

Charting a Course for Boston

Organizing for Change

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“... [W]e don’t have to choose between generational change and keeping the streetlights on; between tackling big problems with bold solutions and filling our potholes; to make change at scale and at street level. We need, we deserve, both. All of this is possible.”

– Mayor-Elect Wu in her victory speech, November 2, 2021¹

Michelle Wu had been elected on the promise of systemic change, but four days after her November 2021 election and just eleven days before taking office as mayor of Boston, she was still considering how best to staff and manage a range of over-arching priorities. Should she hire high-profile advisors in the mayor’s office, assign the work to department chiefs, or pursue another arrangement? On the Friday after her election, Mayor-Elect Wu gathered a team in a conference room outside her soon-to-be vacated city council office to strategize. A half dozen people surrounded her: her campaign manager, her transition director, and a few aides who would end up with roles in her administration. A variety of diagrams with boxes and arrows were splayed across the table. The goal was to shape the administration in ways that would help “institute big promises of reform,” Wu recalled, “while bringing along the existing organization.”² (See Appendix 1 for the full organizational chart at the time Wu was elected.)

Wu considered systems change to be at the core of her campaign. “It was a big part of why people gravitated toward us and volunteered with us.” She continued, “I felt we’d need leaders with an all-encompassing lens on every part of how the city functions. We’d need to be broad.” At the same time, carrying out plans with “czar”-type leaders from the mayor’s office would have challenges, too. “We need to be nimble and agile. You can’t move quickly on things unless you’re connected to real responsibility and headcount. You need people with real authority. Otherwise, you could be just setting yourself up to fail,” she said.

The team was strongly considering several elevated roles with high-priority responsibilities to deliver on her sweeping agenda. They included new positions on climate, youth and schools, early childhood, labor, infrastructure, and public safety. With all this in mind, Wu tried to take a step back and plot out where the responsibility would belong on the corresponding organizational chart. “I’ve been engaging on all these issues and with residents for so long—now is the time when we get to put the pieces of the puzzle together.”

ⁱ Mitchell Weiss was a transition advisor to Mayor-Elect Wu in 2021.

This case was developed solely as the basis for class discussion. It was written for the Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative, a collaboration between Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard Business School, and Bloomberg Philanthropies. It is not intended to serve as an endorsement, source of primary data, or illustration of effective or ineffective management. Copyright © 2022, 2023 President and Fellows of Harvard College. (Revised 8/2023.)

An Outsider with Big Promises

Wu had moved from Chicago to the Boston area in 2003 when she was eighteen to attend Harvard College. After graduating, she returned to Chicago for a short time to care for her family, but then settled in Boston with her mother and younger siblings in 2010 to attend Harvard Law School. While there, she met Professor Elizabeth Warren,ⁱⁱ who was one of the reasons Wu first considered politics. During law school, Wu interned under mayor Thomas M. Menino. In 2013, she won an at-large seat on city council, and she served as council president from 2016 to 2018, the first woman of color to do so.

As a four-term Boston city councilor, Wu ran for mayor on tackling thorny problems and proposing large-scale change. Among her many priorities were affordable childcare, free public transportation, universal pre-K,ⁱⁱⁱ and an ambitious climate action plan.

The City of Boston

Boston, New England's^{iv} largest city, held a population of over 675,000 people in 2020, and nearly five million people resided in the metro area.³ It was a historic city, known for its “firsts” in the country, including the first public park, public school, large public library, and subway. A hub of several industries—such as healthcare, biotech, research, and academia—the city was a hotbed for knowledge workers and sectors relatively insulated from sharp economic declines.⁴ However, Boston also faced issues familiar to many cities across the country: the cost of living was high, affordable housing was scarce, and traffic congestion was cumbersome.⁵ Boston was also experiencing warmer temperatures from climate change and the threat of coastal flooding, as half the city was built on low-lying landfills.⁶

Wu Wins Big

On November 2, 2021, Wu—with her message of “bold, systemic change”—won the mayoral election, taking 64 percent of the vote. Her opponent in the final election, widely considered the more moderate candidate in the race, took 39 percent.⁷

Many observers saw the election results as a sea change signaling a new generation of leadership in Boston. As one journalist wrote when Wu was elected mayor, she was “trailing an impressive string of firsts behind her as a woman, person of color, and Asian American elected to the post.”⁸ Not only that, another reporter declared “. . . but at 36, [she was] also the youngest in nearly a century” and she was “. . . the city’s first mayor in over a century who was not born and raised in Boston.”⁹ Though Wu won with strong support, winning 80 percent of precincts,¹⁰ some doubted her ability to effect change. One professor from the University of Massachusetts Boston said, “. . . I think people . . . are going to be disappointed by the lack of real substantive change because it’s beyond her control.”¹¹

While grand visions defined her campaign agenda, Wu said her administration could do the day-to-day tasks at the same time. In her victory speech, she promised change “at scale and at street level.”¹² She also espoused two other beliefs: that it was crucial for city staff to interact with as many residents as

ⁱⁱ In 2012, Elizabeth Warren became the first female US Senator in the state.

