

2023 Budget Summary

Ombudsman Toronto

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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
- 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 of 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

What We Deliver	Who We Serve		
	The Public	City Staff	City Council
1. 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	✓	✓	✓
2. Expert investigative work to find fair resolutions and make recommendations based on the evidence	✓	✓	✓
3. 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	✓	✓	✓
4. Consultations with City staff to provide guidance and help improve service to the public		✓	
5. Review fairness of Toronto Police procedures and programs to improve accountability of the Toronto Police, through expanded oversight role of Toronto Police Service	✓	✓	✓
6. Review fairness of housing-related policies and other systemic investigations of housing issues through the creation of the Housing Commissioner role within Ombudsman Toronto's structure.	✓	✓	✓

Resources Required (2023 Operating Budget)

Services 1-5 (Investigative Work, Consultations, and Outreach): \$2,782.6 million

Service 6 (Housing Commissioner): \$0.882 million

Total (Gross) Budget: \$3.665 million

Budget at a Glance

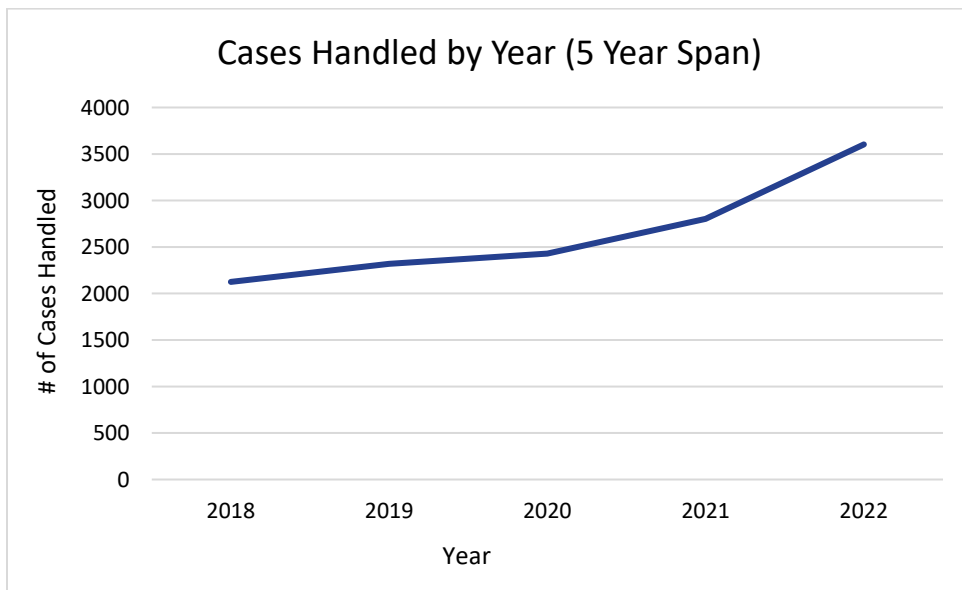
2023 OPERATING BUDGET			
\$Million	2023	2024	2025
Revenues	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0
Gross Expenditures	\$3.7	\$3.8	\$3.8
Net Expenditures	\$3.7	\$3.8	\$3.8
Approved Positions	26.0	26.0	26.0

2023 - 2032 10-YEAR CAPITAL PLAN			
\$Million	2023	2024-2032	Total
Gross Expenditures	\$0.0	\$1.1	\$1.1
Debt	\$0.0	\$1.1	\$1.1

Note: Includes 2022 carry forward funding

How Well We Are Doing – Behind the Numbers

Performance Measures	Behind the Numbers
<p>In 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We handled 3,603 cases*, including 83 police-related cases, and 1,392 housing-related cases. We completed 1 interim investigation report on the City's processes for clearing encampments. We made 8 formal recommendations (and countless informal ones) to improve City services. We conducted 19 Consultations with City staff. We held over 70 outreach sessions with the public, City staff and elected officials. <p><i>*Projected number to year end, as of October 31, 2022.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of cases we handled in 2022 is up 28.5% from 2021 and represents the largest number of complaints handled since the office was first created. 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.



