

2021 Budget Notes



Budget submissions from the Accountability Officers (Auditor General, Integrity Commissioner, Lobbyist Registrar and Ombudsman) have not been the subject of an administrative review and have not been submitted to the City Manager or Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer for review, approval or recommendation prior to submission to the Budget Committee as set out in Chapter 3 of the Toronto Municipal Code, "Accountability Officers."

While we aim to provide fully accessible content, there is no text alternative available for some of the content within these pages. If you require alternate formats or need assistance understanding our charts, graphs, or any other content, please contact us at 416-392-7062 or ombudsman@toronto.ca.

Description

Mandated by provincial legislation (the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*), Ombudsman Toronto is an independent and effective voice for fairness, accountability and transparency at the City of Toronto. We hold the City government accountable to the people it serves. We identify problems, find practical solutions and make recommendations for how the City can improve.

We:

- listen to the public's complaints about City services and administration and identify areas of concern
- investigate by asking questions, gathering information and analyzing evidence
- explore ways to resolve individual cases without taking sides, while also considering broad systemic issues
- shine a light on problems, recommend system improvements, and show staff and the public what fair service requires

Why We Do It

Part of the City's mandatory accountability framework, Ombudsman Toronto serves as a bridge between people and their municipal government. We work to ensure that the City (and almost all its agencies, corporations and boards) treat people fairly in how they deliver services. We also humanize the City government for people whose dealings with it have left them feeling mistreated or alienated. Our work helps to increase people's trust and confidence in their City. In short, the work we do makes Toronto better and provides an essential, legally-mandated service to ensure transparency, accountability and fairness in how the City administration operates.

What Service We Provide

Who We Serve: The Public, City Staff and City Council

What We Deliver:

- An impartial, confidential, and accessible place for members of the public to make a complaint about unfair treatment by City of Toronto services and administration
- Expert investigative work to find fair resolutions, call out systemic unfairness, and make recommendations based on evidence

- Consultations with City staff to provide guidance and help improve service to the public
- Outreach to the public, City staff and City Council to educate on the role of Ombudsman Toronto and the importance of fairness across all City services and operations

How Much Resources (gross operating budget recommended for 2021):

- \$2.271 million

Budget at a Glance

2021 OPERATING BUDGET				2021 - 2030 10-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN			
\$Million	2021	2022	2023	\$Million	2021	2022-2030	Total
Revenues	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0	Gross Expenditures	\$0.0	\$0.7	\$0.7
Gross Expenditures	\$2.3	\$2.3	\$2.3	Debt	\$0.0	\$0.7	\$0.7
Net Expenditures	\$2.3	\$2.3	\$2.3	Note: Includes 2020 carry forward funding to 2021			
Approved Positions	14.0	14.0	14.0				

How Well We Are Doing – Behind the Numbers

Performance measures	Behind the numbers
<p>In 2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We handled 2,447 cases*, including 252 complaints directly related to COVID-19 and 10 COVID-related OT concerns. • We made 11 formal recommendations (and countless informal ones) to improve City services. • We conducted 13 Consultations with City staff. These included providing guidance on how to deliver services and communicate fairly and equitably during the pandemic. We are also lending our administrative fairness expertise to the City’s work on police reform. • We held over 100 Outreach sessions with the public, City staff and elected officials. <p>*Projected number to year end, as of November 15, 2020</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of cases we handled in 2020 is up 5.5% from 2019. • Our recommendations make the City work more fairly for everyone. • We help City staff design better systems and processes and teach them and the public what fair service requires. • Our outreach helps ensure that members of the public know about us when they need us, and that City staff and elected officials know what we do and how we work.