ⁱⁱⁱ Universal pre-K, also known as “preschool for all,” was publicly funded preschool.

^{iv} New England was a region of the US that included the states of Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Connecticut.

possible—or as she said, “bringing City Hall to every block, every street, every neighborhood”¹³—and that they couldn’t be afraid of innovating and experimenting to solve problems, which she subsequently framed as, “embracing the possibility of the city.”¹⁴

A Tight Transition

Due to special circumstances, Mayor-Elect Wu would be sworn in after the election was certified, leaving just a two-week transition period. She’d become the third Boston mayor within a year: in March, mayor Marty Walsh had resigned to become the US secretary of labor, and the acting mayor, Kim Janey—the first woman and person of color ever to serve as mayor of Boston—had lost to Wu in the primaries.

Wu reflected on the transitions that had already occurred in the months before she took office: “After an eight-month interim administration, lots of institutional wisdom had already gone out the door, and quite a few people were new in their roles.” She also reflected on the changes in organizational structure that she had seen as a city councilor: “Previous administrations had added layers between expertise and decision making in the mayor’s office.” She continued, “There were places where I knew we wanted to more directly align first-hand knowledge on the ground and expertise with policymaking. And there were other places where I felt things were duplicative and happening in silos.”

More Than a Vision

As Wu turned to governing, she had a broad platform to turn into action. Often during her campaign for mayor, she had promised Boston’s voters that she would “take on our hardest challenges.” She had committed to using administrative processes, policy, legislation—and more—to “change systems.”¹⁵

She had promised to do so across a wide range of issues. These included housing affordability; education equity; closing the racial wealth gap; transportation; planning and development; small businesses; public health; public safety; economic justice and workers’ rights; climate justice; and arts and culture. Wu had shared detailed plans during the campaign about how she planned to make progress on many of these issues. (See Appendix 2 for an example on climate and Appendix 3 for an example on early education.) All in all, she’d made close to 200 commitments. They ranged from expanding on a free bus riding pilot to electrifying school buses to filling a vacant police commissioner role.

Some promises would likely engage only a few individuals among her leadership team, but many, given the cross-cutting nature of the agenda, would likely require input and coordination from people across her cabinet. Wu’s fight for fare-free transit would involve her mobility chief, of course, but also her chief of policy, chief of staff, equity chief, chief financial officer, housing chief, and perhaps the senior advisor on infrastructure, if she designated one. Plans to make stormwater infrastructure more resilient would almost assuredly draw in the city’s chief of streets; a new planning head; the chief of environment, energy, and open space; the chief financial officer; and the mayor’s senior advisors on infrastructure and climate, if she went ahead and appointed them. Translating vision into action would require deft coordination.

The Org Chart Puzzle

At the transition meeting that November day with her nascent team, Wu and her colleagues continued to discuss the different options available for structuring the systemic work. On climate, someone floated creating a deputy mayor position, but Wu's reaction was that "we need to keep expertise close to decision making, so adding more layers would likely perpetuate inertia." More generally, two options kept rising to the top: she could either place the big agenda items with 1) the cabinet chiefs who had teams in place to do the work or 2) a new senior mayoral aide to operate within the mayor's office, who would not have built-in direct reports or budgetary control, but who would de facto have a more cross-department orientation.

