

COUNTY OF MILWAUKEE
Inter-office Communication

Date: 04/22/2026

To: Marcelia Nicholson-Bovell, Chairwoman, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors

From: Joseph Lamers, Director, Department of Transportation

Subject: From the Director, Department of Transportation, requesting approval to Abolish 1.36 FTE Highway Maintenance Worker II Position (representing one Full Time Highway Maintenance Worker II position and one Highway Maintenance Worker II Temporary Assignment) pay grade NR20 and Create One Full-Time Electrical Mechanic DOT position, pay grade BT26 (Cost-Neutral).

File Type: Action Report

BACKGROUND

The department currently employs three Electrical Mechanics, all of whom are eligible for retirement. These employees maintain critical electrical infrastructure, including roadway lighting systems, traffic signals, facility electrical components, and essential operational electrical assets.

Given this situation, the department must implement immediate succession planning to prevent significant operational risk. Creating a new Electrical Mechanic DOT position at this time allows for:

- Structured knowledge transfer from highly experienced employees
- Continued maintenance and reliability of essential electrical systems
- Reduced future reliance on outside contractors, which cost significantly more
- Preservation of system integrity during retirements or unexpected staffing transitions

The Highway Department is committed to maintaining service levels while remaining fiscally responsible. By reallocating existing budgeted salary through the elimination of 1.36 HMW positions, the creation of an additional Electrical Mechanic DOT position results in no net tax-levy impact. It is our intention that once retirement happens by one or more Electrical Mechanics we will abolish the additional position and restore the 1.36 Highway Maintenance Worker positions.

REQUEST:

The Milwaukee County Highway Department respectfully requests authorization to:

1. Abolish
 - o One Full-Time Highway Maintenance Worker (HMW) position
 - o One Temporary Assignment HMW position (6-month duration)
Hourly range for both: \$23.92–\$35.88
 - o These equal 1.36 Highway Maintenance Worker II positions.
2. Create
 - o One Full-Time Electrical Mechanic DOT position
Hourly rate: \$46.50

This proposal is cost-neutral, achieved by eliminating two HMW positions that have historically been budgeted at the upper end of the pay range. The salary savings generated from these positions fully offsets the cost of creating the Electrical Mechanic DOT role.

FISCAL EFFECT

(Cost-Neutral) Assumptions:

- 1.36 FTE Highway Maintenance Worker II Positions
- It is anticipated that the position will be filled at the end of 2026.

Annual Salary Comparison

Abolished Positions	Pay Grade	Hourly Wage	Annual Salary
1.36 Highway Maintenance Worker (Full-Time)	NR20	35.88	\$111,945
This represents a Highway Maintenance Worker II and a Highway Maintenance Worker II Temporary Assignment			
Total Savings of Eliminated Positions Wages			\$111,945

Created Position	Pay Grade	Hourly Wage	Annual Salary
Electrical Mechanic DOT	BT26	\$46.50	\$96,720
Total Cost of Created Position Wages			\$96,720

POLICY

Wisconsin State Statutes:	59.17
Milwaukee County Code of General Ordinances:	17.05 (1)
Administrative Manual of Operating Procedures:	3.07 Position Change Requests

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN

1A: Reflect the full diversity of the County at every level of County government

3B: Enhance the County's fiscal health and sustainability

RECOMMENDATION

The Milwaukee County Highway Department recommends approval of this temporary cost-neutral staffing abolish/create action. This action ensures continuity of essential electrical maintenance operations and prevents operational risk associated with the pending retirements of all existing Electrical Mechanics.

This proposal reflects responsible financial management while addressing a critical workforce and infrastructure need and taking into consideration the length of time that it may take to recruit and fill this position.

VIRTUAL MEETING INVITES

Joe Lamers, Director, MCDOT

John Rodgers, Deputy Director, MCDOT

Eduardo Santiago, Highway Director and Commissioner, MCDOT- Highway

PREPARED BY:

Eduardo Santiago, Highway Director and Commissioner, MCDOT- Highway

APPROVED BY:



Joe Lamers, Director, Department of Transportation

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

Fiscal Note

Job Evaluation Questionnaire

OSBP Report

DHR Report

cc: Kelly Bablitch, Chief of Staff, Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors Janelle M. Jensen,
Legislative Services Division Manager, Office of the County Clerk