



Department of Planning and Development BGA Policy 2026 Budget Snapshot

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Departmental Highlights

Snapshot: Appropriation & Staffing Changes from 2025 Budget

	2025 Budgeted	2026 Proposed	Net Change	Percent Change
Appropriations	\$132,499,758	\$121,232,815	-\$11,266,943	-8.5%
Positions & FTEs	195	194	-1	-0.5%

**Note: DPD’s size and mandate have changed multiple times since 2011, with the Department of Housing at times combined into DPD and at other times a standalone department. Because of the changing size and function of the department, 2011-2025 annual average rates are not provided in this snapshot.*

- DPD saw a net change of -1 position overall, with four Urban Designer titles eliminated but four City Planner V titles added. Along with other small reductions or increases in various titles, a new Director of Land Acquisition and Disposition was added in the 2026 proposal.
- Unlike most departments, personnel expenses are not DPD’s largest expense category. Just under three-quarters of the department’s budget (72.5%) is dedicated to the Rehabilitation Loans and Grants appropriation.

- In 2022 Rehabilitation Loans and Grants was \$7m appropriation funded entirely by CDBG grant funds. In 2023 and 2024 the appropriation increased to hundreds of millions of dollars and moved to a combination of local and grant funds, the local portions of which went largely unspent within their budget years.
- In 2024, the most recent complete budget year for which local fund actuals and encumbrances data is available, DPD spent only 15% of its locally-funded budget, largely due to spending only \$250,000 of the locally-funded \$84 million appropriated for rehab grants and loans.
- Budgeted rehabilitation loans and grants are down slightly this year with a -\$1.6 million (-1.8%) reduction, still leaving it by far the largest account (and far larger than local budget spend for the appropriation in previous years).
- The largest change in DPD's proposed budget is a -\$12.9 million reduction in the grant reserve balance appropriation, which was nearly eliminated from DPD's budget, with only \$285,000 budgeted to be held in reserve in 2026.
- The department's largest single-appropriation increase was a \$3.3 million (53.3%) jump in outside contracting through the professional and technical services appropriation. While much smaller overall, a \$362,000 increase in IT maintenance appropriations represents a 905% increase over the previous year's \$40,000.

