

Toronto Public Health 2026 Operating Budget Submission

Date: September 12, 2025

To: Board of Health

From: Acting Medical Officer of Health

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report outlines the Toronto Public Health (TPH) 2026 Operating Budget Submission for consideration by the Board of Health. Toronto Public Health's 2026 Operating Budget Submission is \$316,267.7 thousand gross, \$112,527.5 thousand net and 1,847.5 positions.

Toronto Public Health is intending to achieve the City's affordability target, apart from requests to increase its operating budget to strengthen and expand the Student Nutrition Program.

This 2026 Operating Budget Submission is higher than the 2025 Operating Budget by \$14,776.3 thousand gross, \$18,563.9 thousand net with 2.0 less positions. The increase in Toronto Public Health's year-over-year budget is predominately attributed to costs to strengthen and expand the City's Student Nutrition Program, and inflationary and cost of living adjustment (COLA) increases for staff.

Additional information on the change between the 2026 Operating Budget Submission and the 2025 Operating Budget is available in Table 1 in this report.

The 2026 Operating Budget Submission includes in-year changes, and base changes as detailed in the recommendations in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Acting Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Board of Health request the Mayor to propose a 2026 Operating Budget for Toronto Public Health of \$316,267.7 thousand gross, \$112,527.5 thousand net, and 1,847.5 positions, as summarized in Table 1, Overview of the TPH 2026 Operating

Budget Submission, which includes the following incremental changes from the TPH 2025 Operating Budget:

- a. an increase of \$6,439.2 thousand gross and \$6,439.2 thousand net for inflationary costs and salaries and benefits
- b. a decrease of \$885.2 thousand gross and an increase of \$701.4 thousand net, and 1 position for 2026 administrative and technical adjustments
- c. an estimated increase of \$1,538.4 thousand gross, \$0 net for operating costs related to Downtown Homeless Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub
- d. an increase in revenue of \$1,535.5 thousand to accept additional funds from the provincial government to support the delivery of Ontario Public Health Standards programs and services
- e. a decrease of \$6,274.8 thousand gross, \$1,000.0 thousand net resulting from the removal of prior year one-time expenses and related funding
- f. a decrease of \$1,061.0 thousand gross, \$1,061.0 thousand net, along with 6.0 positions to meet efficiency targets
- g. an increase of \$15,019.7 thousand gross, \$15,019.7 thousand net, and 3 positions for Phase 3 and Phase 4 expansion of the Student Nutrition Program, projected growth in student participation, and enhancements to the Food Safety program to support the expansion.

2. The Board of Health directs that this report be forwarded to the City of Toronto Budget Committee for consideration during the 2026 Budget process.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Toronto Public Health's (TPH) 2026 Operating Budget Submission totals \$316,287.4 thousand gross, \$112,527.5 thousand net and 1,847.5 positions. This submission is \$14,776.3 thousand gross and \$18,563.9 thousand net higher, and 2.0 positions less than the 2025 Operating Budget for TPH.

The 2025 Operating Budget includes an estimate increase of \$3,592.2 thousand gross and \$0 net to develop and operate a Downtown HART Hub.

TPH received an affordability target for 2026. Excluding the new and enhanced funding requests for the Student Nutrition Program of \$15,019.7 thousand gross and net, and 3.0 permanent positions, which includes funding for Phase 3 and 4 (155 additional school communities) of the Universal School Food Program, TPH has achieved its target.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer has been advised of the financial impacts associated with this report to be considered along with other priorities as part of the annual budget process.

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on July 7, 2025, the Board of Health - Budget Committee recommended that the Board of Health request the Province of Ontario to increase funding for Toronto Public Health to cover an annual cost of living increase equivalent to the annual average Ontario Consumer Price Index.

[Agenda Item History - 2025.HU4.1](#)

At its meeting on June 3, 2025, the Board of Health requested the Medical Officer of Health review the feasibility of creating an independent website for Toronto Public Health, separate from the City of Toronto's corporate website, and report back to the September Board of Health through the 2026 budget process.

[Agenda Item History - 2025.HL25.5](#)

At its meeting on June 25 and 26, 2025, City Council adopted recommendations on a vision and strategy for Student Nutrition Programs where a universal morning meal program will be implemented by 2026 and a universal lunch program implemented by 2030.

[Agenda Item History - 2025.EX24.3](#)

At its meeting held on March 26, 2025, City Council adopted item EX21.8 – "Building a Universal Student Food Program in Toronto", and approved an increase of \$5 million gross, \$0 net, to the 2025 Operating Budget for the City Manager's Office for expansion of the Student Nutrition Program to new school communities and enhance existing programs in current school communities, offset by available funds resulting from underspending in 2024.

[Agenda Item History - 2025.EX21.8](#)

COMMENTS

Toronto Public Health's 2025 Operating Budget is \$301,511.2 thousand gross and \$93,963.7 thousand net and 1,849.5 positions.