How Well We Are Doing

Service	Service Measure	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Target	2020 Projection	2021 Target	2022 Target	Status
Outcome Measures								
Handling more and more complaints	We will continue to work to handle an ever-increasing number of complaints from the public effectively and quickly	2,125 cases	2,358 cases	N/A	2,447 cases	Continued increase expected	Continued increase expected	●
Responding to increasing case complexity	Despite complaints becoming increasingly complex, we are closing cases more quickly thanks to more staff and better processes. However, if case complexity continues to rise, we may see another increase in case duration.	59% closed within 7 days; 87% within 30 days	31.5% closed within 7 days; 75% within 30 days	Expected reduction in case duration	52% closed within 7 days; 85% closed within 30 days	Cases continue to be more complex and may take longer	Cases continue to be more complex and may take longer	●
Providing more consultations to City staff	Consultations with City staff to ensure new policies, processes and services consider administrative fairness	10	15	N/A	13	N/A	N/A	●
Providing more education to the public, City staff and City Council	Educational presentations to ensure stakeholders know about our services and understand our role	23	36	45	45	50	50	●
Service Level Measures								
Addressing complaints and concerns as quickly as possible; working to return to previous service standards	In 2019, we had to reduce our service standards (how quickly we get back to people). We are working to be able to revert to the previous ones as soon as possible (the pandemic has made this more difficult).	1 business day for calls; 2 for emails and letters	2 business days for calls; 5 for emails and letters	1 business day for calls; 2 for emails and letters	2 business days for calls; 5 business days for emails	1 business day for calls; 2 for emails and letters	1 business day for calls; 2 for emails and letters	●

COVID-19 IMPACT AND RECOVERY

2020 Impact	2021 Impact and Recovery
Financial Impact (Operating) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower spending in investigative expenses. Savings were used to hire temporary staff as the most cost-effective way to undertake necessary casework. 	Financial Impact (Operating) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no incremental costs expected in 2021 related to COVID-19. Ombudsman Toronto will continue to use existing resources and reallocate them to address emerging priorities during the pandemic.
Financial Impact (Capital) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	Financial Impact (Capital) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A
Service Level Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff transitioned seamlessly to working remotely as soon as the pandemic began, and continue to do so without any reduction in service to the public. Staff are remaining connected and informed through weekly team-wide analysis of complaints. We are constantly adopting new ways to be nimble and efficient, including by delivering outreach presentations virtually. 	Service Level Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are well-positioned to continue delivering effective and timely service whether working from home or in the office.

EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

Our Experience and Success

Our Numbers

In 2020:

- We handled **2,447 cases** in 2020 (compared to 2,358 in 2019 and 2,125 in 2018)
- We handled **252 complaints directly related to COVID-19** and **10 COVID-related OT concerns**
- We made **11 formal recommendations** (and countless informal ones) to improve City services
- We conducted **13 Consultations** with City staff
- We held **over 100 outreach sessions** with the public, City staff and elected officials

Our Actions

- The challenges the people of Toronto face are becoming increasingly more complex. COVID-19 has highlighted, magnified and increased them. By quickly adapting to the changing realities of the pandemic without any reduction in service to the public, we were able to respond quickly and effectively to COVID-19-related and other complaints, which **helped the public weather the impacts of the pandemic**.
- Through Consultations with City staff, we **provided guidance on how the City could adapt in order to continue delivering services fairly and equitably during the pandemic**.
- We **continued to modernize and refine our operations to improve service effectiveness and efficiency**, including:
 - An organizational restructuring, including the creation of a Deputy Ombudsman role (within the existing budget), to ensure office stability and professional and operational continuity
 - Cross-training staff to build operational capacity
 - Reviewing and refining our case management system and business processes.

Because of Ombudsman Toronto

In 2020:

- Shelter Support and Housing Administration improved its reporting and analysis of data related to services for those experiencing homelessness.
- Revenue Services clarified its public messaging for people with questions about their property tax account during the pandemic and moved up resuming services at the Revenue Services Call Centre for people wishing to escalate their questions and concerns.
- Toronto Public Health improved its communication by directing the public through its webpage to the most current available provincial information about COVID-19 outbreaks in Toronto's long-term care homes.
- Court Services improved its public messaging about how people could challenge tickets they got during the COVID-19 State of Emergency.
- The City is working to improve fairness and transparency of their third-party liability claims process for basement floods and sewer backups.
- The TTC took steps to improve training for staff when interacting with customers experiencing mental health challenges.
- TCHC improved its processes to ensure fair workplace investigations and apologized to employees they had treated unfairly, committing to a new and improved workplace culture.
- The City implemented an ongoing review of its pandemic-related communications to the public, to ensure clarity and effectiveness of message.