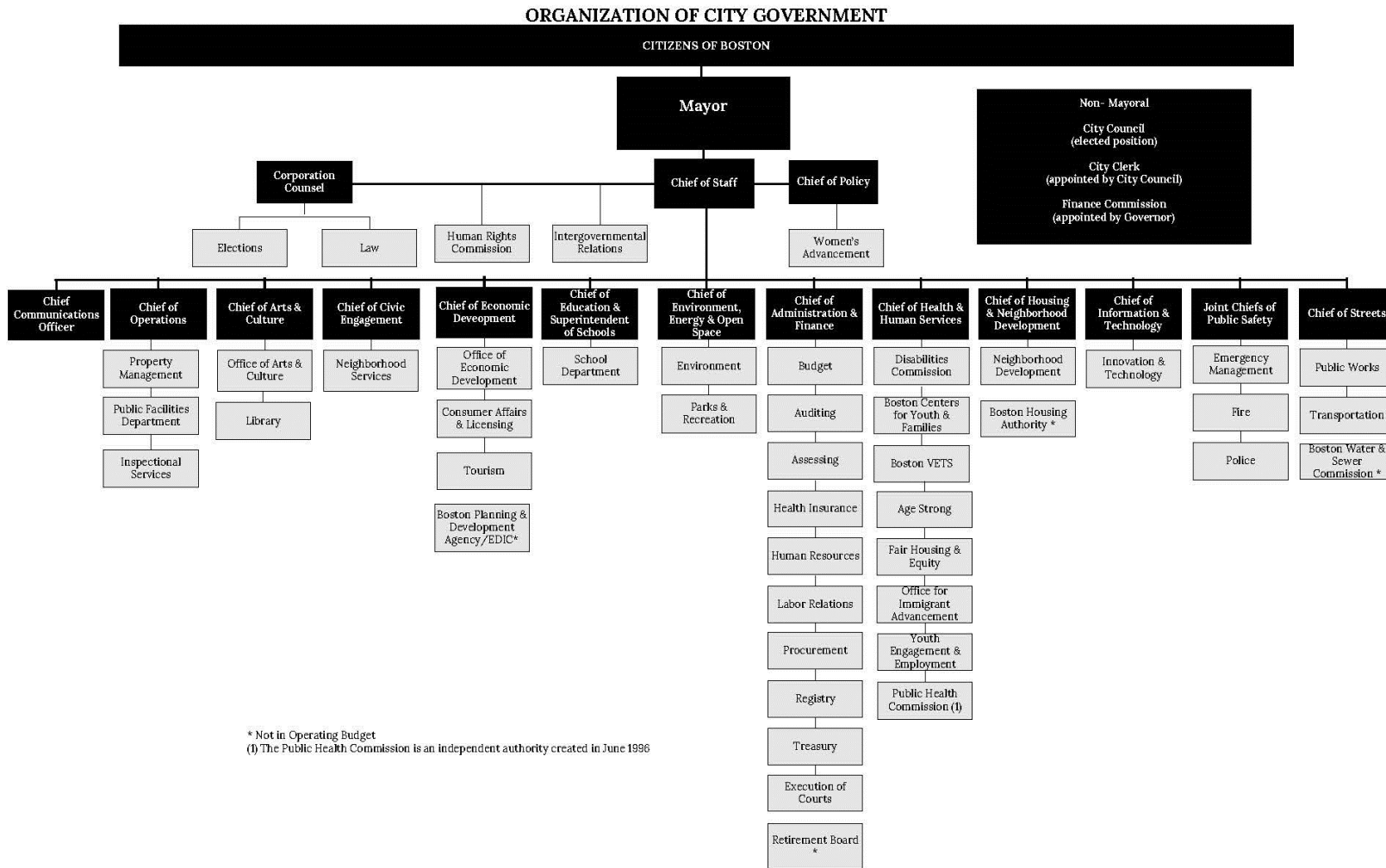
Wu knew from her work as a city councilor that chiefs, "in general, are extremely passionate about their roles and have lots of ideas about what the city should be doing, and they want to take the lead in implementing those ideas." She continued, "I want to empower that kind of leadership but also ensure more effective coordination and a bigger-picture vision."

No matter which decision Wu made, she knew the structure had to facilitate people working across departments and sectors. (See Appendix 4 for the city's 2021 financial operating budget and Appendix 5 for a personnel summary.) At the same time, she said, "I worry that in such a large organization, where inertia can hold things back, having only one person without a huge cabinet and staff they could count on for authority and implementation power wouldn't set them up to be able to pressure other departments—who had lots on their plates—to change course." She added, "It's not just about one person at the top saying words." Assigning the work would be complex: union contracts, for example, might limit certain task assignments.

Wu said of the work ahead: "All of our most entrenched and urgent challenges as a city are interconnected; solving them requires an all-of-government, all-of-society approach. Climate. Jobs. Health. Education. Safety. Quality of life. They cut across everything."

Appendices

Appendix 1 City of Boston Organizational Chart (July 2021)



Source: Operating Budget Fiscal Year 2021, Vol. I, City of Boston, [https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2020/11/Full%20Budget%20Document%20\(2\)_1.pdf](https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2020/11/Full%20Budget%20Document%20(2)_1.pdf), p. 146, accessed September 2022.