Toronto Public Health's 2026 Operating Budget Submission totals \$316,287.4 thousand gross, \$112,527.5 thousand net and 1,847.5 positions. This submission is \$14,776.3 thousand gross and \$18,563.9 thousand net higher and 2.0 positions less than the 2025 Operating Budget. Table 1 below provides a summary of the changes between the TPH 2025 Operating Budget and the 2026 Operating Budget Submission.

Table 1 - Overview of the TPH 2026 Operating Budget Submission

(\$ in thousands)	Gross Expense \$	Revenue \$	Net Expense \$	Positions #
2025 APPROVED OPERATING BUDGET (February 11, 2025)	288,575.6	202,870.1	85,705.5	1,884.5
2025 IN-YEAR ADJUSTMENTS:				
Inflationary and Cost of Living (COLA) increase	8,258.2	0.0	8,258.2	0.0
Student Nutrition Program one-time transfer	5,000.0	5,000.0	0.0	0.0
Downtown Homeless Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub start up and operating costs from Ontario Health	3,592.2	3,592.2	0.0	0.0
Capital adjustments	(1,269.0)	(1,269.0)	0.0	0.0
Transfer of urgent public health need site (UPHNS) staff from TPH to TSSS	(2,645.9)	(2,645.9)	0.0	(35.0)
2025 OPERATING BUDGET WITH ALL IN-YEAR ADJUSTMENTS	301,511.2	207,547.5	93,963.7	1,849.5
2026 INCREMENTAL BUDGET CHANGES:				
a Inflationary and COLA increase	6,439.2	0.0	6,439.2	
b 2026 Administrative and Technical Adjustments	(885.2)	(1,586.6)	701.4	1.0
c Downtown Homeless Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub Operating	1,538.4	1,538.4	0.0	0.0
d Increased Revenue from Ministry of Health	0.0	1,535.5	(1,535.5)	0.0
e Prior Year Approval Impacts	(6,274.8)	(5,274.8)	(1,000.0)	0.0
f Efficiencies Target	(1,061.0)	0.0	(1,061.0)	(6.0)
2026 BASE BUDGET	301,267.7	203,759.9	97,507.8	1,844.5

2026 PROPOSED NEW/ENHANCED PRIORITIES				
Student Nutrition Program - Phase 3 & 4 expansion, program growth, food safety program enhancement	15,019.7	0.0	15,019.7	3.0
2026 BUDGET SUBMISSION	316,287.4	203,759.9	112,527.5	1,847.5
INCREASE (DECREASE) OVER 2025 OPERATING BUDGET	14,776.3	(3,787.6)	18,563.9	(2.0)

Efficiency Targets

As part of the City's 2026 Budget process, Toronto Public Health has been asked to identify efficiencies. Toronto Public Health intends to achieve the City's efficiency target (excluding requests to strengthen and expand Student Nutrition Programs), primarily by utilizing identified efficiencies from Community Health and Well-being (CHW) programs.

As part of routine operations post-COVID, Community Health and Well-being (CHW) programs were reviewed. Opportunities for continuous quality improvement were identified including the introduction of online referral tools, strengthening of referral pathways, cross training, partnering with community and internal partners to strengthen service delivery and consolidating functions to enhance operational effectiveness. An increased focus on reorienting programs towards population health introduced alternative modalities and new technologies for service delivery, supported the intensification of service delivery to priority populations, and increased the focus on activities that impact the physical, natural and social environments.

This work resulted in changes to staffing levels, some of which have been reallocated to other public health priority programs and some vacancies will be used to address efficiency targets.

Inflationary and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA)

TPH's proposed inflationary and COLA expenditures for 2026, as reported to the Board of Health Budget Committee on July 7, 2025 are \$8,581.5 thousand. To meet its affordability target within the limited funding increase from the Ministry of Health, TPH has identified additional efficiencies to address the shortfall and is requesting \$5,380.0 thousand for COLA. It is unknown whether TPH will be asked to sustain these efficiencies in future years.

Student Nutrition Program - cost of food

In 2012, City Council requested that the Medical Officer of Health report to the Board of Health on a plan to consider, as part of the annual operating budget process, an annual increase to the City's investment in Student Nutrition Programs equal to the annual

amount of food inflation reported by the Nutritious Food Basket survey. The requested cost of food increase for 2026 is 3.8 per cent.

Toronto Public Health is recommending an increase to the Student Nutrition Program in the amount of \$949.3 thousand gross and net to address the increasing cost of food at existing Student Nutrition Programs.

Student Nutrition Program

Toronto Public Health is requesting increases to its operating budget of \$15,019.7 thousand gross and net, and 3 positions to strengthen and expand Student Nutrition Programs.

