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FOR INFORMATION CALL

November 3, 2025

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Committee Amends 2026 City Budget, Prioritizes Neighborhood Investment Citywide

The Milwaukee Common Council’s Finance & Personnel Committee on Friday, October 31 advanced an amended 2026 City budget, concluding several weeks of review, public hearings, and fiscal deliberation. The budget package, significantly shaped by Council amendments, focuses heavily on direct investment in neighborhood services, housing stability, and supporting the City’s dedicated public workforce. The amended budget, which now heads to the full Common Council for final discussion and adoption on Friday, November 7, and then to the desk of Mayor Cavalier Johnson for approval, incorporates several key changes aimed at addressing constituent feedback and bolstering quality-of-life initiatives across all districts.

“The Council’s amended budget is a direct reflection of the priorities we heard from the people of Milwaukee,” said **Alderman Marina Dimitrijevic**, Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee. “I want to thank my colleagues for all their thoughtful amendments that help build a better budget for the people.”

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Amended 2026 Budget/ADD ONE

“We faced a considerable structural challenge, but through collaborative effort, we successfully created a responsible spending plan that invests where it matters most: in our neighborhoods, our libraries, and the dedicated employees who serve our city. The amendments passed ensure that the benefits of city growth are distributed equitably across all parts of Milwaukee,” said **Common Council President José G. Pérez**.

Key Amendments approved by the Finance and Personnel Committee include:

Expanded Library Access: The Committee recommended approval of an amendment to restore Sunday library hours cut in the Mayor’s proposed budget, and expand Sunday hours to two additional branch libraries, enhancing accessibility and ensuring these community hubs remain, available vital resources for residents. Due to Council leadership and investment, residents across the city will be able to access 5 of 13 libraries on Sundays in 2026.

Housing Stability Investment: Just under \$1 million in targeted funding was allocated to critical housing programs, including increased support for eviction prevention services, and a significant boost to the successful Milwaukee Home Down Payment Assistance Program, aimed at closing the homeownership gap.

Support for City Employees: Recognizing the dedication of the municipal workforce, the Committee recommended an additional 2% wage increase for general city workers who reside within the City of Milwaukee, on top of the Mayor’s proposed 2% increase, reinforcing the commitment to local hiring and retention.

Public Safety Investment: The Committee recommended approval of a critical budget amendment that injects \$8 million in new capital borrowing into the Milwaukee Fire Department's 2026 Budget, specifically targeting the replacement of the department’s dangerously aging fleet of fire apparatus. The secured funding is slated to cover the cost of several vital replacements, ensuring Milwaukee’s firefighters have safe and reliable equipment, and response times remain swift. This capital investment is necessary to replace 13 frontline engines and ladder trucks that currently exceed the National Fire Protection Association’s recommended 15-year maximum lifespan, thereby enhancing firefighter safety and emergency response readiness across the city.

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Amended 2026 Budget/ADD TWO

“Milwaukee’s firefighters cannot protect us with equipment that belongs in a museum. This amendment corrects a decade of underinvestment because every resident, in every neighborhood, deserves a dependable emergency response. It’s not just a city budget line; it’s a community lifeline,” said **Alderman Peter Burgelis**, Vice Chair of the Finance & Personnel Committee.

The full slate of budget amendments closes the initial structural gap through responsible reserve withdrawals, targeted departmental efficiencies, and the utilization of unexpected non-property tax revenues. All budget amendments, as well as budget documents and previous presentations, can be viewed [here](#).