

## DPW SCOPE OF SERVICES AND BUDGET OVERVIEW FY06

Take a drink of water or wash your clothes; take a walk on a sidewalk; drive to the store on a public street; put out your recyclables; park downtown; flush your toilet. These are all services provided by your Public Works Department, which manages the backbone infrastructure of the city. Not surprisingly, this infrastructure is usually taken for granted, which is as it should be. Thanks to the hard work of DPW's many employees, these basic systems work all day every day. And when there's a problem, Public Works employees fix it.

Each division within DPW will be discussed in more detail in the following pages. Here is an overview of the Department's major activities and the associated revenues and costs.

Water & Wastewater deliver potable water to your tap and clean the wastewater prior to discharge into the Winooski River and Lake Champlain. These services represent almost half of DPW's total expenditures. The funds come from ratepayers and from services provided to others so there is no burden on the property tax.

Parking & Traffic is responsible for all public parking in the city and at the airport, as well as traffic lights, signs, crossing guards, and fire alarms. It is funded from parking fees at municipal garages and on-street meters.

Streets & Sidewalks is responsible for maintenance (plowing & sweeping), as well as fixing potholes, repaving streets and laying new sidewalks. It is funded from the Capital Street Program (a dedicated portion of the property tax) and state aid to help defray the costs of maintaining state roads within the city.

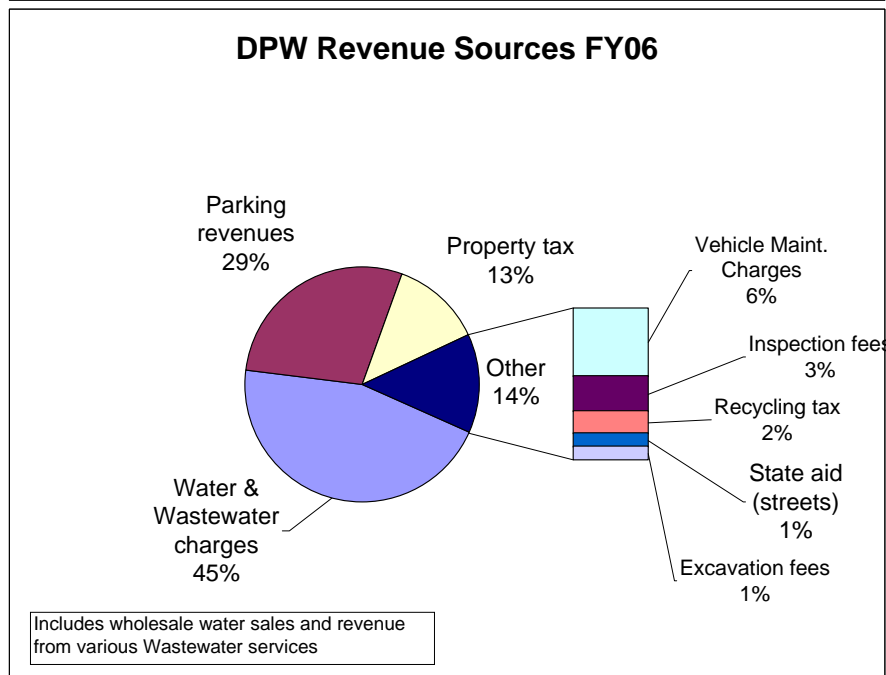
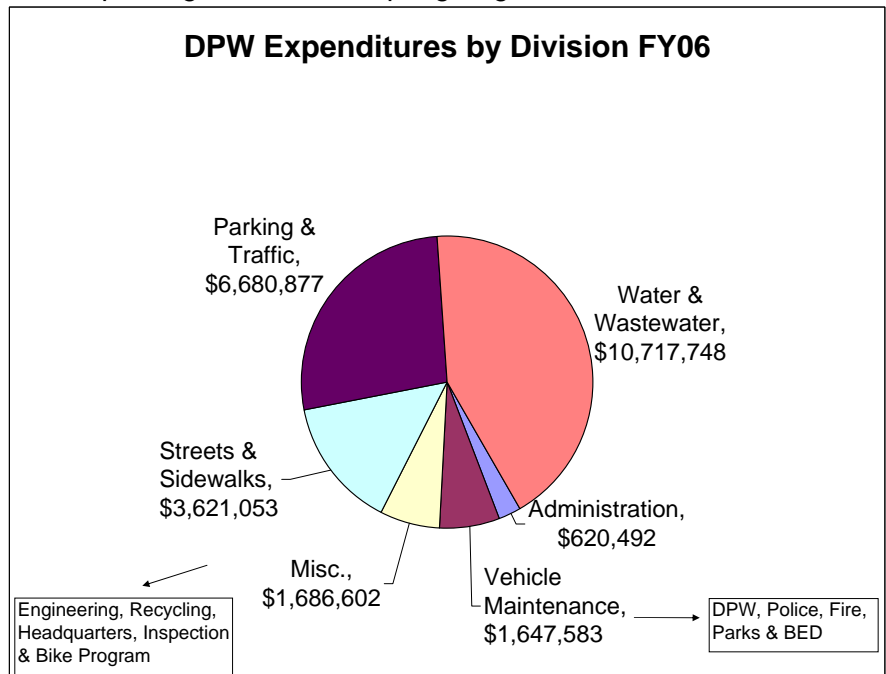
Vehicle Maintenance operates the City's central garage; services fleet vehicles (Public Works, Police, Fire, Parks & Electric departments); and operates the central fueling station for fleet vehicles. It is funded by fees paid by each department for the services provided.

Recycling conducts curbside pick-up and autumn yard waste collection, licenses haulers, and monitors City landfills. It is funded entirely with fees.

Inspection Services offers consultation and technical advice, issues permits for construction in the city, and inspects the work for adherence to safety codes and standards. It is funded entirely by fees.

Engineering provides technical support for major capital projects, design and engineering services for Water and Wastewater, reviews traffic requests, manages traffic calming, performs traffic studies and staffs various committees.

Administration provides services to the divisions (and Parks & Rec.), including budgeting, accounting, payroll, clerical, billing, and customer service.



## WATER & WASTEWATER

### WATER

Water Division expenditures were \$5.1 million last year. When adjusted for inflation, this is almost 15% lower than in Fiscal Year 1999.

Some costs rose last year but less than the rate of inflation (e.g., wages & benefits, and debt service). The payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) actually declined by 39% -- from \$355,678 to \$217,906.