Phase 3 and Phase 4 expansion - \$14,229 thousand gross and net

In June 2025, City Council adopted recommendations on a vision and strategy for Student Nutrition Programs where a universal morning meal program will be implemented by 2026 and a universal lunch program implemented by 2030. The report includes a phased implementation plan for a universal morning meal program. Phases 1 and 2 to expand morning meal programs to 73 additional communities have been funded. Toronto Public Health is recommending an increase of \$14,229.0 thousand gross and net to provide operational and start-up costs for the Phase 3 and Phase 4 expansion of morning meal programs to 155 additional school communities as described in the report to City Council.

Program growth - \$433.4 thousand gross and net

Toronto Public Health is requesting an increase of \$433.4 thousand gross and net to fund existing SNPs that are seeing an increase in students participating in the program.

Enhance Food Safety Program - \$357.3 thousand gross and net, and 3.0 positions

Finally, Toronto Public Health is requesting an increase of \$357.3 thousand gross and net, and 3.0 permanent positions to enhance the capacity of its Food Safety Program in order to conduct inspections and provide support to the additional school communities that will be funded for a SNP through the expansion.

Sexual Health Partnership Clinics

Toronto Public Health is recommending an increase of \$107.1 thousand gross to its operating budget for increases to sexual health partnership clinics. This includes a funding increase for 2026, that would bring the total funding to \$2,853.6 thousand, which is a 3.9% increase for 2026.

Downtown Homelessness and Addiction Recovery Treatment (HART) Hub

On January 2, 2025, the Ministry of Health confirmed that the City of Toronto had been approved to implement a Downtown HART Hub. Estimated operating funding amounts from Ontario Health for 2025 and 2026 have been annualized and included in Table 1.

Estimated funding amounts for 2025 include initial start-up costs of \$274.8 thousand from Ontario Health. The Downtown HART Hub aims to improve the health of Toronto residents by facilitating access to health care services for people who use drugs, including improved access to treatment and recovery services, and integrated pathways to wraparound supports such as mental health care and housing.

Funding from the Ministry of Health for Mandatory Programs

On August 22, 2023, the Ontario Government announced their plan for [investing in a stronger public health sector](#). The announcement contained commitments to restore \$47 million in funding to public health units effective January 1, 2025, and provide a one per cent (1%) increase in funding for the next three years. Incremental revenue of \$1,535.5 thousand represents the increased amount for 2026.

2026 Administrative and Technical Adjustments

The 2026 administrative and technical adjustments are for changes in interdivisional costs and revenues, savings achieved from vacating leased space, and reductions in revenue from the Ministry of Health for one-time initiatives as outlined in Table 2. The net expenditure of \$701.4 thousand is primarily related to the reduction of inter-divisional revenue for the transfer of urgent public health need site (UPHNS) staff from TPH to Toronto Shelter and Support Services.

Table 2 - 2026 Administrative and Technical Adjustments

(\$ in thousands)	Gross Expense \$	Revenue \$	Net Expense \$	Positions #
Interdivisional Costs and Interdivisional Revenues	172.0	(882.0)	1,054.0	0.0
Administrative Cleanup, Technical Adjustments	(352.5)	0.0	(352.5)	0.0
Injectable Opioid Agonist Treatment (iOAT) Program adjustment to reflect ending of the program in 2025	(300.0)	(300.0)	0.0	0.0
Supervised Consumption Sites (SCS) adjustment to reflect ending of the program in 2025	(404.7)	(404.7)	0.0	0.0
Delivery of Capital Positions	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0
	(885.2)	(1,586.6)	701.4	1.0

Feasibility of an Independent Toronto Public Health Website

As requested by the Board of Health, Toronto Public Health assessed the feasibility of creating an independent website for Toronto Public Health, separate from the City of Toronto's corporate website. Findings from the assessment indicated that the creation of an independent website is technically feasible, dependent on the expertise and resources of the City's Technology Services Division (TSD). The project would incur budget and resource impacts if TPH is to maintain its current service levels. Approximately \$3,900.0 thousand over two years would be required to build the website using existing City infrastructure. The majority of these costs are related to the recruitment of 13 staff positions. Once built, maintaining the website would require \$600.0 thousand (4 staff positions) on an annual basis. Furthermore, a request for an independent website would need to be approved by Strategic Public and Employee Communications (SPEC) and TSD as per the City's policies.

As part of TPH's Strategic Plan 2024-2028, TPH is taking action to reinforce itself as a reputable and credible source of public health information and services. Planning is underway for a website content audit to ensure public health information is up-to-date, consistent, relevant, inclusive and citizen-centric. Planning is also underway for a public education campaign to address health misinformation, disinformation and malinformation.

Strategic Impact

The proposed increases to the 2026 Operating Budget to support the expansion of the Student Nutrition Program advances Toronto Public Health's Strategic Plan 2024-2028 with a particular focus on:

- Priority 2: Promoting health and well-being across the lifespan
 - Objective b: Prioritizing effective interventions for children and youth to meet their changing needs.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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