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City Council builds a cleaner, greener and more transit-friendly Toronto with an approved Five-Year Capital Plan

Toronto's transit, transportation and the environment are the focus of the City's Capital Budget spending for the next five years. Today Toronto City Council approved their first Five Year Capital Plan of \$6.7 billion with two-thirds of the budget focused on improving city transit and transportation infrastructure.

"Fifty per cent of the 2007 Capital Budget is for the TTC, which is not sustainable without long-term federal and provincial funding for transit infrastructure," said Mayor David Miller. "We need a national transit strategy."

The City's Five-Year Capital Plan addresses the state of good repair capital requirements within debt affordability guidelines and limits the growth in infrastructure repair backlog. State of good repair spending will average \$1 billion each year from 2007 to 2011.

"Financing the City's 2007 Capital Budget and 2008 – 2011 Capital Plan continues to be a major challenge," stated Councillor Shelley Carroll, Chair of the City's Budget Committee. "However, I'm proud that this Capital Plan includes much-needed investment in transit and infrastructure. It will help make Toronto a better city."

The approved 2007 Capital Budget and 2008 – 2011 Capital Plan focuses on the City's health and safety, legislated, and state of good repair capital spending needs. Of the \$1.432 billion 2007 Capital budget, about 75% or \$1.074 billion is targeted to these three categories of projects.

"Included in the five-year Capital Plan are investments in projects that contribute to the Mayor's priorities of making Toronto a safer, cleaner, greener and beautiful city with transit strategic directions that are in accordance with Council's official plan," said City Manager Shirley Hoy.

While the 2007 Capital Budget's major focus is on infrastructure maintenance, there is limited investment to fulfill the priority service demands of a growing Toronto population. Capital Budget improvements for a greener tomorrow include, new light rail vehicles and buses, energy-use reductions project for City buildings, and investing in trails and parkland.

"We are balancing our affordable debt limits against the maintenance of City assets," added Joe Pennachetti, Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer. "However, without sustained new sources of funding, our debt burden will continue to rise and we will be unable to provide the needed new services or facilities to meet growth demands of city residents and businesses."

Toronto is Canada's largest city and sixth largest government, and home to a diverse population of more than 2.6 million people. It is the economic engine of Canada and one of the greenest and most creative cities in North America. In the past three years Toronto has won more than 50 awards for quality and innovation in delivering public services. Toronto's government is dedicated to prosperity, opportunity and liveability for all its residents.

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