Appendix 2 Boston's Green New Deal & Just Recovery: 15 Actions

| Action | Description |
|--|--|
| 1. Accelerating Decarbonization | Commit to citywide carbon neutrality by 2040, 100 percent renewable electricity by 2030, and a net-zero municipal footprint by 2024. |
| 2. A Justice Audit and Framework | Perform a comprehensive justice audit to inform a citywide justice framework to overhaul and shape decision-making going forward. |
| 3. Easing Upfront Costs of Clean Energy Infrastructure | Remove barriers and accelerate the installation of solar and efficiency measures for city government, residents, and businesses through Green Municipal Bonds and the Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE). |
| 4. Green Workforce Development | Create good jobs with strong benefits to support a clean, just economy and maintain the new critical infrastructure long term through city partnerships with technical schools, local industry, and state entities that emphasize hiring locally. |
| 5. Divesting from Harmful Industries and Reinvesting in a Clean, Just Future | Divest in certain areas and move money in support of clean energy and community-based financial institutions. |
| 6. An Urban Climate Corps | Expand employment opportunities for youth and residents through a paid training program to revitalize neighborhoods through green infrastructure installation, climate-resilient design, the restoration of natural spaces, and community engagement. |
| 7. De-commodifying Housing | Expand cooperative housing and community land trusts for long-term and permanent affordability, community ownership, and more socially and financially resilient communities. |
| 8. A Renters' Right to Counsel | Give access to legal representation for tenants as added protection from unwanted or potentially illegal evictions, also reducing the costs for shelter housing, healthcare, and foster care otherwise associated with homelessness. |
| 9. Just and Resilient Development | Create affordable green overlay districts and standard community benefits agreements to provide transparency and predictability while aligning private development with goals for equity and resiliency. |
| 10. Resilient Stormwater Infrastructure | Protect against flooding from more frequent and more intense rain and storms by shifting to a more equitable fee, based on land use and the extent of impervious surfaces to incentivize green infrastructure and generate resources for district-level stormwater planning efforts. |
| 11. Transportation Justice | Prioritize and allocate street space for active transportation modes. Pursue fare-free transit to remove barriers to public transit as a public good. |
| 12. An Equitable Small Business Recovery | Leverage public contracting opportunities to set goals for equity that ramp up quickly and create opportunity for worker cooperatives. Create a technical assistance space and virtual resource hub to support business certification and integration with sustainability measures. |
| 13. Food Justice | Leverage purchasing power to align food purchasing with sustainable and local producers, as well as direct resources to expand urban agriculture. |
| 14. Growing the Urban Tree Canopy | Use priority planting zones based on urban heat island maps, and a comprehensive urban forest strategy to boost tree coverage for carbon sequestration, cleaner air, temperature regulation, and community benefit. |
| 15. A Local Blue New Deal | Act on the transformative potential to harness coastal and ocean resources for clean energy development, sustainable food systems, carbon capture, and good jobs. Coastal cities can reimagine a relationship with the ocean through regeneration and climate justice. |

Source: Adapted from "Planning For a Boston Green New Deal & Just Recovery," Office of Boston City Councilor Michelle Wu, August 2020, <https://assets.ctfassets.net/1hf11j69ure4/B6NLxIOVxTVMNbHEvFaQE/700f4762bae92990f91327a7e01e2f09/Boston-Green-New-Deal-August-2020-FINAL.pdf>, accessed October 2022.

Appendix 3 Plan to Close the Early Education and Childcare Gap – Creating a One-Stop Shop for Enrollment and Access