Key Challenges and Risks

- The **volume of complaints we receive continues to rise** (5.5% increase in 2020; 9.1% increase in 2019; 29.1% increase in 2018).
- **The complexity of cases also continues to increase**, which the pandemic has further contributed to.
- The pandemic has created and highlighted **challenges which are most acute for the most vulnerable people** in Toronto. Our services are especially vital for these communities.
- Despite being thoughtful about how to use our limited resources, we often find ourselves **without the necessary resources to do the important work of identifying issues without a complaint and proactive consultation with City staff**.
- While we have been closing cases more quickly thanks to more staff and new processes, **case duration may increase again if the complexity of cases continues to rise**.

Priority Actions

- **Listen to and resolve the public's complaints** as effectively and as quickly as possible
- **Identify and address systemic issues** in how the City serves people
- **Consult with City staff** to help build fair systems and service and to show them what equitable service requires
- **Continue expanding our outreach** to the public and City staff to inform them of our role and services

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Ombudsman recommends that:

1. City Council approve the 2021 Operating Budget for Ombudsman Toronto of \$2.271 million gross and net:

	Gross Expenditures (\$000s)	Revenue (\$000s)	Net Expenditures (\$000s)
Total Office Budget	2,271.3	0.0	2,271.3

2. City Council approve the 2021 staff complement for Ombudsman Toronto of 14.0 positions.
3. City Council approve the 2022-2030 Capital Plan for Ombudsman Toronto totalling \$0.700 million in project estimates as detailed by project in Appendix 6b.

Ombudsman Toronto

Susan E. Opler

Ombudsman

Tel: (416) 392-7061

Email: Susan.Opler@toronto.ca

2021 OMBUDSMAN - RECOMMENDED OPERATING BUDGET

2021 OPERATING BUDGET OVERVIEW

Table 1: 2021 Operating Budget

(In \$000s)	2019 Actual	2020 Budget	2020 Projection*	2021 Base Budget	2021 New / Enhanced Requests	2021 Budget	Change v. 2020 Projection	
By Service	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Revenues								
Ombudsman Toronto								
Total Revenues								
Expenditures								
Ombudsman Toronto	1,953.0	2,195.7	2,195.7	2,271.3		2,271.3	75.6	3.4%
Total Gross Expenditures	1,953.0	2,195.7	2,195.7	2,271.3		2,271.3	75.6	3.4%
Net Expenditures	1,953.0	2,195.7	2,195.7	2,271.3		2,271.3	75.6	3.4%
Approved Positions	12.0	14.0	14.0	14.0		14.0		

*2020 Projection based on Q3 Variance Report

COSTS TO MAINTAIN EXISTING SERVICES

Total 2021 Base Budget of \$2.271 million gross and net reflecting an increase of \$0.076 million in spending above 2020 projected year-end actuals (prior to enhancements or efficiencies), predominantly arising from:

- Salary & benefit adjustments related to benefit adjustment and realignment of budget to actual.
- Increase in computer software maintenance budget to reflect actual requirements in 2021.
- Increase in contribution to Insurance Reserve Fund.
- Economic factor adjustment for non-payroll items.

EQUITY IMPACTS OF BUDGET CHANGES

No significant equity impacts: The changes in Ombudsman Toronto's 2021 Operating Budget do not have any significant equity impacts.

2021 OPERATING BUDGET KEY DRIVERS

The 2021 Operating Base Budget for Ombudsman Toronto is \$2.271 million gross or 3.4% higher than the 2020 Projected Actuals. Table 2 below summarizes the key cost drivers for the base budget.