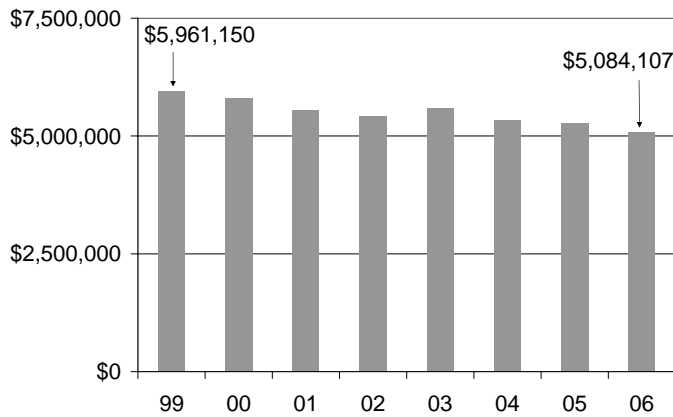
### WASTEWATER

Wastewater expenditures were \$5.6 million last year. When adjusted for inflation, this is 22% lower than in Fiscal Year 1999.

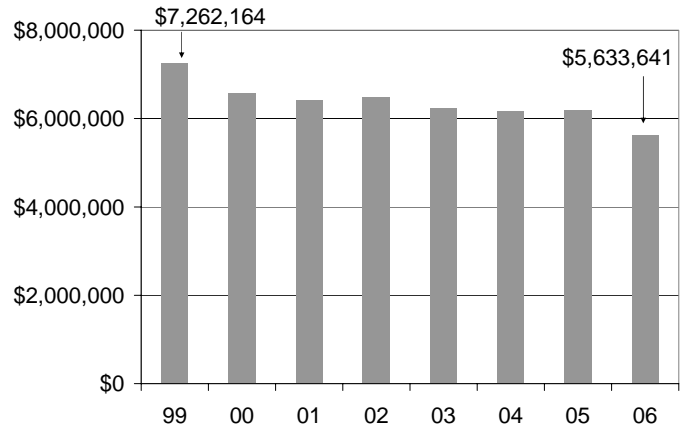
Most costs were relatively stable last year but the payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT) declined by 45% -- from \$1,193,962 to \$654,564.

Note: The declines in the payments in lieu of taxes are due to the overall shift in tax burden from commercial & industrial properties to residential properties from the state mandated reappraisal. However, while all other properties are appraised every ten years or so, the City appraises Water & Wastewater facilities every year. As a result, Water & Wastewater's PILOT will increase each year to reflect the higher values.

**Water Division Annual Expenditures**  
(Fiscal Year; inflation adjusted)



**Wastewater Division Annual Expenditures**  
(Fiscal Year; inflation adjusted)



## TAXES & FEES

Burlington water and wastewater rates include taxes and fees that help reduce property taxes. As a municipal utility, DPW is not required to pay property taxes. However, the City Charter requires DPW to make an annual payment in lieu of taxes and collect a 3.5% franchise fee for the City. These payments come from all water and wastewater customers, including entities such as UVM and Fletcher Allen that don't pay property taxes. This is a more equitable distribution of the burden of financing City operations.

**If not for these taxes and fees, the property tax rate would be about \$0.03 higher than it is today. This means that a family with a \$175,000 home saves about \$53 per year in property taxes, while paying only \$17 in franchise fees; an overall savings of \$36 per year.**

<b>DPW Payments in Lieu of Taxes and Franchise Fee Transfers</b>					
Fiscal Year	Payments in lieu of taxes		Franchise fee transfers		Annual Totals
	Wastewater	Water	Wastewater	Water	
2002	\$1,013,237	\$280,011	\$174,646	\$148,320	<b>\$1,616,214</b>
2003	\$1,001,734	\$299,715	\$169,867	\$146,997	<b>\$1,618,313</b>
2004	\$1,055,290	\$313,420	\$174,910	\$152,030	<b>\$1,695,650</b>
2005	\$1,193,962	\$355,678	\$188,119	\$160,621	<b>\$1,898,380</b>
2006	\$654,564	\$217,906	\$173,804	\$163,502	<b>\$1,209,776</b>
<b>5 yr. Totals</b>	<b>\$4,918,787</b>	<b>\$1,466,730</b>	<b>\$881,346</b>	<b>\$771,470</b>	<b>\$8,038,333</b>

## WATER & WASTEWATER

As with any utility, some costs are fixed, such as debt service (and utilities are very capital intensive). Other costs are beyond management's control such as payments in lieu of taxes, health and liability insurance costs, inter-departmental charges, and franchise fees. These represent almost two thirds of all expenditures. However, Water & Wastewater have been aggressive in seeking savings wherever possible.

**Energy:** DPW has partnered with BED to achieve substantial energy savings. The investments have paid significant dividends as Water & Wastewater are saving over \$150,000 per year on their electric costs.

**Debt Service:** The City borrowed \$12 million in 1982 to upgrade and expand its water facilities. Annual debt service is 29% of total costs, but the debt will be paid off in 2012. These funds can then be used to improve the water distribution system. The City also borrowed \$25 million in the early '90s as part of a \$52 million upgrade to the wastewater plants, and for sewer separation. Annual debt payments will decline temporarily in 2006 when a \$12 million bond is paid off. This too will allow DPW to address important capital needs.

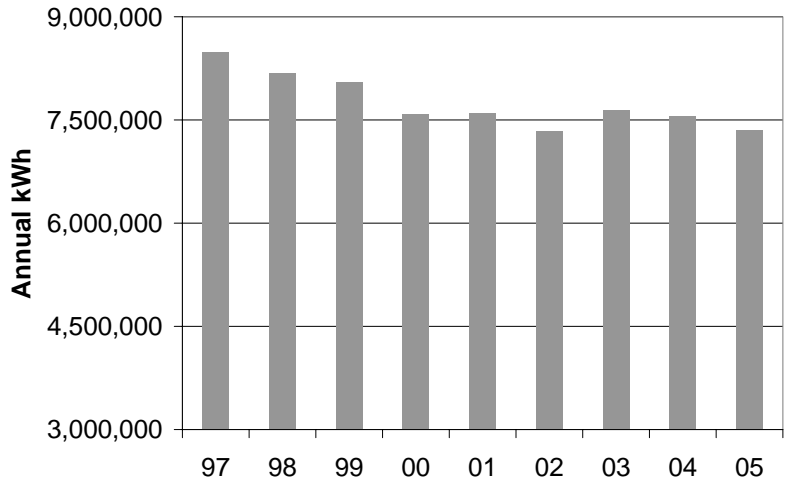
**Phosphorous:** Phosphorus is a pollutant that stimulates excessive algae growth in Lake Champlain causing problems for recreation, water supplies, and the ecological health of the Lake. The State discharge permit regulating Burlington's three wastewater plants limits them to a maximum monthly average of total phosphorus of 0.8 milligrams per liter. As the graph above shows, the Main Plant (by far the largest of the three) has had no violations; is consistently well below the limit; and is improving over time.