| Action | Description |
|---|--|
| 1. Create an Office of Early Education and Care | A fully staffed, resourced, multilingual Office of Early Education and Care (EEC) will share provider resources, coordinate with non-profit organizations, house relevant data, and serve as a guide for families of all backgrounds as they navigate early education and care across Boston. |
| 2. Streamline Enrollment and Outreach | The Office of EEC will create a user-friendly, multilingual website and phone line for families to enroll their children in early education seats within BPS and at BPS-aligned center-based and family-based programs. The gaps between the pre-K lottery, the regular school assignment lottery, and community centers’ application process create unnecessary confusion and stress for families and perpetuates racial inequities. Aligning enrollment timelines will ensure all families know what options are available to them and enable a coordinated citywide outreach strategy. |
| 3. Share Real-time Data for Full Accessibility | The City should integrate data across the City, state, and federal level to create a one-stop shop for parents seeking information, vouchers, or other financial assistance, and proactively reach out to all new parents in Boston to offer assistance. |
| 4. Offer Open-Source Resources for Providers | The Office of EEC will work in partnership with local non-profit organizations to serve as a resource hub for current and prospective providers, including sharing business planning tools; sample policies, procedures, and handbooks; pedagogical resources; networking opportunities for informal collaboration; and membership and discounts to online educational tools. ... Boston should build a platform tailored to our local community context and ensure full language accessibility. Providing welcome kits to newly-licensed family-based programs would help providers navigate their financial and business management options. |
| 5. Organize Neighborhood Communities of Learning | The Office of EEC will organize neighborhood-based networks of early education providers—in BPS, center-based programs, and family-based programs. Neighborhood organization will help providers access up-to-date information, adapt to changing circumstances, and share best practices and professional development opportunities, and build community. |
| 6. Leverage Cultural Institutions Across the City | The Office of EEC will help connect early education providers to the City’s museums, libraries, and other cultural institutions to increase young children’s exposure to history, art, music, and other hands-on learning experiences. |

Source: Adapted from “A Bold Plan to Close the Early Education and Childcare Gap,” Michelle Wu for Mayor, 2021, <https://www.michelleforboston.com/plans/early-education>, accessed October 2022.