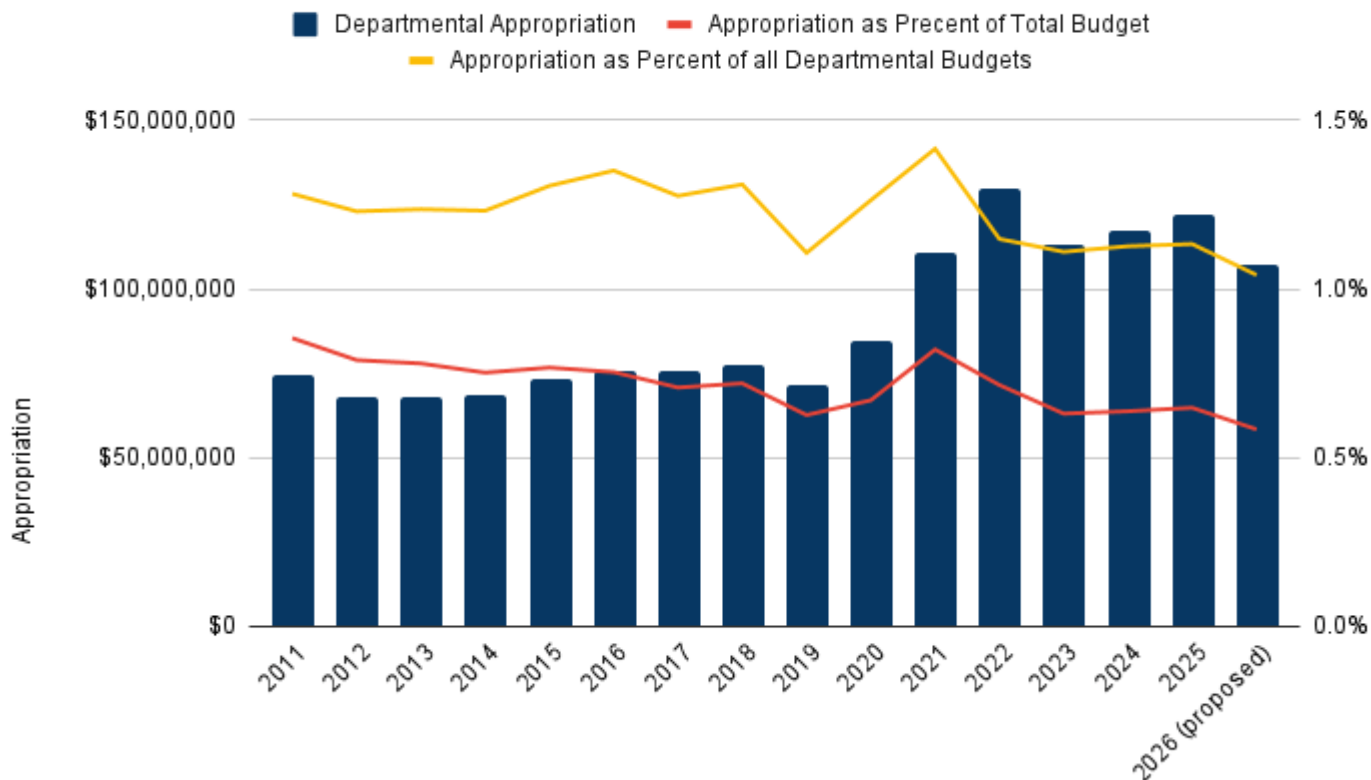
Historical Context

Rahm Emanuel replaced the then-Department of Housing with the Department of Planning and Development in the 2014 budget, at a lower rate of funding than its predecessor. (Housing had \$191.7m in appropriations in the 2013 budget; DPD began its existence in the 2014 budget with \$153.8m.)

The Department of Housing returned to city budgets in the 2019 budget and resumed operating as an independent office under Lori Lightfoot's administration. In the 2019 budget, DPD's budget dropped from \$189.2m the previous year to \$35.1m, while the newly-returned DoH received \$148.4m.

DPD then saw significant budget increases in the pandemic-era budgets, more than doubling its post-split appropriation. That increased funding dropped off dramatically with 2025's -34.5% cut in DPD's budget from the previous year, and this year's proposal continues to see declines (albeit far more modest) with a -8.5% recommendation.

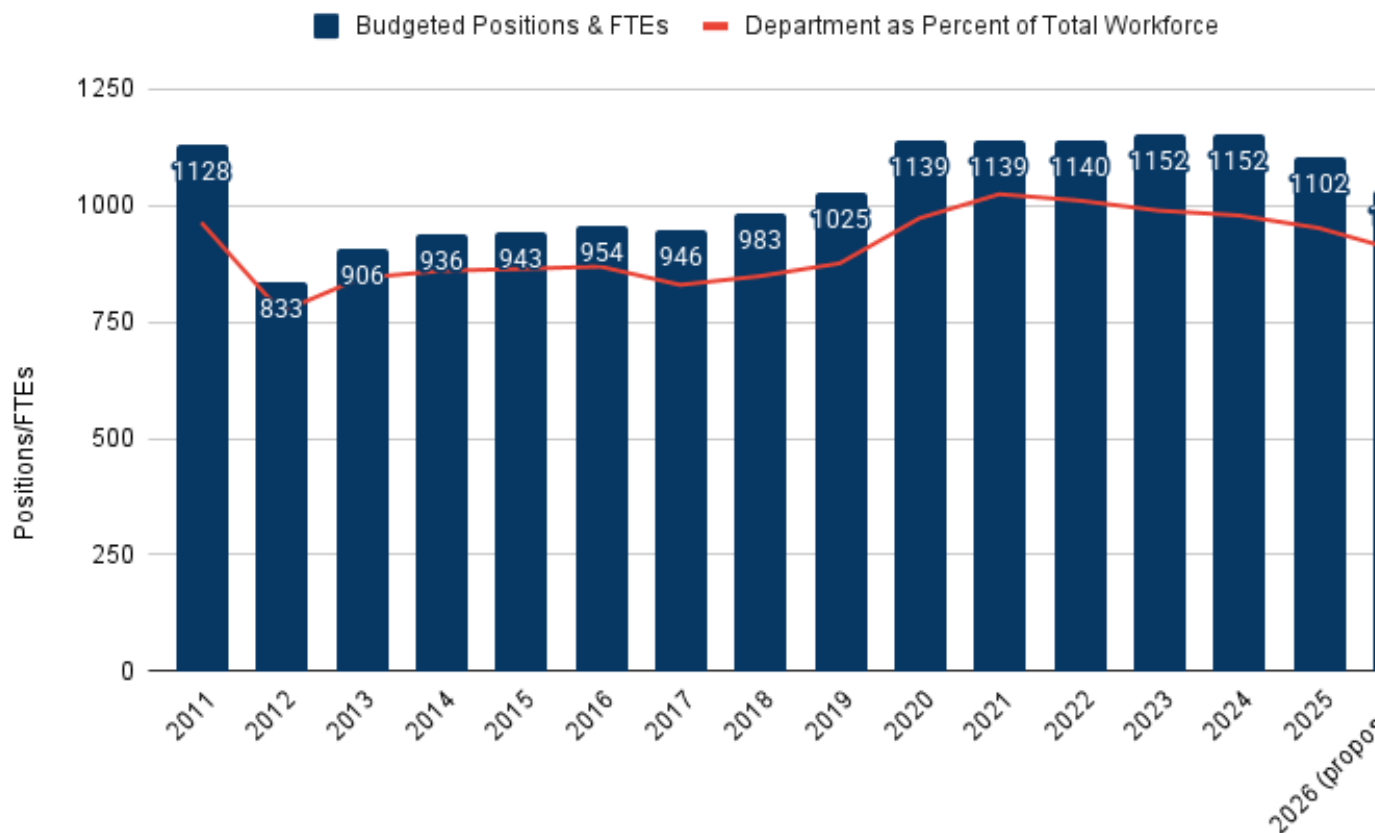
CPL Appropriation, Chicago City Budgets 2011-2026 (proposed)



DPD has been a dramatic outlier in terms of local fund actual spend in recent years. Over the past three complete budget years for which local fund actuals/encumbrances data is available, DPD spent on average only 27.4% of its locally funded budget annually, compared to the citywide average 86.4% local fund spend, driven in particular by very low percentages of the department's Rehabilitation Loans and Grants appropriation (its largest) expended in 2023 and 2024.