In 1996, DPW began using bacteria to "eat" phosphorous instead of treating it with aluminum sulfate. This saves money, removes more phosphorous, and reduces the use of chemicals.

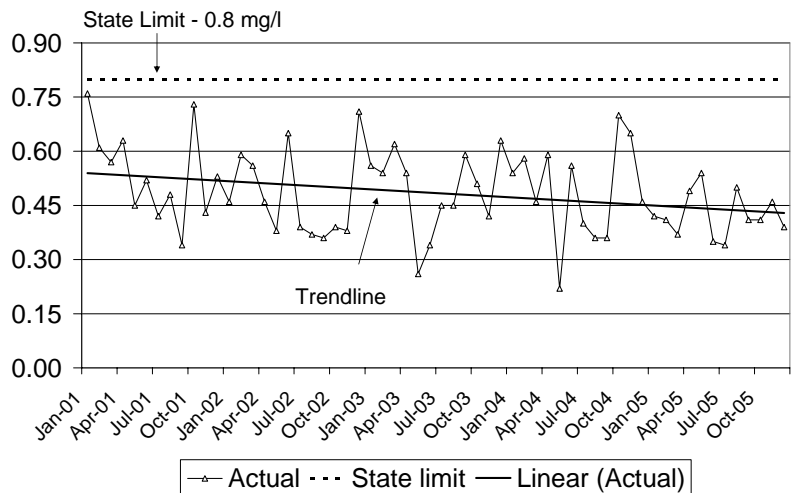
**Turbidity:** Turbidity is a cloudiness of water caused by particles too small to be seen without magnification; much like smoke in air. Fluids can contain particulates of many different sizes. Some suspended material is large enough and heavy enough to settle rapidly to the bottom of a container if a liquid sample is left to stand. But very small particles will settle only very slowly or not at all if the sample is regularly agitated. These small solid particles cause the liquid to appear turbid. Measurement of turbidity is a key test of water quality and Burlington's water meets and exceeds all drinking water standards. To view our annual drinking water quality report go to our website [www.dpw.ci.burlington.vt.us](http://www.dpw.ci.burlington.vt.us).

**Quantity & Quality:** On average, DPW pumped 4.5 million gallons of water per day in FY06 and treated 6.9 million gallons of wastewater and stormwater per day. There were no beach closings this year due to wastewater issues.

**Energy efficiency investments pay dividends  
- 13% drop in electric usage since 1997 -**



**Monthly Average Phosphorous Concentration  
- Main Plant -  
(milligrams per liter - mg/l)**



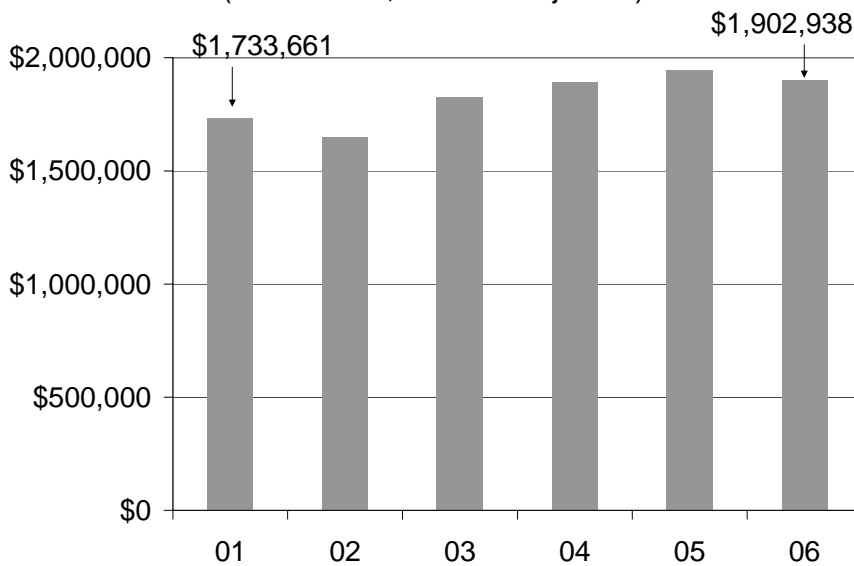
## STREETS & SIDEWALKS

Streets & Sidewalks is responsible for maintaining all road and bridge structures in the City's public right-of-way. This includes salting, sanding and snow plowing, street sweeping, patching potholes, resurfacing streets, utility cut repairs, guardrails, and storm response. The Division also conducts smaller sidewalk and ramp projects funded under the Street Capital Improvement Program (see next page).

There are 120 miles of public streets in Burlington, including seven miles of Class 1 State highways (Routes 2, 7 and 127), and 22 miles of Class 2. The property tax is the primary source of funding for this Division but the City is reimbursed by the state for all maintenance and repairs for Class 1 highways and is eligible for up to 80% matching funds for special projects on Class 2 roads. There are also 200 miles of sidewalks.

Street maintenance is funded by excavation fees, a portion of the dedicated street tax, and the General Fund. Adjusted for inflation, annual expenditures have increased only 10% since 2001.

**Streets & Sidewalks - Annual Expenditures**  
(Fiscal Year; inflation adjusted)



See page 6 for information about snow plowing and street sweeping.

Street and sidewalk maintenance in a densely populated city in the Northeast is as much an art as a science. Variables include weather, population density, the age, and condition of the roads and sidewalks, traffic, parked cars, the number of available staff, the extent of their experience and training, and the quality of the equipment.

Every town faces different challenges and all comparisons should be taken with a grain of salt. Nevertheless, one standard measure of efficiency is the cost of maintenance per road mile.

A 2005 survey of area towns found that Burlington had one of the lowest costs

per road mile of all the towns that responded. It's unwise to draw too many conclusions from this data without more information, but it certainly suggests that Public Works is managing its resources well.

**Road Conditions:** There was considerable public dissatisfaction with the condition of the city's streets in the late '90s. DPW analyzed the problem and found that the overall "Pavement Condition Index" (PCI) was under 70, which is considered failing. [Note: The PCI was developed by the Construction Engineering Research Laboratory of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. PCI is a numerical rating of pavement condition that ranges from 0 to 100, with 0 being the worst possible condition and 100 being the best possible condition.] DPW projected road conditions 20 years out based on various funding options. It was determined that an 8-cent tax increase was necessary to improve the PCI over time but the city council selected the 4-cent option, which was subsequently approved by the voters.

The additional money has been used for increased sidewalk and street repairs (see page 5), but - as expected - program revenues are not enough to keep up with the aging and deteriorating infrastructure. Presently the main roads have an average PCI of 72 and the neighborhood roads a PCI of 53. This reflects DPW's decision to focus on the main roads and tackle as many neighborhood streets as possible with the remaining funds.