Appendix 4 City of Boston Operating Budget, 2021: General Funds Appropriations

| Cabinet | Department | FY 18 Expenditure | FY 19 Expenditure | FY20 Appropriation | FY21 Appropriation | 21 vs 20 |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Mayor's Office | Mayor's Office | 4,178,112 | 4,556,277 | 5,331,414 | 5,380,619 | 49,205 |
| | Election Department | 3,905,877 | 4,205,689 | 5,524,196 | 5,262,101 | -262,095 |
| | Intergovernmental Relations | 1,197,436 | 1,291,712 | 1,580,011 | 1,388,348 | -191,662 |
| | Human Rights Commission | | | | 500,746 | 500,746 |
| | Law Department | 6,503,424 | 6,479,021 | 8,377,366 | 8,186,099 | -191,267 |
| | Women's Advancement | 242,700 | 257,236 | 346,188 | 462,817 | 116,629 |
| | Total | 16,027,548 | 16,789,935 | 21,159,175 | 21,180,730 | 21,555 |
| Operations | Property Management Department | 17,927,980 | 19,616,267 | 18,795,900 | 17,160,405 | -1,635,495 |
| | Public Facilities Department | 5,449,174 | 6,554,871 | 7,169,689 | 7,060,474 | -109,215 |
| | Inspectional Services Department | 18,566,595 | 19,170,451 | 18,940,155 | 20,908,524 | 1,968,369 |
| | Total | 41,943,748 | 45,341,589 | 44,905,744 | 45,129,403 | 223,659 |
| Civic Engagement | Neighborhood Services | 3,061,883 | 3,044,743 | 3,718,338 | 4,137,589 | 419,252 |
| Total | 3,061,883 | 3,044,743 | 3,718,338 | 4,137,589 | 419,252 | |
| Arts & Culture | Office of Arts & Culture | 1,347,105 | 1,307,975 | 2,051,666 | 2,238,752 | 187,086 |
| | Library Department | 35,758,490 | 38,663,859 | 40,534,902 | 41,386,509 | 851,607 |
| Total | 37,105,595 | 39,971,834 | 42,586,568 | 43,625,262 | 1,038,693 | |
| Economic Development | Office of Economic Development | 2,339,130 | 3,506,339 | 3,446,210 | 5,403,600 | 1,957,390 |
| | Consumer Affairs & Licensing | 1,151,755 | 1,222,148 | 1,353,513 | 1,486,453 | 132,940 |
| | Office of Tourism | 1,134,559 | 1,333,810 | 1,545,852 | 1,651,972 | 106,120 |
| Total | 4,625,444 | 6,062,297 | 6,345,574 | 8,542,025 | 2,196,451 | |
| Education | Boston Public Schools | 1,093,289,520 | 1,126,676,079 | 1,178,564,205 | 1,258,633,065 | 80,068,860 |
| | Total | 1,093,289,520 | 1,126,676,079 | 1,178,564,205 | 1,258,633,065 | 80,068,860 |
| Environment, Energy & Open Space | Environment Department | 2,470,122 | 4,779,367 | 3,197,886 | 3,197,563 | -323 |
| | Parks & Recreation Department | 26,322,942 | 25,988,602 | 26,666,627 | 27,135,110 | 468,483 |
| | Total | 28,793,064 | 30,767,969 | 29,864,513 | 30,332,673 | 468,160 |
| Administration & Finance | Administration & Finance | 1,205,918 | 757,337 | 1,737,927 | 1,272,150 | -465,776 |
| | Assessing Department | 7,190,085 | 7,150,524 | 7,746,306 | 7,718,365 | -27,940 |
| | Auditing Department | 2,680,026 | 2,735,310 | 2,947,260 | 2,828,293 | -118,967 |
| | Budget Management | 2,811,863 | 2,702,651 | 3,541,745 | 3,270,971 | -270,774 |
| | Execution of Courts | 19,513,268 | 18,233,939 | 5,000,000 | 5,000,000 | 0 |
| | Health Insurance | 210,986,298 | 212,029,308 | 221,381,299 | 216,096,323 | -5,284,976 |
| | Human Resources | 4,251,960 | 4,694,941 | 5,849,713 | 5,970,600 | 120,888 |
| | Medicare | 9,815,432 | 10,673,357 | 11,200,000 | 11,200,000 | 0 |
| | Office of Labor Relations | 1,250,130 | 1,122,845 | 1,465,905 | 1,459,896 | -6,010 |