- Complaints to our office have increased every year over the last five years, a **69.5% increase since 2018.**
- From 2021 to 2022, complaints **increased by 28.5%, the largest yearly number of complaints.**
- Our effectiveness continues to match the pace of complaints: **over 90% of cases are closed within 30 days.**

How Well We Are Doing

Service	Measure	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Target	2022 Projection	Status	2023 Target	2024 Target
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	2,429 cases	2,803 cases	3,023 cases	3603 cases	●	Overall increase expected, plus additional increase related to police oversight and possible Housing Commissioner role	Overall increase expected, plus additional increase related to police oversight and possible Housing Commissioner role
Address systemic issues of broad and significant unfairness	We will continue to address public concerns regarding systemic issues in how the City serves people by launching investigations.	2 public reports	2 public reports	2 public reports	1 public report	●	2-3 public reports	2-3 public reports
Address systemic issues related to the administration of housing policies	We will review the fairness of housing-related policies and conduct other systemic investigations of housing issues through the creation of the Housing Commissioner role	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	The Housing Commissioner role is not confirmed – if it proceeds, we will assess and plan accordingly	The Housing Commissioner role is not confirmed – if it proceeds, we will assess and plan accordingly
Responding to increasing awareness of our services and demand	Despite increasing complaints, we are closing cases more quickly thanks to more staff and better processes. However, if case numbers continue to rise, we may see an increase in case duration.	52.8% closed within 7 days; 85.3% closed within 30 days	62% closed within 7 days; 92% closed within 30 days	72% closed within 7 days; 92% closed within 30 days	72% closed within 7 days; 92% closed within 30 days	●	As awareness of the Office grows, complaints are also expected to rise. Case handling may take longer	As awareness of the Office grows, complaints are also expected to rise. Case handling may take longer

Service	Measure	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Target	2022 Projection	Status	2023 Target	2024 Target
Outcome Measures								
Providing consultations to City staff	We continue to proactively work with City staff through consultations to prevent complaints before they arise by ensuring new policies, processes, and services are fair	14	15	15	19	●	N/A (Provided on as-needed basis)	N/A (Provided on as-needed basis)
Providing more outreach to the public, City staff and City Council	We will deliver informational presentations and meetings to ensure stakeholders know about our services and understand our role	45	60	60	75	●	75	75
Service Level Measures								
Addressing complaints and concerns as quickly as possible	We are addressing complaints and concerns as quickly as possible and working to maintain service standards despite increasing case numbers	1 business day for calls, 2 business days for written complaints	2 business days for calls, 5 business days for written complaints	1 business day for calls, 2 business days for written complaints	1 business day for calls, 2 business days for written complaints	●	1 business day for calls, 2 business days for written complaints	1 business day for calls, 2 business days for written complaints

COVID-19 IMPACT AND RECOVERY

2023 Impact and Recovery

Operating Budget Impact

- There are no incremental costs expected in 2023 related to COVID-19. Ombudsman Toronto will continue to use existing resources and reallocate them to address emerging priorities during the pandemic.

Service Level Changes

- Despite continuing to work in a hybrid environment, there are no service level changes expected for 2023.
 - Staff are well-positioned to continue delivering effective and timely service whether working from home or in the office.
 - Staff remain connected and informed through weekly team-wide analysis of complaints.
 - We are constantly adopting new ways to be nimble and efficient, including delivering outreach presentations virtually and designing digital public education materials.
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EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES

Our Experience and Success

In 2022, the number of complaints to Ombudsman Toronto increased by 28.5% and represents the largest number of complaints received by our office in a given year. Despite this significant increase, we were able to maintain our high service standards, closing 90% of our cases within 30 days. We also increased our outreach and engagement work, helping to ensure that more 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.

Our Numbers

In 2022:

- We handled **3,603 cases (an increase of 28.5% from 2021, the largest number of cases our office has seen since it opened)**, resulting in the resolution of the public's complaints and concerns, and the improvement of City services. This is a multi-year trend: we have seen increases to our case numbers year over year (**an increase of 69.5% since 2018, and an increase of 152% since 2012**).
- We completed an **interim investigation report** on the City's processes for clearing encampments and made **8 formal recommendations** that were unanimously accepted by the City. We are also well on our way to completing the final report on the City's process for clearing encampments, which will include further recommendations.
- Throughout continued work on finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding agreement with the Toronto Police Service (TPS) and the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB) to begin our oversight of the TPS and TPSB's policies and procedures, we **received 83 police-related inquiries**.
- We received **1,392 cases related to housing issues (40% of the total received)**, from a wide range of Divisions and issues related to the provision of housing and housing-related services.
- We conducted **19 Consultations** with City staff.
- We held over **70 outreach sessions** with the public, City staff and elected officials.