The Department's policy is to put the money where the cars are. Since current revenues are not sufficient to meet the demand system wide, repair dollars are allocated using a "triage" philosophy. It's much cheaper to fix a street in decent condition, than to rebuild a fully deteriorated road.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

In 2000, Burlington voters approved a four cent increase in the dedicated tax for long-term street paving and sidewalk replacement. The tax also pays for the local share (2%) of major road projects (e.g., North St., Riverside Ave. and the Southern Connector); capital improvements to the Bikepath and crosswalks; and traffic calming (e.g., speed bumps & signs). The Program is funded from the dedicated street tax (just over 7 cents per \$100 value), plus revenues from excavation fees.

Each year, DPW re-paves an average of about two miles of new pavement. The streets are selected based on the condition of the road and the volume of traffic. Although the funding is consistent, the amount of new pavement varies based on the extent of reconstruction required and the width of the right of way. Repaving was down a bit last year because more money was set aside for the local match on the big projects (North Ave. & Riverside) and because costs have increased due to higher prices for petroleum products.

Portions of the following streets have been repaved since FY03:

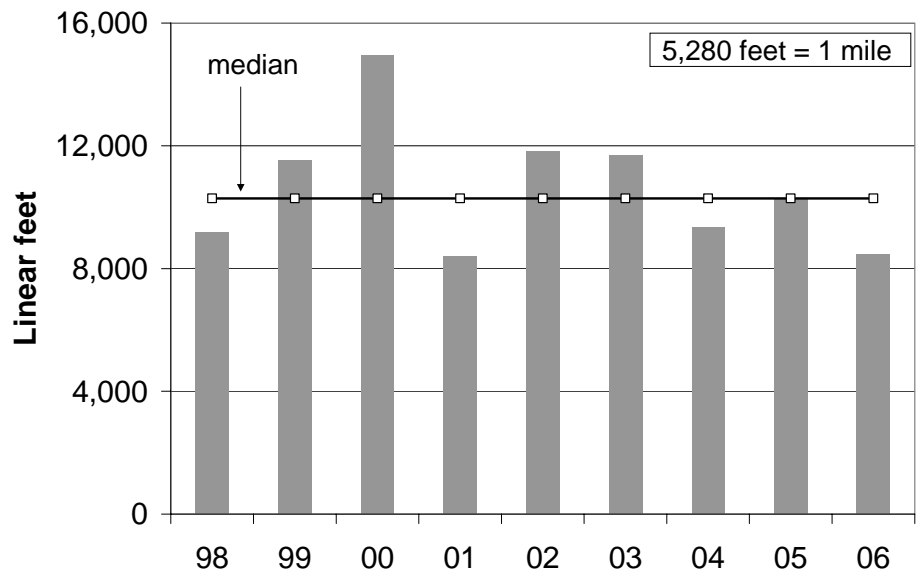
- 03: Flynn, Hayward, Locust, North Prospect, Plattsburg, North Champlain & North Willard
- 04: Crescent, Dodds Ct., Flynn, Elmwood, Intervale, Orchard Terrace, Nash, Pearl & St. Paul
- 05: Cliff, Colchester Ave., Flynn, Crescent, Spruce & S. Winooski
- 06: Beltline, Colchester Ave, College St, Ethan Allen Pkwy, Gazo Ave & James Ave

On average, DPW reconstructs almost 3 miles of sidewalks each year. Generally, the available resources are distributed evenly throughout the city (see below).

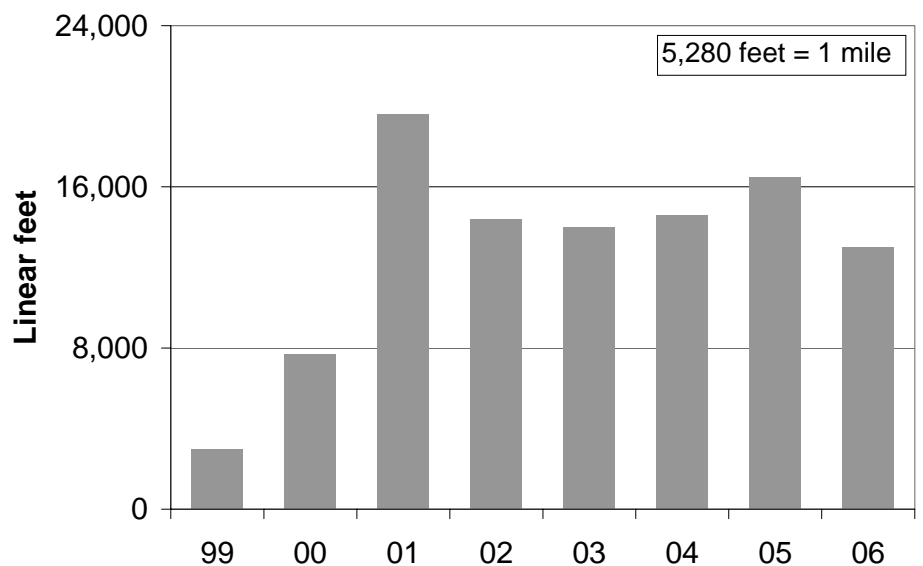
At the current rate, it will take 67 years to replace all 200 miles of our sidewalks. But the new ones are only expected to last 50 years. Thus, the money available from the dedicated tax is not enough to ensure that all the sidewalks are replaced before they exceed their normal lifespan.

Sidewalk replacement	
Ward	Avg. annual expenditure FY02 - FY06
1	\$53,800
2	\$61,600
3	\$70,600
4	\$58,600
5	\$72,800
6	\$68,600
7	\$69,800
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$455,800</b>

**Street Paving Program  
Linear Feet per Fiscal Year**



**Sidewalk Replacement Program  
Linear feet per fiscal year**

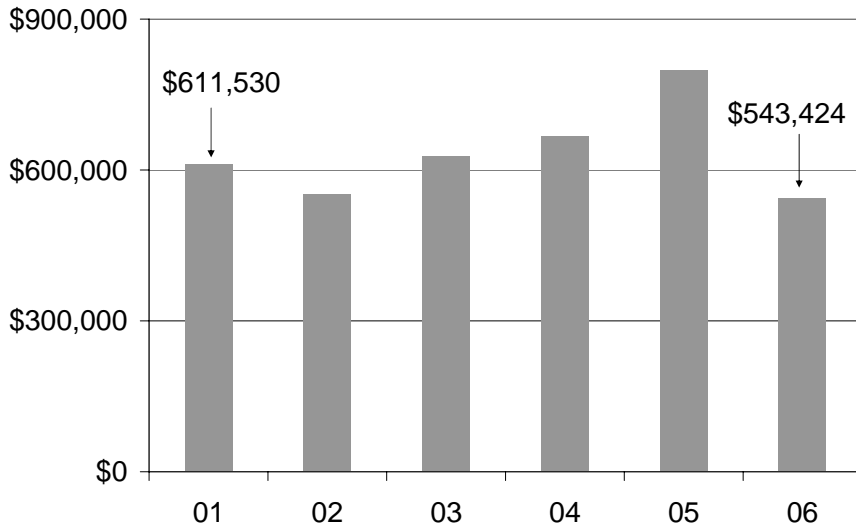


## SNOW PLOWING

DPW's snow plow fleet includes 17 plows and trucks of varying sizes and 10 sidewalk tractors. Even with all this equipment and staff, it takes 5 - 7 hours to plow the streets once (and another 3 hours to salt), 6 - 8 hours to plow sidewalks; 14 - 18 hours to snow blow sidewalks; and 8 - 12 hours to sand sidewalks.