| | Pensions & Annuities - City | 3,636,293 | 3,699,484 | 4,100,000 | 3,900,000 | -200,000 |
| | Pensions & Annuities - County | 30,129 | 13,147 | 100,000 | 0 | -100,000 |
| | Procurement | 1,658,911 | 1,736,215 | 1,888,611 | 1,859,992 | -28,619 |
| | Registry Division | 957,564 | 1,116,384 | 1,109,488 | 1,086,639 | -22,849 |
| | Treasury Department | 5,216,098 | 20,169,845 | 19,800,186 | 4,576,638 | -15,223,548 |
| | Unemployment Compensation | 0 | 0 | 350,000 | 350,000 | 0 |
| | Workers' Compensation Fund | 1,385,668 | 1,618,544 | 2,200,000 | 2,000,000 | -200,000 |
| | Total | 272,589,642 | 288,453,828 | 290,418,439 | 268,589,868 | -21,828,571 |
| Health & Human Services | Office of Health & Human Services | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2,405,798 | 2,405,798 |
| | Boston Center for Youth & Families | 29,151,768 | 27,468,082 | 29,605,788 | 29,051,676 | -554,112 |
| | Commission For Persons W/Disabilities | 428,128 | 400,491 | 487,540 | 510,616 | 23,076 |
| | Age Strong | 3,568,631 | 3,723,852 | 3,965,665 | 4,446,097 | 480,432 |
| | Fair Housing & Equity | 258,664 | 290,704 | 318,366 | 317,514 | -852 |
| | Office of Immigrant Advancement | 443,901 | 411,934 | 627,767 | 1,125,549 | 497,782 |
| | Public Health Commission | 79,563,339 | 87,967,402 | 93,405,428 | 106,473,529 | 13,068,101 |
| | Boston VETS | 3,233,627 | 2,937,051 | 4,705,679 | 4,612,875 | -92,804 |
| | Youth Engagement & Employment | 6,336,200 | 6,091,124 | 6,990,580 | 7,818,028 | 827,448 |
| | Total | 122,984,259 | 129,290,640 | 140,106,814 | 156,761,682 | 16,654,868 |
| Housing & Neighborhood Development | Neighborhood Development | 13,685,668 | 14,203,732 | 20,577,614 | 29,088,350 | 8,510,736 |
| Total | 13,685,668 | 14,203,732 | 20,577,614 | 29,088,350 | 8,510,736 | |
| Information & Technology | Department of Innovation and Technology | 33,816,198 | 39,059,083 | 34,360,307 | 35,022,259 | 661,952 |
| | Total | 33,816,198 | 39,059,083 | 34,360,307 | 35,022,259 | 661,952 |
| Public Safety | Emergency Management | 650,751 | 684,252 | 885,163 | 985,440 | 100,277 |
| | Fire Department | 233,419,618 | 259,809,035 | 271,616,063 | 271,548,665 | -67,398 |
| | Police Department | 399,924,488 | 416,762,368 | 414,306,878 | 404,182,026 | -10,124,853 |
| Total | 633,994,857 | 677,255,656 | 686,808,104 | 676,716,130 | -10,091,974 | |
| Streets | Central Fleet Management | 2,829,169 | 2,993,212 | 3,110,484 | 3,012,586 | -97,898 |
| | Office of Streets | 1,798,367 | 2,131,409 | 2,217,107 | 2,053,526 | -163,581 |
| | Public Works Department | 82,963,493 | 85,363,039 | 100,267,573 | 98,909,662 | -1,357,911 |
| | Snow Removal | 28,168,776 | 22,762,894 | 24,788,144 | 21,067,583 | -3,720,560 |
| | Transportation Department | 35,559,546 | 38,038,731 | 39,276,378 | 38,748,112 | -528,266 |
| Total | 151,319,351 | 151,289,285 | 169,659,686 | 163,791,469 | -5,868,217 | |
| Non-Mayoral Departments | City Clerk | 1,234,257 | 1,233,660 | 1,346,251 | 1,392,267 | 46,017 |
| | City Council | 5,248,445 | 5,442,471 | 5,721,300 | 5,736,400 | 15,100 |
| | Finance Commission | 271,026 | 276,453 | 294,446 | 299,784 | 5,338 |
| | Total | 6,753,728 | 6,952,584 | 7,361,996 | 7,428,451 | 66,455 |
| Grand Total | 2,459,990,506 | 2,575,159,253 | 2,676,437,077 | 2,748,978,956 | 72,541,878 | |

