward a lease-to-own Vactor truck. There is enough free cash in the Sewer Enterprise Fund to pay for a \$200,000 downpayment, with annual payments of roughly \$89,000/year over five years. Free cash for the downpayment will be requested in spring 2026 from the Sewer Enterprise Fund's retained earnings balance.

YEAR 2:

We recommend replacement of the following vehicles in Year 2:

- Heavy Dump Truck #29, with an estimated replacement cost of \$230,000
- The Wyoming Cemetery backhoe (#50), estimated to cost \$210,000
- The 2008 Bombadier sidewalk plow. We recommend replacement with a trackless machine that can also be used with attachments for summer operations, with an estimated cost of \$190,000.
- Engineering Division vehicle – this can be replaced with an electric vehicle, given the availability of a charging station at the City Hall parking lot. This replacement is estimated at \$50,000.
- Catch basin clamshell attachment for the new Truck #21 (hook lift) - \$100,000

This amounts to a total of \$780,000 for Year 2 replacement vehicles.

YEAR 3:

We recommend replacement of the following vehicles in Year 3:

- Highway Division bucket truck - \$150,000
- Light trucks (utility bodies for facilities with one salter) - #56 and #58 (\$80,000 to \$110,000 each, depending on what is specified)
- DPW Facilities van #40 - \$70,000
- Pickup truck #59 - \$65,000
- Loader #77 - \$250,000
- Hotbox HB-2 - \$40,000

The resulting request for Year 3 is \$795,000.

The DPW is anxious to get our fleet up to a serviceable level, to allow us to provide both efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the services we provide. We appreciate your consideration of this capital plan for our vehicles over the next three years.



City Auditor

City Hall, 562 Main Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 979-4110
Fax - (781) 662-2182

Free Cash Orders for Fiscal Year 2026

“Free cash” is a term used to describe any remaining, unrestricted funds from the previous fiscal years. After it is “certified” by the state, free cash use requires a recommendation from the Mayor and an appropriation from the City Council.

More information on free cash is available on the state’s website (<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/free-cash>).

Council Order Item ID	APPRO Amount	Balance of Free Cash	Dep/Fund	Description	Status
	<i>Certified</i>	5,558,450.00			
2026-612	20,020.00	5,538,430.00	Dept - 162	Poll Pads and a label Printer	Approved
2026-614	50,000.00	5,488,430.00	Fund - 2543	Melrose Cultural Council	Approved
2026-615	25,000.00	5,463,430.00	Dept - 121	Chamber and City Event Support	Approved
2026-1147	170,000.00	5,293,430.00	Dept - 423	Sidewalk Plow	
2026-1148	880,000.00	4,413,430.00	Dept- 931	DPW Vehicles	
2026-1149	865,000.00	3,548,430.00	Dept-931	DPW Snow and Ice Deficit	
2026-1150	244,944.00	3,303,486.00	Fund - 1620	School Department	
2026-1151	10,000.00	3,293,486.00	Dept- 422	Bike Racks	

*The first three appropriation requests listed were approved at the 4/6/26 City Council meeting. As requests are submitted by the administration and approved by the City Council, the table above will be updated accordingly and shared with subsequent orders.



CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Administration–Engineering–Water–Sewer–Facilities
Parks–Forestry–Highway–Sanitation–Cemetery–Fleet

James Troup

Assistant Director – Administration & Finance

**City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176**

Telephone – (781) 665-0142

E-mail: jtroup@cityofmelrose.org

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Jennifer Grigoraitis
Melrose City Council

From: James Troup, DPW Deputy Director – Administration and Finance

cc: Kerriann Golden, CFO/Auditor
Kathryn Armata, Treasurer Collector
Elena Proakis Ellis, DPW Director

Date: April 9, 2026

Re: FY26 Snow and Ice Commitment

In consideration of the commitments of the Snow and Ice Budget for Fiscal Year 2026, the Department of Public Works is requesting a Free Cash transfer in the amount of \$865,000 to make each category whole and to avoid financing the deficit.

