

FY2025 Budget Narrative: PUBLIC WORKS

Personnel

Current for 2024?	Full Time	Part Time
Highway Division	7	1
Transfer Station Division	3	2
Administration	1	1
Additional for 2025?		
NONE		

*Changes in personnel? – Retirements, promotions, new positions
Hiring challenges? – recruitment, retention?*

PERSONNEL

The Department of Public Works filled 4 open positions this year.
The part-time town custodian retired and was replaced.
Two (2) highway driver/operator vacant positions were filled.
One (1) transfer station attendant vacant position was filled.

One (1) open position for Administrative Assistant to the Public Works Director remains to be filled.

Although currently almost fully staffed, DPW faces challenges when it comes to recruitment and retention. Numerous factors play a role in these challenges.

There are many demands on the DPW crew for their time in the form of mandatory overtime. Winter maintenance operations at all hours of the night and day. Summer beach cleaning and maintenance operations start at 5:00am 4 days a week. Emergency callouts year-round for weather, traffic, and community related events. These factors take the employee away from their life outside of work with little or no prior notification. For example, holidays, family celebrations and family milestones are missed when called in to provide the town services. Ultimately causing conflict with a work/life balance.

Obtaining a CDL is more difficult than it has ever been. The federal restrictions and requirements are laborious.

Interactions with residents can often be perceived negatively by the employee. Employees often feel under appreciated by residents. Conflict and uncourteous behavior to town employees is commonplace.

Societal changes have caused a shortage in the available workforce for skilled trade workers.

FY2025 Budget Narrative: PUBLIC WORKS

Operational Costs – (Non-Personnel)

Catastrophic events? – Storms, accidents, equipment failures, unanticipated building maintenance?

What are the biggest factors driving operational cost changes?

Are there any anomalies that occurred this year or will occur next year?

Are there plans to manage growing costs or to drive reductions?

PUBLIC WORKS OPERATIONAL COSTS NON-PERSONNEL

The winter storm in January 2024 imposed unanticipated costs on the Public Works Department’s operating budget, with impacts expected to extend into FY2025 for critical infrastructure repairs. Initial costs from the storm were absorbed within the FY2024 budget, but subsequent repairs to the more significantly affected infrastructure, including the Harbor Road Seawall, Harbor Road Bridge, and the sidewalks and boardwalks along Ocean Boulevard (Route 1A), will necessitate increased budget allocations. FEMA has awarded or is currently processing funding to aid in these repairs, covering 75% of project costs. However, this requires the town of Rye to fund the remaining 25% of the total cost. Additionally, these infrastructure projects demand specialized engineering services, which add to the overall project expenses.

Vehicle maintenance expenses have been a persistent and growing driver of operational costs. Repair costs, including both parts and labor, have significantly increased, particularly for repairs beyond the scope of in-house DPW capabilities. The department has incurred substantial expenditures in maintaining plow trucks during the last five years of their designated 15-year service life. To address this, we propose reducing the service life of dump/plow trucks from 15 to 10 years, generating cost savings on repairs and enabling trade-in values to offset the cost of new equipment. A similar reduction in the service life of 1-ton trucks, from 10 years to 7 years, is projected to yield comparable savings. Historically, DPW vehicles have had no trade-in value due to their poor condition at the end of service life. The Public Works Department intends to propose a warrant article to increase the Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund by an additional \$50,000 to support these adjustments in service life.

Below is a summary of current equipment repair expenses, excluding 2024 costs:

EQUIPMENT DESIGNATION	EQUIPMENT DESCRIPTION	REPLACEMENT YEAR	AVG. ANNUAL SPEND (2010–present)	LIFE OF VEHICLE SPEND	SPEND LAST 5 YEARS (2019–2023)
Trk #107	2008 Int’l Dump	2024	\$4,879.47	\$68,312.63	\$34,700.31
Trk #113	2010 Ford 1 Ton	2022	\$2,756.88	\$38,596.26	\$13,013.25
Trk #114	2012 Ford Rack	2023	\$1,960.99	\$23,531.93	\$15,135.89
Trk #115	2014 Int’l Dump	2028	\$4,020.71	\$40,207.05	\$34,396.15
Trk #116	2015 Ford 1 Ton	2025	\$1,884.16	\$18,841.62	\$12,167.83
Trk #117	2016 Ford Utility	2026	\$1,552.31	\$13,970.75	\$11,352.68
Trk #118	2017 Int’l Dump	2031	\$1,975.39	\$15,803.09	\$11,508.49