Source: Operating Budget Fiscal Year 2021, Vol. I, City of Boston, [https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2020/11/Full%20Budget%20Document%20\(2\)_1.pdf](https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2020/11/Full%20Budget%20Document%20(2)_1.pdf), p 20, accessed September 2022.

Appendix 5 City of Boston Operating Budget, 2021: Personnel Summary

| | | 1/1/18 | 1/1/19 | 1/1/20 | 1/1/21 | Projected |
|---|--|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | | FTE | FTE | FTE | Projected | Inc/(Dec) |
| Office of the Mayor | Mayor's Office | 44.1 | 44.6 | 51.0 | 51.0 | - |
| | Election Department | 28.6 | 29.0 | 28.0 | 28.0 | - |
| | Intergovernmental Relations | 9.0 | 9.0 | 10.0 | 10.0 | - |
| | Law Department | 54.0 | 52.0 | 57.0 | 57.0 | - |
| | Human Rights Commission | - | - | - | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| | Women's Advancement | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - |
| | Total | 138.7 | 138.6 | 150.0 | 154.0 | 4.0 |
| Operations | Inspectional Services | 217.0 | 218.0 | 208.0 | 213.0 | 5.0 |
| | Property Management | 134.0 | 132.0 | 126.5 | 126.5 | - |
| | Public Facilities Department | 59.0 | 60.0 | 60.0 | 60.0 | - |
| | Total | 410.0 | 410.0 | 394.5 | 399.5 | 5.0 |
| Civic Engagement | Neighborhood Services | 48.0 | 45.0 | 48.0 | 49.0 | 1.0 |
| | Total | 48.0 | 45.0 | 48.0 | 49.0 | 1.0 |
| Arts & Culture | Office of Arts & Culture | 12.0 | 10.0 | 15.0 | 16.0 | 1.0 |
| | Library Department | 386.6 | 384.0 | 381.9 | 389.4 | 7.5 |
| | Total | 398.6 | 394.0 | 396.9 | 405.4 | 8.5 |
| Economic Development | Office of Economic Development | 22.0 | 26.0 | 25.0 | 26.0 | 1.0 |
| | Consumer Affairs & Licensing | 14.0 | 15.0 | 15.0 | 20.0 | 5.0 |
| | Office of Tourism | 10.0 | 10.0 | 11.0 | 11.0 | - |
| | Total | 46.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 57.0 | 6.0 |
| Education | School Department | 9,005.2 | 9,248.6 | 9,302.9 | 9,582.0 | 279.1 |
| | Total | 9,005.2 | 9,248.6 | 9,302.9 | 9,582.0 | 279.1 |
| Environment, Energy & Open Space | Environment | 25.0 | 26.0 | 27.0 | 29.0 | 2.0 |
| | Parks and Recreation | 217.0 | 213.0 | 227.0 | 233.0 | 6.0 |
| | Total | 242.0 | 239.0 | 254.0 | 262.0 | 8.0 |
| Administration & Finance | Administration & Finance | 7.0 | 5.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 1.0 |
| | Assessing Department | 82.0 | 77.0 | 70.0 | 70.0 | - |
| | Auditing Department | 32.0 | 33.0 | 32.0 | 32.0 | - |
| | Budget Management | 21.7 | 21.7 | 22.7 | 22.7 | - |
| | Human Resources | 45.8 | 45.8 | 46.0 | 46.0 | - |
| | Labor Relations | 10.0 | 8.0 | 9.0 | 9.0 | - |
| | Purchasing Division | 20.0 | 21.0 | 21.0 | 21.0 | - |
| | Registry Division | 17.0 | 19.0 | 18.0 | 18.0 | - |
| | Treasury Department | 50.0 | 46.0 | 49.0 | 49.0 | - |
| | Total | 285.5 | 276.5 | 273.7 | 274.7 | 1.0 |
| Health & Human Services | Office of Health and Human Services | - | - | - | 12.0 | 12.0 |
| | Boston Center for Youth & Families | 364.4 | 369.0 | 359.5 | 348.5 | (11.0) |
| | Commission for Persons with Disabilities | 7.0 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | - |
| | Age Strong Commission | 42.7 | 48.5 | 48.4 | 52.4 | 4.0 |
| | Fair Housing & Equity | 7.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 | - |
| | Office of Immigrant Advancement | 5.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 7.0 | 2.0 |
| | Public Health Commission | 844.8 | 832.4 | 846.9 | 850.9 | 4.0 |
| | Boston VETS | 15.0 | 12.0 | 14.0 | 14.0 | - |
| | Youth Engagement & Employment | 5.0 | 7.0 | 9.0 | 9.0 | - |
| Total | 1,290.9 | 1,285.9 | 1,296.8 | 1,307.8 | 11.0 | |
| Housing & Neighborhood Development | Neighborhood Development | 38.3 | 37.0 | 39.7 | 40.7 | 1.0 |
| | Total | 38.3 | 37.0 | 39.7 | 40.7 | 1.0 |
| Information & Technology | Dept of Innovation & Technology | 133.6 | 131.6 | 127.0 | 127.0 | - |
| | Total | 133.6 | 131.6 | 127.0 | 127.0 | - |
| Public Safety | Emergency Management | 1.5 | 1.5 | 3.8 | 4.8 | 1.0 |
| | Fire Department | 1,610.3 | 1,611.5 | 1,618.5 | 1,618.5 | - |
| | Police Department | 2,830.1 | 2,862.6 | 2,895.7 | 2,898.7 | 3.0 |
| | Total | 4,441.9 | 4,475.6 | 4,518.0 | 4,522.0 | 4.0 |
| Streets | Office of Streets | 19.0 | 22.0 | 24.0 | 24.0 | - |
| | Central Fleet Management | 43.0 | 44.0 | 42.0 | 42.0 | - |
| | Public Works Department | 319.0 | 313.0 | 316.0 | 318.0 | 2.0 |
| | Transportation | 377.9 | 363.5 | 365.5 | 365.5 | - |
| | Total | 758.9 | 742.5 | 747.5 | 749.5 | 2.0 |
| Non-Mayoral | City Clerk | 15.0 | 13.0 | 14.0 | 14.0 | - |
| | City Council | 77.2 | 80.2 | 75.6 | 75.6 | - |
| | Finance Commission | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 | - |
| | Total | 96.2 | 97.2 | 93.6 | 93.6 | - |
| Grand Total | | 17,333.8 | 17,572.5 | 17,693.6 | 18,024.2 | 330.6 |

Source: Operating Budget Fiscal Year 2021, Vol. I, City of Boston, [https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2020/11/Full%20Budget%20Document%20\(2\)_1.pdf](https://www.boston.gov/sites/default/files/file/2020/11/Full%20Budget%20Document%20(2)_1.pdf), p 32, accessed September 2022.

Endnotes

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- ² Unless otherwise noted, quotes from Mayor Wu are derived from an in-person interview on October 28, 2022, conducted by the case writers.
- ³ “U.S. Census Bureau Quickfacts: United States,” <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/bostoncitymassachusetts/POP010220>, accessed October 2022.
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- ¹¹ Platoff and Valencia, “Michelle Wu wins historic race,” *The Boston Globe*, accessed October 2022.
- ¹² Gavin, “What Michelle Wu said,” *Boston.com*, accessed October 2022.
- ¹³ Ibid.
- ¹⁴ Christopher Gavin, “Three steps and Michelle Wu’s journey to bring City Hall to the people.” *Boston.com*, November 16, 2021, <https://www.boston.com/news/politics/2021/11/16/three-steps-and-michelle-wus-journey-to-bring-city-hall-to-the-people/>, accessed October 2022.
- ¹⁵ “Our policy platform is more than a vision,” Michelle for Mayor, <https://www.michelleforboston.com/issues>, accessed November 2022.