



# Toronto Civic Employees' Union, Local 416

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## 2026 Budget Submission to the City of Toronto Budget Committee

### LOCAL 416

Affiliated with the Canadian  
Labour Congress and the  
Labour Council of Toronto  
& York Region

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**Submitted to:** Budget Committee, City of Toronto

**Submitted by:** Toronto Civic Employees Union Local 416

**Date:** January 19, 2026

### Introduction

Local 416 represents thousands of the City of Toronto's outside workers who deliver essential frontline services that residents rely on every day - roads and winter maintenance, water and wastewater operations, parks and recreation supports, solid waste collection, municipal operations, and paramedic services. These services are the backbone of public health, safety, mobility, and quality of life in Toronto.

The 2026 staff-prepared budget provides an important opportunity to strengthen the City's frontline capacity and protect service delivery standards at a time of rising demand, aging infrastructure, and climate-driven pressures. Local 416 submits this written brief to highlight key areas of alignment with the City's priorities and to recommend investments needed to sustain safe, reliable, high-quality public services.

### Preservation and Expansion of Frontline Services

The Budget Launch states that the City is preserving frontline services. City performance results from 2025 underline the need for sufficient staffing complements, including 215,096+ potholes repaired, faster delivery of construction projects, expanded hours in 70+ libraries and pools (+2 hours/day). These achievements demonstrate the City's reliance on skilled outside workers and the need for stable staffing, appropriate scheduling, and ongoing investment in equipment and facilities.

### Emergency and Paramedic Staffing Pressure

While the City reports that 263 additional emergency workers, including paramedics, were added in 2025 to improve response times, hiring alone is no longer enough to stabilize Toronto's emergency-response system. Despite ongoing recruitment efforts, Toronto Paramedic Services continues to lose experienced medics at a pace that outstrips new hiring. Between 2022 and 2025, the service lost 422 full-time paramedics meaning that even if the City successfully hires all 362 new positions planned between 2025 and 2028, Toronto will still end up with fewer paramedics in 2028 than it had in 2022. This level of churn reflects a deeper retention crisis driven by overwhelming call volumes, the increasing complexity and trauma exposure of frontline emergency work, rising workplace violence, and the growing cost of living in Toronto.

pressures are causing paramedics to leave our force for lower-stress, lower-cost municipalities or to leave the profession entirely.

Local 416 urges Council to continue funding paramedic hiring, training, safe staffing ratios, fleet and equipment replacement, and wellness and fatigue-risk-management supports. However, given the scale of outflow, Toronto cannot solve this problem alone.

### **Financial Pressures & Efficiency Expectations**

The City reports an improving but significant opening pressure of \$1.07B in 2026, down from \$1.2B in 2025. Local 416 is concerned that unspecified efficiency targets or offsets could drive workload intensification, deferred maintenance, increased WSIB claims, and service disruptions. Frontline staffing and safety must not be sacrificed for balancing requirements.

### **Recommendations**

1. The City sustain and expand paramedic hiring while also strengthening retention through improved training, mental health and wellness supports, fatigue-management measures, protected and predictable meal-break provisions, and a reliable fleet-replacement schedule, recognizing that Toronto cannot stabilize emergency-response capacity through hiring alone.
2. The City ensure adequate winter-maintenance staffing in Roads and Transportation, maintain safe overtime and scheduling standards, and fund resurfacing, pothole repair, and construction operations at levels fully matched with appropriate fleet capacity.
3. The City expand technical and safety training for Toronto Water crews, strengthen health-and-safety supports, and modernize specialized equipment required for basement-flooding prevention and stormwater-management work.
4. The City increase Parks and Recreation staffing to support longer facility hours, strengthen custodial and maintenance coverage, and plan proactively for seasonal operations and seasonal conversion work.
5. The City provide clear visibility into Solid Waste Management's capital plans for fleet renewal and yard modernization, and maintain staffing levels that support growing diversion and organics-processing demands, while also evaluating the operational, financial, and service-reliability benefits of expanding the proven in-house Solid Waste model—ensuring that future service design decisions prioritize cost transparency, quality control, and long-term workforce stability.
6. The City protect and fund stable staffing complements across all outside-worker divisions to meet service targets, maintain public safety, and prevent unsafe workload intensification.

### **Conclusion**

Local 416 members deliver the essential services that keep Toronto moving, safe, clean, resilient, and healthy. The 2026 budget's commitment to preserving frontline services and

renewing critical infrastructure is a positive foundation. To meet the City's service targets and rising demands, Council must match these commitments with concrete investments in staffing, equipment, training, and workplace infrastructure. A strong, well-resourced public workforce is the most reliable path to stability, resilience, and value for Toronto residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ted Aivialis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ted Aivialis  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President  
Toronto Civic Employees' Union  
CUPE Local 416