FY2025 Budget Narrative: PUBLIC WORKS

EQUIPMENT DESIGNATION	EQUIPMENT DESCRIPTION	REPLACEMENT YEAR	AVG. ANNUAL SPEND (2010–present)	LIFE OF VEHICLE SPEND	SPEND LAST 5 YEARS (2019–2023)
Trk #119	2018 Int'l Dump	2033	\$1,611.77	\$11,282.37	\$8,781.07
Trk #120	2020 Ford 1 Ton	2030	\$735.53	\$2,942.13	\$2,942.13

This strategic approach is designed to mitigate the impact of rising repair costs, ensure fleet reliability, and optimize financial resources by extending trade-in opportunities and reducing the need for high-cost repairs on aging equipment

Capital Expenditures

Capital outlay – include explanatory narratives and quotes

Warrant articles – include now for informational purposes

Other than CIP submissions what are the possible warrant articles and why they will be needed?
 Why are these included in the budget as capital expenditures and not as operational costs?
 How are these part of a strategy/plan to maintain/support/update capital equipment?

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

CAPITAL OUTLAY

- **Fuel Use Tracking System** **\$25,000**
 Track Departmental Fuel Consumption
 Replace the 40-year-old antiquated DOS fuel tracking system with a system that is fully transferable to a new fuel island; should one be approved by the electorate. Additional 12% for contingencies.
- **Road Condition Street Scan** **\$20,000**
 Provide Pavement Condition Index (PCI)
 Aid the future paving program through AI and web-based GIS asset management platform that provides current state of the infrastructure (roads, catch basins, manholes) then optimizes algorithms that evaluate and prioritize repairs and repair strategies.
- **MS4 Assistance** **\$40,000**
 EPA Mandated Requirements for MS4 Compliance
 Aid the MS4 program through technical assistance in facets of the EPA mandated MS4 permitting process in relation to storm water in the regulated area of Rye. Design Structural BMP (storm water treatment structure).

FY2025 Budget Narrative: PUBLIC WORKS

- **Harbor Road Seawall** **\$36,500**
Design Services Harbor Road Seawall FEMA 25% cost share
Provide design services and construction plans for the repair of Harbor Road Seawall which was damaged during the January 2024 storms. The approximate cost \$144,748. FEMA share 75%, \$108,561. Town of Rye share 25%, \$36,187

- **Harbor Road Bridge** **\$TBD**
Scour damage repairs caused by the January 2024 storms.
FEMA cost sharing estimates are still underway and TBD. Awaiting project award.

These capital outlay requests are not included in the operational budget for several reasons. The 3% budget increase limitation is a significant factor in not including capital outlay in the operating budget. There is no avenue for FEMA cost sharing or expense in the operating budget and it remain within the 3% budgetary increase limitation. The street scan could be included in the paving operating budget but would reduce the overall paving program and ultimately the lineal footage resurfaced. A capital reserve fund was established in 2024 for MS4 projects and is increasing annually through warrant article approvals. There is no avenue for funding the fuel tracking system in the operating budget and it remain within the 3% budgetary increase limitation.

WARRANT ARTICLES

<u>Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund</u> To reduce the service life of heavy equipment and vehicles.	\$250,000
<u>MS4 Capital Reserve Fund</u> Construct mandated storm water BMP in 2 years.	\$25,000
<u>Building Maintenance Expendable Trust</u> Additional funding for DPW site fence replacement.	\$10,000
<u>Washington Road Improvements LTAP Grant</u> Extending funding indefinitely.	\$0
<u>Harbor Road Bridge</u> Extending funding indefinitely.	\$0

DEPARTMENT GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

Past Year:

What has your department accomplished this year?

Were you able to meet the department's expectations and/or the needs of the community last year?

Were there any key successes you would like to share?

FY2025 Budget Narrative: PUBLIC WORKS

DEPARTMENT GOALS & OBJECTIVES: This Past Year

The Public Works Department has made great strides this year to enhance our town's infrastructure, improve public safety, and manage emergency situations efficiently. Notably, the department coordinated an effective emergency response to the severe January storms, helping mitigate potential damage and restore normalcy quickly. Our team also undertook critical infrastructure improvements, including the replacement of a culvert on South Road, a project completed by DPW staff to generate significant cost savings for the town. The Department also completed the replacement of the 2 undersized culverts on Perkins Road using a contractor. This replacement is a needed upgrade to include concrete headwalls and addition of a third pipe.