This winter dealt us challenges that have not been seen in nearly 10 years. Total snowfall exceeded 60 inches, highlighted by two storms at the end of February and early March that dumped over 45 inches of snow and each lasted more than 36 hours. The DPW Team responded to nearly two dozen events. Contracted vendors were used for 6 storms. Snow removal operations were in effect on four separate occasions. Adding to our difficulties was a stretch of nearly two months when temperatures did not exceed 30 degrees. The strain of the winter weather operations coupled with the aging fleet requires additional costs to maintain our equipment.

Please note that our 5-year average spent on Snow and Ice operations is \$1,024,066. Unlike FY23, FY24, and FY25, this year was a far from mild winter. Fiscal controls including purchasing from State Contracts and competitive bidding for supplies and materials continue to positively impact the spending in this category. We continue to leverage these controls to minimize the effect from the Snow and Ice deficit on our operating budget.

The Free Cash allocation will be distributed to offset deficits in Overtime, Contracted Services, and Supplies/Materials line items that include fuel, road salt, and repair parts.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support.



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CITY OF MELROSE

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
*Administration-Engineering-Water-Sewer-Facilities
Parks-Forestry-Highway-Sanitation-Cemetery-Fleet*

Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., BCEE
Director of Public Works

City Yard, 72 Tremont Street
Melrose, Massachusetts 02176
Telephone - (781) 665-0142
E-mail: eproakis@cityofmelrose.org

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor Jennifer Grigoraitis
Melrose City Council

From: Elena Proakis Ellis, P.E., Director of Public Works

cc: Kerriann Golden, CFO/Auditor
Lauren Grymek, Chief of Staff
James Troup, Deputy DPW Director – Administration & Finance

Date: April 17, 2026

Re: **Bike Racks – Free Cash Request**

The Department of Public Works requests \$10,000 to purchase and install bike racks in various locations throughout the City. City staff had previously maintained a list of all current and desired bike rack locations. This list will be updated and desired locations will be documented to determine which are the highest priority. Locations that have been discussed include schools, parks, and business districts, many of which already have bike racks but could benefit from additional bike storage space due to existing demand.

The proposed funding will be used for both the purchase and installation of these bike racks. This project is consistent with the City's Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School programs, encouraging safe and convenient active transportation and reducing traffic congestion.

The Department of Public Works hereby requests \$10,000 of free cash for bike racks. The funds will be deposited into a dedicated account set up by the Auditor's Office (014222-551075).

Thank you for your consideration of this project.



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May 3, 2026

Re: Appropriations ID # 2026-1151 (Bike Racks)



**Melrose Pedestrian & Bicyclist
Committee**

Dear Members of the Melrose City Council,

We are writing to express support for the city's requested appropriation of \$10,000 from free cash in order to purchase bicycle parking racks for use throughout the city. Free cash requests should ideally not create unsustainable future capital burdens on the city, and bicycle racks fit this mold: they are low-maintenance, long-lasting capital items which are critical for supporting the city's short- and long-term transportation goals. Many of the city's existing downtown racks date to 2012, and will still be operational for decades to come.

If appropriate bike parking is not available at popular destinations, people will either switch to car trips (leading to more traffic, more crashes, and more conflicts for vehicle parking), be discouraged from making local trips (hurting local businesses), or will choose to secure bikes inappropriately (potentially damaging other infrastructure). Ample bike parking is not only functional, it signals that the city takes seriously its Complete Streets and Net Zero goals. As development patterns in the city continue to evolve, we encourage the city to review locations where new mixed-use buildings may be planned or in progress, to ensure those neighborhoods have ample bike parking to support the city's current and future businesses and residents.

Back in 2024, we developed a set of [Bicycle Parking Design Guidelines](#) which could be shared with local developers, with the goal of ensuring bicycle parking in Melrose was designed with end users in mind. We were pleased to see that the city's Planning Department was very receptive to our recommendations, which were ultimately adopted by the Planning Board. While those recommendations apply mostly to private developments, we urge DPW to review our recommendations to ensure that the racks which are purchased are functional, high-quality, and will withstand the test of time.

Melrose Pedestrian & Bicyclist Advisory Committee