Inflation adjusted expenditures were down 32% from FY05. The decrease was the result of lower maintenance costs; a drop in the use of salt on side streets; and a reduction in overtime due to relatively mild weather.

**Snow Program - Annual Expenditures**  
(Fiscal Year; Inflation adjusted)



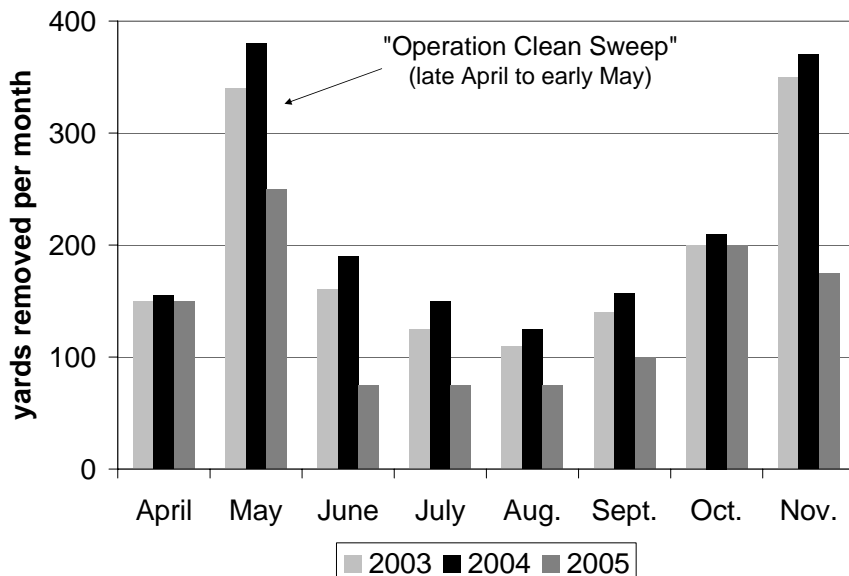
The program is funded primarily with property taxes. We have 39,000 people in Burlington and just over 10,000 taxable properties so the average cost for winter street maintenance was \$14 per person and \$54 per taxable property.

In response to growing expectations by citizens, Burlington has increased its snow plowing activities in recent years. As a result, there is no city of comparable size in New England that spends as much effort on sidewalks as Burlington. DPW has acquired newer and better equipment and has improved the training provided to staff.

## STREET SWEEPING

It is unavoidable that sand, dirt, and other debris accumulate on our streets. If not cleaned, this debris tends to run into Lake Champlain. These sediments contain chemicals from automobiles and yard runoff that pollute that the waters of the Lake. Therefore, street sweeping is not only about quality of life, it is an environmental issue as well.

**Street Sweeping: Yards of Debris Removed**



Street Sweeping occurs on each street approximately three times from June to September, plus Spring and Fall cleanups of heavy debris. Note: There are times when the sweeper doesn't sweep curb to curb because of parked cars that prevent the sweeper from getting to the gutter line and curb where most of the road debris accumulates.

The volume of debris collected is substantial. In 2005, Public Works crews removed approximately 1,100 yards of debris, equal to 1,650 tons of material.

Note: At present, the trucks do not have scales to weigh the debris collected so the figures reported are estimates only.

## PARKING

The Parking division maintains 2,938 parking spaces downtown, including three garages, six surface lots, and on-street metered parking (43% of all downtown parking). An additional 1,303 spaces (19%) are privately owned but open to the public for a portion of the day. The remaining 38% is private.

There are another 350 spaces at the General Dynamics lot on Lakeview. They are managed by CCTA as part of the Park & Ride program for downtown employees. The planned South End Transit Center is moving ahead and the lot will be expanded to 550 spaces.

This division also manages the Airport parking facilities and receives a portion of their revenues.

The maximum daily rate for the city garages is well below local private lots, as well as public garages in other New England cities (see graph at right).

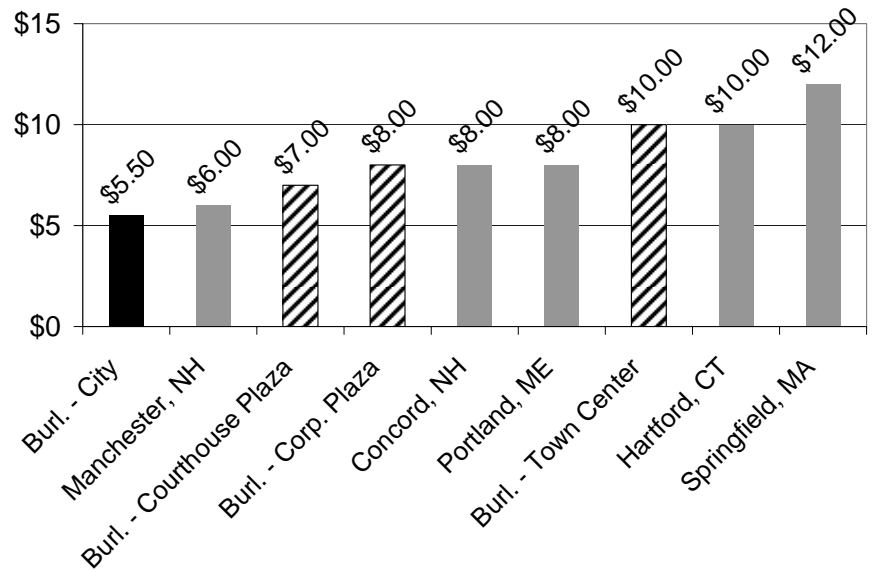
Since 1999, the City has offered free parking for the first two hours in the downtown garages. The program is partly subsidized by downtown merchants and has been very successful: 66% of transient cars park for two hours or less.

DPW continues to analyze downtown parking supply and demand. Downtown parking will be a large part of the City Transportation Plan currently in development. Reducing demand for downtown spaces through more park and ride options (e.g. another park and ride facility to the East), as well as a comprehensive "wayfinding" system directing users to available parking should help solve the problem.