Staffing levels, like appropriations budgets, have fluctuated over the years as DPD's form, function, and relation to the Department of Housing has undergone changes.

CPL Budgeted Workforce, 2011-2026 (proposed)



From February through September of 2025, the months for which the city released full-time position vacancy data, DPD averaged a 17.5% vacancy rate, compared to the citywide average of 11.2%.

21 of the department's budgeted full-time positions were persistent vacancies, meaning that the same title/division/section/subsection combination was vacant for all eight months of available data:

Budgeted Position Changes

DPD saw a net change of -1 position overall, with four Urban Designer titles eliminated but four City Planner V titles added. Along with other small reductions or increases in various titles, a new Director of Land Acquisition and Disposition was added in the 2026 proposal.

Net and Percent Position/FTE Changes, 2025 to 2026 (proposed) Budgets

Title	2025 Annual Positions	2026 Annual Positions	Net Change	Percent Change
City Planner V	27	31	4	14.8%

Director of Land Acquisition and Disposition	0	1	1	New Title
Architect II	3	4	1	33.3%
Project Manager	2	1	-1	-50.0%
Supervising Planner	8	7	-1	-12.5%
Recovery Team Program Manager	1	0	-1	-100.0%
Urban Designer	8	4	-4	-50.0%

Appropriations

DPD is 94.1% locally-funded in this year's budget proposal, up from the previous year's 87.4%.

Slightly more than half the department's budget comes from the Neighborhoods Opportunity Fund, with 12.1% from the corporate fund and 10.6% from the Local Impact Fund. Other funds make up single-digit portions of the budgeted appropriations.

Fund	2025 Budgeted	2026 Proposed	Net Change from 2025	Percent Change from 2025	Percent of 2026 Recommended Funds
Neighborhoods Opportunity Fund	\$66,638,541	\$66,629,002	-\$9,539	0.0%	55.0%
Corporate Fund	\$15,374,675	\$14,686,249	-\$688,426	-4.5%	12.1%
Local Impact Fund	\$12,851,032	\$12,851,032	\$0	0.0%	10.6%
Tax Increment Financing Administration Fund	\$9,798,085	\$10,426,157	\$628,072	6.4%	8.6%
Citywide Adopt-a-landmark Fund	\$11,076,425	\$9,441,375	-\$1,635,050	-14.8%	7.8%
Disaster Recovery Fund	\$0	\$5,000,000	\$5,000,000	New Fund	4.1%
Entitlement Fund	\$0	\$1,706,000	\$1,706,000	New Fund	1.4%
Local Public and Private Grant Fund	\$502,000	\$285,000	-\$217,000	-43.2%	0.2%
Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Fund	\$13,974,000	\$208,000	-\$13,766,000	-98.5%	0.2%
Community Development Block Grant Year LI	\$1,677,000	\$0	-\$1,677,000	-100.0%	0.0%
Federal Grant Fund	\$608,000	\$0	-\$608,000	-100.0%	0.0%

Largest Appropriations

Unlike most departments, personnel expenses are not DPD's largest expense category. Just under three-quarters of the department's budget (72.5%) is dedicated to the Rehabilitation Loans and Grants appropriation.

In 2022 Rehabilitation Loans and Grants was \$7m appropriation funded entirely by CDBG grant funds (meaning actuals are not available from the Department of Finance actuals and encumbrances dataset, which only contains local funds). In 2023 and 2024 the appropriation moved to a combination of local and grant funds, the local portions of which were substantially underspent.

In 2024, the most recent complete budget year for which local fund actuals and encumbrances data is available, DPD spent only 15% of its locally-funded budget, largely due to spending only \$250,000 of the locally-funded \$84 million appropriated for rehab grants and loans.

Change from Previous Year

The largest change in DPD's proposed budget is a -\$12.9 million reduction in the reserve balance appropriation, which according to budget presentation is the account for grant funds not planned to be expended during the budget year. The appropriation was nearly eliminated from DPD's budget, with only \$285,000 budgeted to be held in reserve in 2026.

Rehabilitation loans and grants are down slightly this year, with a -\$1.6 million (-1.8%) reduction, still leaving it by far the largest account (and far larger than local budget spend for the appropriation in previous years).

The department's largest single-appropriation increase was a \$3.3 million (53.3%) jump in outside contracting through the professional and technical services appropriation. While much smaller overall, a \$362,000 increase in IT maintenance appropriations represents a 905% increase over the previous year's \$40,000.