Table 2: 2021 Key Drivers – Base Budget

Key Cost Drivers	2019 Actuals**	2020 Budget	2020 Projection*	2021 Base Budget	Change Vs. 2020 Projection	
					\$	%
Expenditures						
1 Salaries and Benefits	1,827.3	1,919.2	2,041.6	1,980.3	(61.3)	-3.0%
2 Materials and Supplies	7.4	5.3	6.2	5.4	(0.9)	-14.3%
3 Equipment	23.8	4.5	7.7	4.6	(3.2)	-40.9%
4 Service and Rent	84.6	256.4	129.8	267.5	137.8	106.2%
5 Contribution To Capital						
6 Contribution To Reserves	9.9	10.4	10.4	13.5	3.2	30.6%
Total Expenditures	1,953.0	2,195.7	2,195.7	2,271.3	75.6	3.4%
Revenues						
1 Provincial Subsidies						
2 User Fees & Donations						
3 Draw from Reserve Funds						
4 Other Revenues (Inc. IDR's)						
Total Revenues						
Net Expenditures	1,953.0	2,195.7	2,195.7	2,271.3	75.6	3.4%
Approved Positions	12.0	14.0	14.0	14.0		

*2020 Projection based on Q3 Variance Report

** 2019 Actuals adjusted retroactively to remove interdepartmental charges and recoveries

Salaries & Benefits:

- Temporary staff were hired in 2020 as the most cost-effective way to undertake necessary casework. The cost of these temporary staff is reversed in 2021 to align with the 2020 investigative expenses budget in the Services & Rents category. This cost reversal is offset by salary & benefit budget pressures related to permanent staff's benefit adjustments and realignment of budget to actual.

Services and Rent:

- Increase due to lower spending in investigative expenses in 2020. The 2021 budget reflects anticipated needs of the office, which may require unknown specialized investigative skills and/or services.
- Economic factor adjustments.

Contribution to Reserves:

- Increase in contribution to Insurance Reserve Fund.

Note:

1. For additional information on 2021 key cost drivers refer to [Appendix 2](#).

2022 & 2023 OUTLOOKS**Table 3: 2022 and 2023 Outlooks**

(\$000s)	2020 Projection*	2021 Budget	2022 Outlook	2023 Outlook
Revenues				
Gross Expenditures	2,195.7	2,271.3	2,275.7	2,284.6
Net Expenditures	2,195.7	2,271.3	2,275.7	2,284.6
Approved Positions	14.0	14.0	14.0	14.0

*2020 Projection based on Q3 Variance Report

Key drivers

The 2022 Outlook with total gross expenditures of \$2.276 million reflects an anticipated \$0.004 million or 0.19% increase in gross expenditures above the 2021 Operating Budget; The 2023 Outlook expects a further increase of \$0.009 million or 0.4% above 2022 gross expenditures.