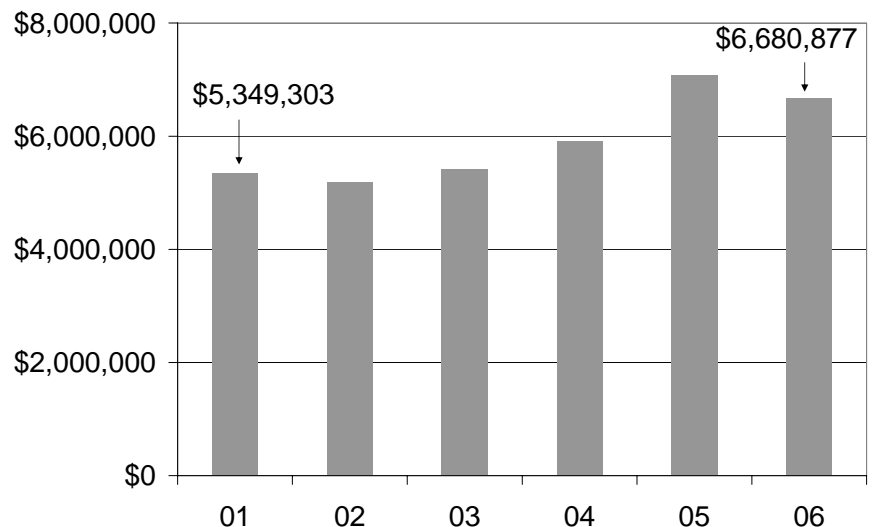
The division is funded entirely from parking revenues and receives no money from property taxes. Inflation adjusted expenditures have increased since 2001 but it reflects higher parking revenues.

Downtown Parking					
Ownership Type	Municipal	Private - open to the public	Private	Totals	
	On street	1,153	0	0	1,153
Surface lots	245	60	1,856	2,161	32%
Garages	1,540	1,243	749	3,532	52%
Totals	2,938	1,303	2,605	6,568	100%
	43%	19%	38%	100%	

### Maximum Daily Garage Rates



### Parking & Traffic Annual Expenditures (Fiscal Year; Inflation adjusted)



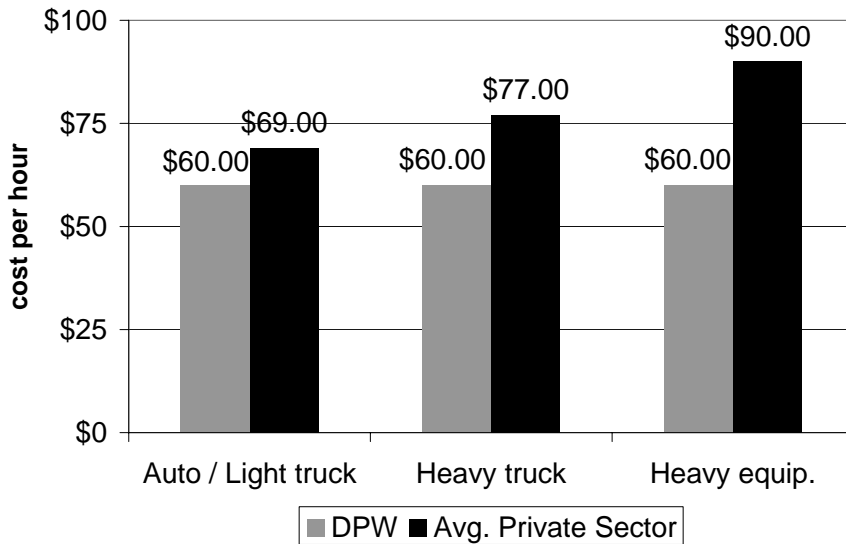
## FLEET SERVICES

Before the Public Works Department was created in 1985, City vehicles were either maintained by individual departments or work was contracted to local garages. Subsequently, the Police, Fire, Parks and Electric Departments all agreed to have Public Works service their vehicles. The Fleet Services group is responsible for the maintenance and repair almost 300 City owned vehicles, 8 emergency facility generators, and 17 outside Fire and Rescue vehicles.

There are several advantages to having a central municipal garage. For example, a municipal operation is not-for-profit and has lower overhead than private garages. As a result, billable rates are lower than the private sector (see graph below) In addition, service personnel are available 24 hours a day, which is critical since many of the vehicles are used by the City's emergency responders.

It's difficult to quantify the savings for city departments that moved vehicle maintenance to DPW because of changes in the number and types of vehicles over time. However, BED estimates that they are saving the equivalent of 1.6 full-time employees every year since the switch and are extremely satisfied with the service.

**Vehicle Repair Rates  
FY 2007**

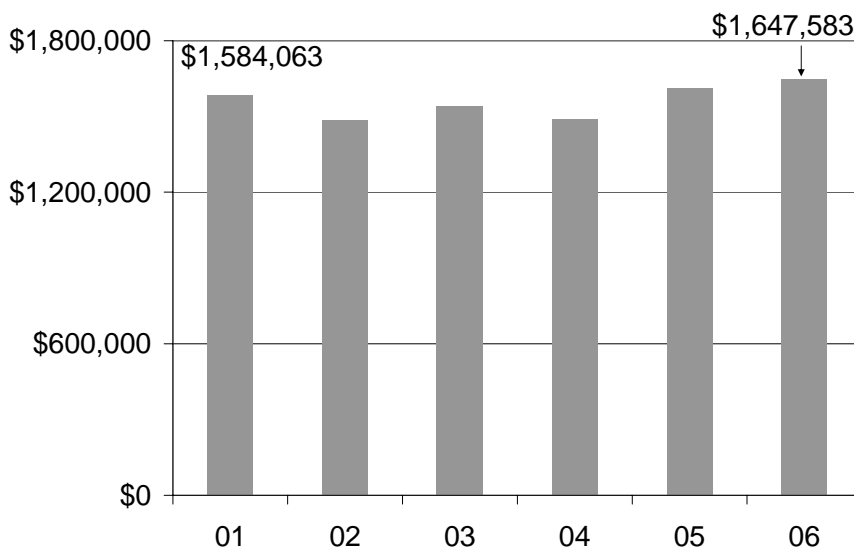


The group also operates the Central Fueling Depot at Pine Street. It provides fuel for all City vehicles. Bulk purchasing saves the City approximately \$0.10 per gallon on fuel -- about \$18,000 per year.

The City Council and the Mayor have recommended converting fleet vehicles to alternative fuels to improve air quality, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and reduce energy dependence.

Although the City's fleet is a small part of the total number of vehicles in Burlington, it uses about 200,000 gallons of gasoline and diesel each year. Thus, the switch to alternative fuels can have a significant impact on the environment.