This year, our Public Works Department has been actively involved in projects that enhance community infrastructure and safety. A significant achievement has been our partnership with FEMA, through which we've facilitated the award of \$244,000 in project funding and design work to date. These funds are instrumental in advancing critical infrastructure improvements that will benefit our town in both the short and long term.

Additionally, we are pleased to report that our road paving program successfully resurfaced 15,632 lineal feet, equating to nearly 3 miles of improved road conditions.

In addition to these accomplishments, we've continued our focus on essential town maintenance and upgrades, ensuring that our community remains resilient, safe, and well-prepared for the future. These accomplishments are a testament to our commitment to maintaining and enhancing town infrastructure while managing resources wisely for the benefit of all residents.

Moving Forward:

What are your department goals for next year?

Create efficiencies?

Solve hiring/retention issues?

IT initiatives to streamline operations?

If you fell short this year, what needs to happen to close the gap?

Do you see the needs/expectations of the community changing over the next three or so years?

What must happen in this department to keep up with those changes?

What are the largest risks or threats to the department - market/environmental/demographic changes?

Moving Forward: Departmental Goals and Strategic Initiatives

As the Public Works Department plans for the upcoming fiscal year, our focus will remain on creating operational efficiencies, addressing workforce needs, implementing IT advancements to streamline workflows, and meeting the evolving expectations of the community. These objectives are critical to ensuring the department can continue to deliver reliable, high-quality services and maintain essential town infrastructure.

FY2025 Budget Narrative: PUBLIC WORKS

1. Operational Efficiencies

- **Fleet Management Strategy:**
 - *Objective:* Extend the life of key fleet assets through strategic service life adjustments and increase trade-in value to mitigate replacement costs.
 - *Actions:* Propose a warrant article to increase the Highway Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund by \$50,000 to support the transition to shorter vehicle replacement cycles, which will decrease long-term maintenance costs and enhance service reliability.
- **Proactive Maintenance Paving:**
 - *Objective:* Ensure the department's readiness to address infrastructure issues before they escalate into costly repairs.
 - *Actions:* Utilize data from upcoming pavement condition assessments to refine and prioritize our road resurfacing schedules.

2. Hiring and Retention Strategy

- **Staffing Support and Succession Planning:**
 - *Objective:* Address current hiring constraints while maintaining a skilled workforce to meet rising service demands.
 - *Actions:* Continue efforts to fill the Administrative Assistant position to alleviate administrative workloads.
 - Establish a succession plan in preparation for anticipated retirements, specifically the Transfer Station Senior Attendant in 2026.
 - Introduce an additional role such as Deputy Director of Public Works to provide operational redundancy, support succession planning, and allow employees to take paid leave without disrupting services.
 - Introduce an additional role such as a Laborer in the Highway Division to reduce overtime dependency and meet service demand.
- **Employee Well-being and Work/Life Balance:**
 - *Objective:* Improve staff retention by promoting a healthier work/life balance, particularly in demanding roles.
 - *Actions:* Review seasonal workloads, such as winter maintenance, to lessen the impact of mandatory overtime. Refine the on-call rotation system to better distribute emergency response responsibilities among staff.

3. IT Initiatives to Streamline Operations

- **Tracking and Reporting for Mandated Programs:**
 - *Objective:* Improve efficiency and compliance with federally mandated programs, particularly in MS4 stormwater management.
 - *Actions:* Fund MS4 assistance through the proposed capital outlay to streamline compliance with EPA regulations, thus reducing administrative burden and minimizing risk.

4. Community Needs and Expectations

- **Infrastructure Modernization and Safety:**
 - *Objective:* Address the community's growing expectations for resilient and well-maintained public infrastructure.
 - *Actions:* Partner with FEMA to continue infrastructure upgrades on critical structures such as the Harbor Road Seawall, Harbor Road Bridge, and sidewalks along Ocean Boulevard. Through FEMA's financial support, and by assuming the town's 25% funding obligation, these upgrades will advance safety, storm resilience, and accessibility.
- **Responsive and Transparent Community Engagement:**
 - *Objective:* Continue to foster positive relationships with the community by proactively communicating about project timelines, service updates, and any service interruptions.
 - *Actions:* Continue the public outreach program, including social media updates and periodic reports, to keep residents informed about DPW projects and provide a channel for resident feedback.

Conclusion

With these goals, the Public Works Department aims to create a sustainable, resilient, and responsive operational framework that aligns with community expectations and prepares us for future challenges. By focusing on efficiency, workforce stability, community engagement, and strategic cost management, we will continue to improve service delivery and infrastructure support for the residents of our town.