

MARBLEHEAD DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

VOTER INFORMATION GUIDE · PROP 2½ OVERRIDE QUESTION

The **Marblehead Department of Public Works (DPW)**, under the direction of **Director Amy McHugh**, maintains the town's essential infrastructure: roads, sidewalks, stormwater systems, public shade trees, and the municipal vehicle fleet. The DPW manages snow removal, storm response, and receives **40–100 calls and emails daily** from residents. **The department has been reduced from 30+ workers to just 19**: every additional cut means deferred repairs and reduced service across Marblehead.

DPW DIVISIONS & CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

<p>■ Highway Dept. Maintains streets, sidewalks, walls & fences, traffic signs, and markings. Pavement repairs, street sweeping, fire lane & handicap marking, sign replacement, sidewalk repairs, landscaping, seasonal leaf & litter cleanup, grading parking lots, overseeing paving contractors, issuing permits, supporting events & voting, and Rail Trail maintenance.</p>	<p>■ Storm Sewer (Drain) Dept. Oversees assets valued at over \$85 million. Maintains 75 miles of pipes, various structures, and multiple outfalls: regularly cleaned, inspected, and repaired. Ensures compliance with State Storm Water Regulations, manages private connections, conducts animal rescues, and oversees capital improvement projects. Funded by taxes.</p>	<p>■ Tree Dept. Plants, prunes, and inspects public shade trees throughout Marblehead. Performs tree & stump removal and safety inspections.</p>
	<p>■ Fleet Mechanics Dept. Maintains and repairs all town-owned vehicles: keeping plows, trucks, and equipment road-ready year-round.</p>	<p>* Storm Response Dept. Manages snow plowing, removal, road pre-treatment, flood mitigation, and debris clearing to keep Marblehead's streets accessible during weather events.</p>
<p>■ Engineering Dept. Provides engineering design and project management for infrastructure improvement projects across all Town departments; construction administration, inspection, and field engineering for public way improvements; oversees Town infrastructure records and GIS mapping services; leads the Town's MS4 program; and serves as Town's Floodplain Administrator.</p>		

WHAT'S AT STAKE FOR MARBLEHEAD

■ INVEST PLAN: TIER 3

\$15 Million Override · Phased Over 3 Years

Staffing

1 PT General Clerk (Tier 1); 1 HEO (Tier 1) (Heavy Equipment Operator: operates excavators, loaders & heavy machinery); **1 Laborer (Tier 1); 1 GIS Specialist (Tier 2)** (improves online maps for residents; supports Building, Assessor, Finance, Health & other depts.); **1 Foreman (Tier 3); 1 Specialized HEO (Tier 3)**.

In-House Trench Repair Program Implementation (Tier 3)

Enables road repairs beyond pothole patching. Requires a crew of six and key equipment including backhoes, pavement spreaders, rollers & CDL drivers. Redirects funding for equipment needs.

Greater Efficiency (Tier 3)

With more staff, multiple projects advance simultaneously: minimizing maintenance backlogs for all 5 divisions.

Improved Resolution Times (Tier 3)

Additional personnel reduce the number of days residents wait for resolutions to daily calls and emails for service requests.

Improved Service Levels (Tier 3)

Significantly improved service across Highway, Storm Sewer, Tree, Fleet, and Storm Response divisions.

Long-Term Value (Tier 3)

Investing now enables stronger maintenance programs, lowering emergency repair costs and future capital expenses. Delaying maintenance increases costs each year.

■ NO OVERRIDE

FY27 Balanced Budget Cuts Take Effect

Staffing Cuts

2.5 FTEs eliminated from an already lean department: down from 30+ workers to 19 in recent years.

Asphalt Budget Cut

\$60,000 reduction in asphalt funding forces reliance on the revolving fund's limited resources: fewer pavement repairs and hinders the In-House Trench program.

Longer Wait Times

Services not affecting public health, safety, or state mandates will see longer wait times as resident expectations and state requirements continue to grow.

Slower Storm Response

Fewer staff means reduced capacity: delays in plowing, road pre-treatment, and debris clearing during weather events.

Deferred Maintenance Costs Rise

Increases highway reconstruction costs. Reduced tree pruning harms public shade trees. Neglected stormwater causes flooding, property damage, and poor water quality in harbors, beaches, and freshwater areas. DPW must hire outside consultants for projects (streets, sidewalks) and CDL training needs.