**Vehicle Maint. Division - Annual Expenditures  
(Fiscal Year; Inflation adjusted)**



DPW is partnering with UVM to construct a fast fill compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling station at Pine Street. The University will purchase up to six transit buses for use in its campus area transportation system. Eighty percent of construction and vehicle purchase costs are federally funded with each partner responsible for the 20% local match. Off peak capacity will be utilized by DPW through acquisition of appropriate CNG vehicles as current equipment comes due for replacement.

Adjusted for inflation, expenditures have been steady and are only 4% higher than five years ago. Thus is especially noteworthy since fuel prices have increased almost 200% since 2001.

## RECYCLING

Public Works began a residential recycling pilot project in 1989. The City joined the Chittenden Solid Waste District (CSWD) in 1990. The City Council made recycling mandatory in 1992 and DPW began municipal collection of residential recyclables in 1993.

DPW's recycling crews make 1,000 to 1,500 stops per day, and the total number of residential units served is over 13,000. Collected materials are transported to the Solid Waste District's Material Recovery Facility in Williston, where they are sorted, baled, and shipped to appropriate markets. Through the blue box program, Burlington residents recycled 3,000 tons of material last year (about 440 pounds per household). Including commercial activity, CSWD estimates that we divert at least 38% of our solid waste to recycling.

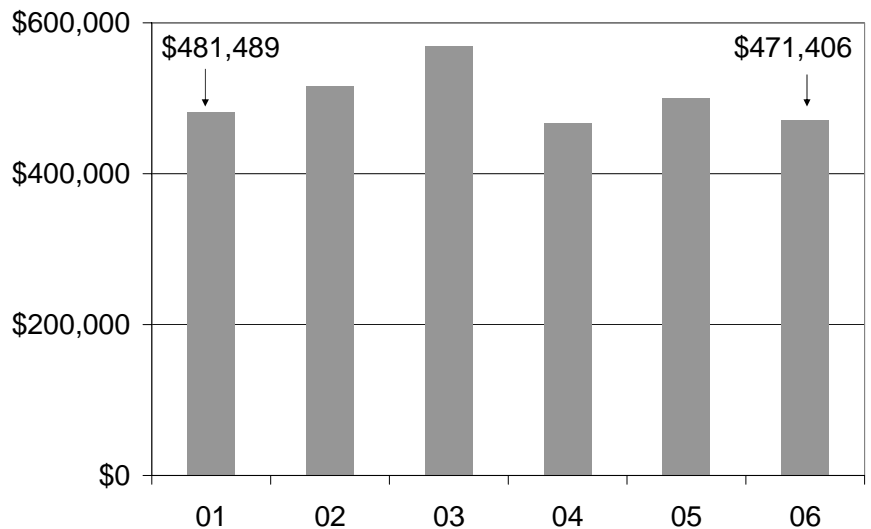
There are enormous economic and societal benefits from recycling. According to the EPA:

- Producing recycled paper requires about 60% of the energy used to make paper from virgin wood pulp.
- Incinerating 10,000 tons of waste creates one job; landfilling 10,000 tons of waste creates six jobs; recycling 10,000 tons of waste creates 36 jobs.
- In 2000, the national recycling rate of 30% saved the equivalent of more than 5 billion gallons of gasoline, reducing dependence on foreign oil by 114 million barrels.

The cost of the recycling program is paid from a Solid Waste Generation Tax assessed to each residential unit within the City. This tax is currently \$3.10 per month per residential unit and is collected for the City by the private trash haulers who pick up your solid waste. Businesses are required to recycle as well but they contract directly with private haulers.

Recycling expenditures grew from FY01 to FY03 for three reasons: 1) the reclassification of several employees who had been "limited service" (grade increases and eligibility for retirement benefits raised annual costs); 2) increasing costs of maintaining old trucks; and 3) a large one-time Worker's Comp payment for an injured worker.

**Recycling Division - Annual Expenditures**  
(Fiscal Year; Inflation adjusted)

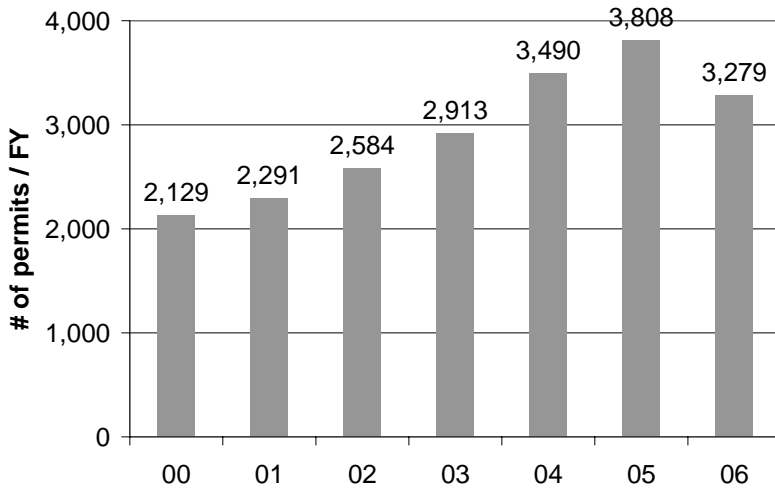


However, the Department made two important strategic changes in FY04 that helped reduce costs. In 2003, the CSWD converted from a "co-mingle" processing system to a single stream ("all in one") recycling system. To accommodate the new system, DPW purchased three new recycling trucks and implemented a more efficient route schedule. The combination of these changes resulted in fewer trips, an increase in tons collected per trip, and a reduction in staff and overtime that produced significant savings. In addition, vehicle maintenance costs declined from the switch to new vehicles. Note: The increase in FY05 is due largely to the lease / purchase payment for the new vehicles and the usual increases in wages and insurance costs.

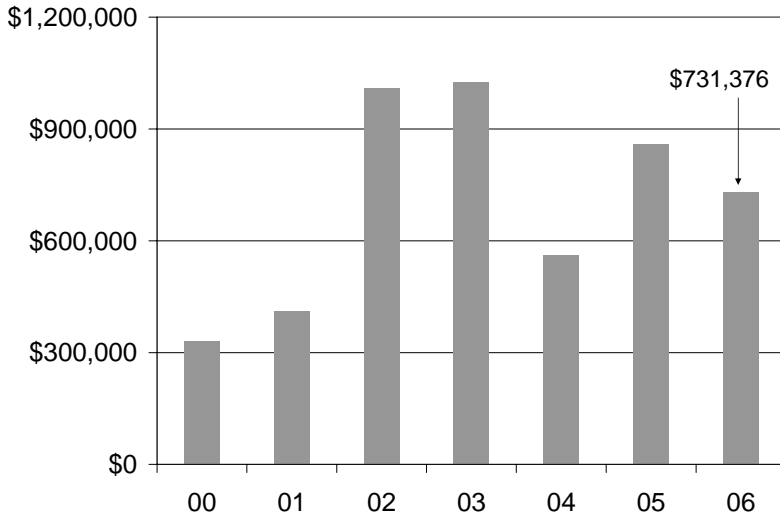
The Recycling program also conducts the Fall leaf pick-up. The compost facility accepts leaves and grass clippings from local residents and landscapers; Ice cream waste from Ben & Jerry's and food scraps from restaurants, supermarkets and food manufacturers; and chicken, cow and horse manure from local farmers and stables. These materials are taken to the regional compost facility in the Intervale and are used by the Intervale Foundation to help produce organic compost for farmers and gardeners. Last year, the Compost Project sold almost 25,000 cubic yards of material, split about evenly between compost and topsoil. Some of this material is used to enrich depleted soil in the Intervale and helps support the expansion of farming and gardening activities. [See <http://www.intervale.org/index.shtml> for more info. on the Intervale Center]

