

Response to Ontario Regulation 286/09 Budget Matters – Expenses

Date: January 27, 2026

To: City Council

From: Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

Wards: All

SUMMARY

The City of Toronto's (City) annual balanced budget is prepared using the cash basis of accounting. This method allows the City to focus on the funds required to support operating expenses in the fiscal year and to acquire capital assets.

Ontario Regulation 286/09 "Budget Matters - Expenses" (Regulation) permits exclusion of non-cash accounting expenses from the City's annual budget such as amortization expenses, post-employment benefits expenses, and solid waste landfill closure and post-closure expenses.

The Regulation further requires the City to provide:

- An estimate of the change in accumulated surplus as a result of the exclusion of the above expenses, and
- An analysis of the estimated impact of the exclusion of these expenses on future tangible capital asset funding requirements.

Total expenses excluded from the 2026 budget is estimated to be \$1,919 million. These expenses will be recorded in the City's financial statements and reduce the annual surplus for accounting purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer recommends that:

1. City Council receive this report for information.
2. City Council authorize City Staff to publish, on the City website, information related to Ontario Regulation 286/09 "Budget Matters - Expenses" in future fiscal periods and thereby, satisfy legislative reporting requirements.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The expenses excluded from the City's cash budget does not require cash outlays in the current fiscal year. The values represent financial reporting allocations (amortization of tangible capital assets over the expected useful life) or changes to estimated liabilities that are settled at a future date. The estimated value of these expenses (\$1,919 million) for 2026 will reduce the City's annual surplus calculation for accounting purposes.

DECISION HISTORY

As required by the Regulation, this report has been provided to Budget Committee annually since 2010.

To view the last two reports on-line, please follow the hyperlinks below:

<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2025.CC27.2>
<https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.CC15.2>

COMMENTS

In accordance with section 228 of the City of Toronto Act, 2006 (Act), the City prepares an annual balanced budget using the cash basis of accounting; no surplus or deficit is planned, per legislative requirements that state municipalities must ensure their budgets are balanced. The annual budget generates revenues through sources such as property taxes, utility charges, and other user fees to finance planned operating and capital expenses that require cash outflows in the applicable year.

Given that the City's methodology for preparing its budget differs from the accounting framework required for financial reporting (Public Sector Accounting Standards, PSAS), Ontario Regulation 286/09 requires the City to estimate and report on the value of the following expenses which are required for financial statement reporting purposes under the accrual basis of accounting, and therefore, not included in the City's annual balanced cash budget:

- Amortization of tangible capital assets: costs associated with the declining value of an asset resulting from the passage of time (the asset useful life during which benefits are derived).
- Post-employment benefit expenses: benefits earned by the City's employees in the current year, but not paid for until at, or beyond, retirement.
- Solid waste landfill closure and post-closure expenses: costs associated with anticipated closure and post-closure activities (also known as asset retirement obligations for landfills).

Other exclusions from the budget but are required under the accrual basis of accounting include non-cash adjustments that reflect changes in the City's liabilities such as:

- Contaminated site liabilities: costs related to the remediation of an unexpected

contamination of sites

- Asset retirement obligations: costs of the retirement activities required to settle the legal obligations of tangible capital assets
- Provision for property and liability claims: costs to settle anticipated property and liability claims

The table below outlines the difference between how the City treats the expenses identified in the Regulation, along with other PSAS adjustments that are required for financial reporting versus budgeting purposes.

Item	Budget Treatment	Financial Reporting Treatment
Amortization	Not budgeted as allowed by the Regulation	Expensed based on usage of the capital asset over its service life
Post-employment benefit expenses	Not budgeted as allowed by the Regulation	Expensed as earned by the employees' service during the year
Solid waste landfill closure and post-closure expenses	Not budgeted as allowed by the Regulation	Expensed over the useful life of the landfill
Other non-cash adjustments	Not budgeted	Expensed when there are changes in liability estimates

The table below lists the estimated 2026 expenses excluded from the City's cash based balanced budget:

	In millions of dollars
Excluded expenses:	
Impact of exclusions allowed by Ontario Regulation 286/09:	
Amortization of tangible capital assets	\$ 1,770
Estimated increase in post-employment benefits	134
Estimated increase in asset retirement obligations for solid waste landfill closure and post-closure costs	4
Impact of other exclusions:	
Estimated decrease in contaminated sites liability	(5)

	In millions of dollars
Estimated increase in other asset retirement obligations	14
Estimated increase in provision for property and liability claims	2
Total of excluded expenses	\$ 1,919

Note: Amounts in brackets represent decreases in expenses resulting from decreases in liabilities; amounts not reflected with brackets represent increases to expenses, resulting from a financial allocation such as amortization, or an increase in a liability.

As the City's balanced budget process outlines anticipated sources of, and uses for funds in the current year, the exclusion of the above expenses does not immediately impact the City's ability to generate sufficient funding to finance its annual operating and capital expenses. In addition, the amounts disclosed in the above table were determined based on accrual accounting requirements and therefore, are not intended to represent the expenditures included in the City's budget submissions.

The excluded expenses meet financial reporting requirements, based on public sector accounting standards; as a result, the value impacts the accumulated surplus reported in the City's audited financial statements. The accumulated surplus for the City represents its cumulative net investment in tangible capital assets.

The existing processes for capital requirements, through the City's Ten-Year Capital Budget and Plan, and operating/capital budget approvals, provide transparency in current and future year funding required for tangible capital assets. The combination of various funding sources, including the City's own revenue sources, such as property taxes, and debt, progressively secure resources for future tangible capital asset requirements, in addition to anticipated payment of post-employment benefits, and solid waste landfill closure and post-closure costs.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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