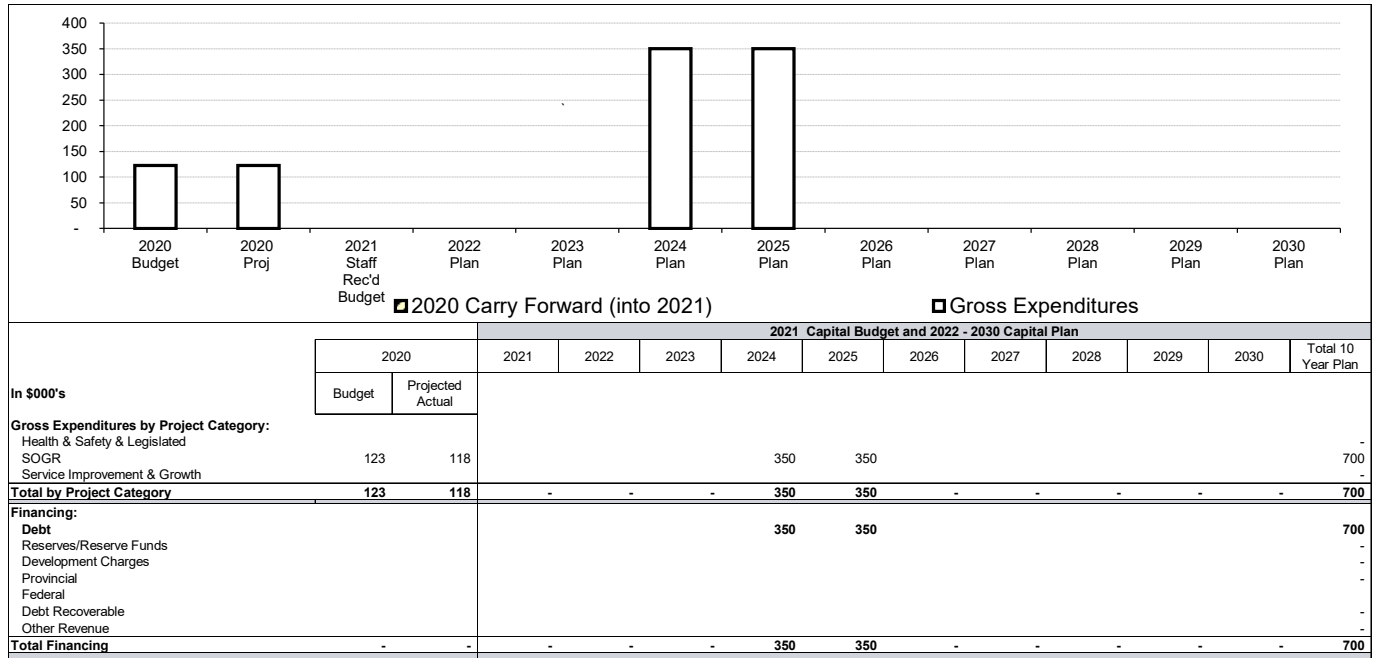
These changes arise from the following:

- Benefit rate adjustments
- Economic factor adjustments for non-payroll items

2021 – 2030 OMBUDSMAN -
RECOMMENDED
CAPITAL BUDGET AND PLAN

2021 – 2030 CAPITAL BUDGET & PLAN OVERVIEW

Chart 1: 10-Year Capital Plan Overview
(\$'000)



Changes to Existing Projects
(\$0.0 Million)

New Projects
(\$0.7 Million)

- *Ombudsman Toronto Case Management System SOGR* project is an end of life replacement and upgrade of the system to meet corporate and industry standards and allow for added functionalities using new technology. The system will support the Office in fulfilling its legislative mandate.


Capital Needs Constraints
(\$0.0 Million)

Note:

For additional information, refer to [Appendix 6](#) for a more detailed listing of the 2021 and 2022-2030 Capital Budget & Plan by project.

2021 – 2030 CAPITAL BUDGET AND PLAN

\$0.7 Million 10-Year Gross Capital Program


Information Technology
\$0.7 M 100%
<i>Ombudsman Toronto Case Management System SOGR</i>

How the Capital Program is Funded

City of Toronto		Provincial Funding	Federal Funding
\$0.7 M 100%		\$0.0 M 0%	\$0.0 M 0%
Debt	\$ 0.7 M		

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

COVID-19 Financial Impact - Operating

N/A

Appendix 2

2021 Operating Budget by Revenue / Expenditure Category

Category (In \$000s)	2018	2019	2020	2020	2021 Total Ombudsman Budget	2021 Change from	
	Actual**	Actual**	Budget	Projection*		2020 Projected	Actual
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Provincial Subsidies							
Federal Subsidies							
Other Subsidies							
User Fees & Donations							
Licences & Permits Revenue							
Transfers From Capital							
Contribution From Reserves/Reserve Funds							
Sundry and Other Revenues	4.8						
Inter-Divisional Recoveries							
Total Revenues	4.8						
Salaries and Benefits	1,697.9	1,827.3	1,919.2	2,041.6	1,980.3	(61.3)	(3.0%)
Materials & Supplies	9.9	7.4	5.3	6.2	5.4	(0.9)	(14.3%)
Equipment	43.8	23.8	4.5	7.7	4.6	(3.2)	(40.9%)
Service and Rent	94.4	84.6	256.4	129.8	267.5	137.8	106.2%
Contribution To Capital							
Contribution To Reserves/Reserve Funds	2.2	9.9	10.4	10.4	13.5	3.2	30.6%
Other Expenditures							
Inter-Divisional Charges							
Total Gross Expenditures	1,848.3	1,953.0	2,195.7	2,195.7	2,271.3	75.6	3.4%
Net Expenditures	1,843.4	1,953.0	2,195.7	2,195.7	2,271.3	75.6	3.4%
Approved Positions	12.0	12.0	14.0	14.0	14.0		