## INSPECTION SERVICES

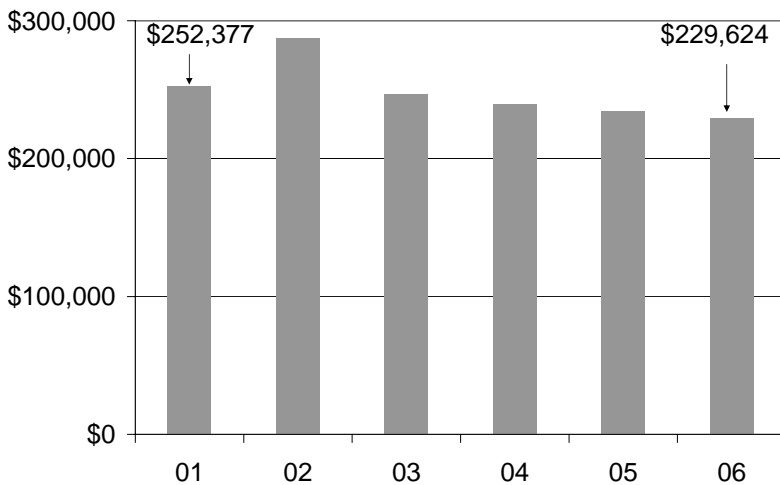
**Number of Trade Permits Issued by DPW**  
(building, plumbing, electrical & HVAC)



**Trades Inspection Fees Collected by DPW**



**Inspection Services - Annual Expenditures**  
(Fiscal Year; Inflation adjusted)



Inspector's issue permits for new buildings, additions, alterations, repairs, demolitions, sprinkler system changes, fire alarms, fire suppression, plumbing, mechanical and electrical systems.

The division is funded with revenues from inspection fees (building, plumbing, electrical & HVAC). There are only 3 inspectors and, as the chart at left illustrates, their workload has increased significantly. The number of inspections increased 79% from FY00 to FY05, but declined somewhat last year. The growth in demand was largely the result of development at Fletcher Allen, UVM, Champlain College, and on the Waterfront.

A typical single family home project usually involves three appointments: a visit, a rough inspection, and a final inspection. But the large projects have hundreds of personnel working non-stop for years, which requires time on site by the inspectors virtually every week for the duration of the project.

Fees are based on the cost of a project and are currently \$7.00 per \$1,000 of value. The fee was raised from \$6 to \$7 in 2004. Prior to that, the fee had not been raised since 1984.

As the chart at left shows, revenue varies considerably from year to year. Although revenues appear to exceed expenditures, there are a number of related services for which there is no direct revenue source (e.g., staff and attorney's time for enforcement). If not for the "excess" fee revenues, these activities would require additional property tax funds.

Moreover, since the cost of employee benefits for the non-revenue divisions is paid by general city funds, these occasional surpluses from revenue divisions help offset the need for property tax contributions.

Notwithstanding increased demand for services, inflation adjusted expenditures for this division are actually lower today than in FY01.

## ENGINEERING

Engineering provides technical support for major capital projects and Development Review, design and engineering services for Water and Wastewater, performs traffic studies, manages traffic calming projects, and staffs various committees. The current major capital improvement projects are described below.

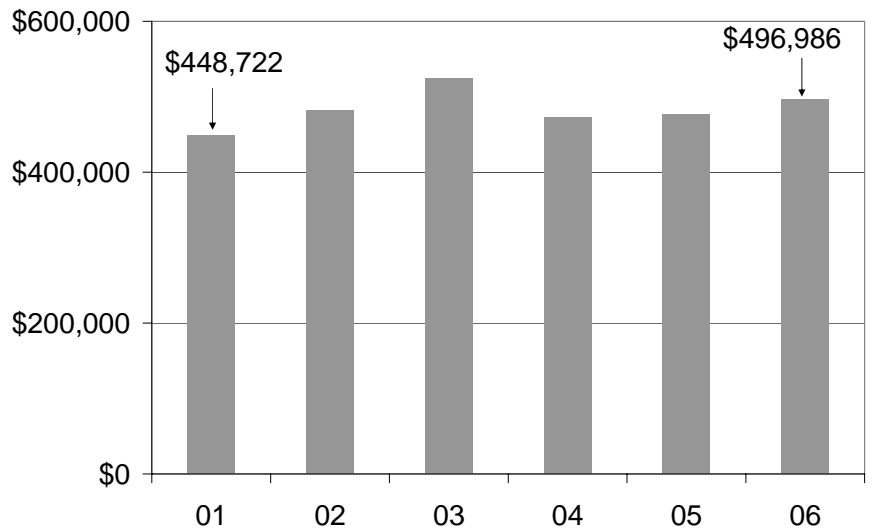
Southern Connector: Beginning next year, the existing section (I-189 to Home Ave.) will be upgraded and construction will begin on the second section (Home Ave. to Lakeside Ave.). The design for the final section (Lakeside Ave. to Battery St.) has not been finalized but discussions continue.

Riverside Avenue (N. Winooski Ave. to Colchester Ave.): The long awaited reconstruction of Riverside Ave. is finally nearing completion. The schedule calls for the sidewalks and curbs to be completed this year, along with the removal of the overhead utility poles and wires. Landscaping and a final paving layer will be done in 2007.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan: With help from the Metropolitan Planning Organization, DPW has begun this year-long process. It will include priorities for a 5 year capital investment plan, street design guidelines, and consideration of amenities to enhance the mass transit system. The plan will incorporate the goals and objectives of the City's Legacy Plan, and the Alliance for Climate Action. There will be many opportunities for public input at a series of public meetings in each Ward.

Engineering is supported by funds from the various projects and divisions it serves. Recent variances in expenditures reflect shifts in staff allocation within DPW.

**Engineering Division - Annual Expenditures**  
(Fiscal Year; Inflation adjusted)



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