* Year-End Projection Based on Q3 2020 Variance Report

** Prior Year Actuals adjusted retroactively to remove interdepartmental charges and recoveries

Appendix 3

Summary of 2021 Service Changes

N/A

Appendix 4

Summary of 2021 New / Enhanced Service Priorities Included in Budget

N/A

Appendix 5

Summary of 2021 New / Enhanced Service Priorities Not Included in Budget

N/A

Appendix 6

2021 Capital Budget; 2022 - 2030 Capital Plan Including Carry Forward Funding

Project Code	(In \$000s)	2021 Budget	2022 Plan	2023 Plan	2024 Plan	2025 Plan	2026 Plan	2027 Plan	2028 Plan	2029 Plan	2030 Plan	2021 - 2030 Total	Health & Safety & Legislated	SOGR	Growth & Improved Service
OM001	Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR				350	350						700		700	
	Total Expenditures (including carry forward from 2020)				350	350						700		700	

Appendix 6a

2021 Cash Flow and Future Year Commitments Including Carry Forward Funding

N/A

Appendix 6b

2022 - 2030 Capital Plan

Project Code	(In \$000s)	2022 Plan	2023 Plan	2024 Plan	2025 Plan	2026 Plan	2027 Plan	2028 Plan	2029 Plan	2030 Plan	2022-2030 Total	Health & Safety & Legislated	SOGR	Growth & Improved Service
OM001	<i>Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR</i>			350	350						700		700	
	Total Expenditures			350	350						700		700	

Appendix 7

Reporting on Major Capital Projects: Status Update

N/A

Appendix 8

Summary of Capital Needs Constraints

(In \$ Millions)

N/A

Appendix 9

2021 User Fee Changes

(Excludes User Fees Adjusted for Inflation)

Table 9a - New User Fees

N/A

Table 9b – Fees Above Inflation

N/A

Table 9c - User Fees for Discontinuation

N/A

Table 9d - User Fees for Technical Adjustments

N/A

Table 9e - User Fees for Transfers

N/A

Table 9f - User Fees for Rationalization

N/A

Appendix 10

Inflows and Outflows to/from Reserves and Reserve Funds

2021 Operating Budget

Corporate Reserve / Reserve Funds

Reserve / Reserve Fund Name (In \$000s)	Reserve / Reserve Fund Number	Withdrawals (-) / Contributions (+)		
		2021	2022	2023
		\$	\$	\$
Insurance Reserve Fund	XR1010			
<i>Withdrawals (-)</i>				
<i>Contributions (+)</i>		13.5	13.5	13.5

* Based on 9-month 2020 Reserve Fund Variance Report

Appendix 11

Glossary

Actuals: An actual financial amount paid (or received) for the delivery of City services (these exclude any commitments to be paid in the future).

Capital Budget: A Capital Budget is the City's plan to acquire / build assets or extend the useful life of existing assets; an example of a capital expenditure is the construction of a new community centre.

Complement: Positions that support the delivery of City services and service levels as approved by Council.

Operating Budget: An Operating Budget is the City's annual plan to provide services to the residents of Toronto; the budget includes all revenues and expenses needed to provided services; an example of an operating cost would be the cost to run the TTC subways.

Recommended Operating / Capital Budget: An operating or capital budget recommended by Accountability Officer to City Council for consideration and approval.

State of Good Repair (SOGR): The cost of maintaining assets to ensure they are able to support the delivery of City services and meet service outcomes