Our Positive Impact

- A woman fleeing an abusive relationship moved out of her **TCHC** residence and was living in a shelter. Because of Ombudsman Toronto, she was able to be released from her current lease agreement with TCHC and **secure new housing**.
- Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation was not clear about their complaints escalation process—information listed on its website was inconsistent. As a result of Ombudsman Toronto's work, **TSHC updated its website to provide clear and accurate information about how a member of the public can escalate a complaint**—an important aspect of fair service.
- Ombudsman Toronto **worked with SSHA to place a mother and her children, who were minors, in a shelter**. The mother had previously had shelter space, but the children were unable to be placed. As a result of our work, the family was able to reside together.
- As a result of Ombudsman Toronto's consultation, **CREM will be updating its Park Levy Fee for developers to make the process more transparent**. Specifically, CREM will now share how they calculate the fee and will let the public know about their right of appeal if they disagree with the valuation.
- Ombudsman Toronto recommended to the **Toronto Paramedic Services** that its written communications to complainants about its Professional Standards Unit investigation reports give more information about the findings of its investigation of a complaint, how to access a copy of an investigation report, and appeal options. Toronto Paramedics Services has begun implementing our recommendations, **resulting in clearer communication and a more accountable process for the public**. We will continue to monitor the implementation of our remaining recommendations.
- As a result of Ombudsman recommendations, the **City's Housing Secretariat's** website will now include **information about housing co-ops**, including what it means to be a member of a co-op, how that is different from being a tenant, and how to make complaints as a co-op member.

Our Actions

- The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic were still felt by people in Toronto in 2022, and our team continued to receive complaints about COVID-19 issues with City services. Through **efficient and impartial complaint handling**, we continued to help the public deal with the lasting impacts of the pandemic and guided the City on how to continue delivering services fairly and equitably during the pandemic.
- We **advanced implementation of the City Council's unanimous directive on Enhancing Policing Accountability** through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Toronto Police Service, Toronto Police Services Board, and Ombudsman Toronto.
- In response to Council's directive, we **began the process of considering the resources required for the office to focus on investigations and reports related to systemic housing discrimination and systemic hurdles in the City of Toronto's housing planning and service delivery roles, including consideration of a Deputy Ombudsman, Housing.**
- We **developed and expanded targeted outreach and engagement activities**, including introducing Ombudsman Addo to members of the public and City staff and focusing our engagement strategy on equity-deserving groups and communities with increased barriers to accessing City services.

Key Challenges and Risks

- While we are working diligently to complete the Memorandum of Understanding with Toronto Police Service (TPS) and the Toronto Police Services Board (TPSB), the MOU is taking longer than expected to finalize.
- The volume of complaints we are handling is higher than ever before and continues to rise year after year.
- The complexity of cases also continues to increase, which could impact the time we take to close cases and complete investigations. Our oversight role of the TPS and potential new role as Housing Commissioner will likely contribute to this increased complexity and case load.
- Our current website is significantly out of date, cannot be extended with the current service provider, and requires an update to continue serving the public fairly. Without funding for this website, access to crucial information about our services, including the capacity to make a complaint online, will be impossible.

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 services and show them what equitable service requires.
 - Continue expanding our outreach to the public and City staff to inform them of our role and services.
 - Evaluation of the capacity and resources required to conduct housing related investigations on behalf of the Housing Commissioner.
 - Creation of a new Ombudsman Toronto website.
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RECOMMENDATIONS

City Council adopted the following recommendations:

1. The 2023 Operating Budget for Ombudsman Toronto of \$3.665 million gross and net:

	Gross Expenditures (\$000s)	Revenue (\$000s)	Net Expenditures (\$000s)
Total Office Budget	\$3,664.6	\$0.0	\$3,664.6

2. The 2023 staff complement for Ombudsman Toronto of 26.0 positions.
3. The 2024-2032 Capital Plan for Ombudsman Toronto totalling \$1.100 million in project estimates as detailed by project in [Appendix 6b](#).

2023 OPERATING BUDGET

2023 OPERATING BUDGET OVERVIEW

Table 1: 2023 Operating Budget

(In \$000s)	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 Projection*	2023 Base Budget	2023 New / Enhanced	2023 Budget	Change v. 2022 Projection	
By Service	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Revenues								
Ombudsman Toronto	200.1							N/A
Total Revenues	200.1							N/A
Expenditures								
Ombudsman Toronto	2,422.8	2,688.5	2,738.5	3,664.6		3,664.6	926.1	33.8%
Total Gross Expenditures	2,422.8	2,688.5	2,738.5	3,664.6		3,664.6	926.1	33.8%
Net Expenditures (including COVID-19)	2,222.7	2,688.5	2,738.5	3,664.6		3,664.6	926.1	33.8%
Required COVID-19 Support								N/A
Net Budget (excluding COVID-19 supports)	2,222.7	2,688.5	2,738.5	3,664.6		3,664.6	926.1	33.8%
Approved Positions**	14.0	18.0	N/A	26.0		26.0	N/A	N/A

* 2022 Projection based on 9 Month Variance

**YoY comparison based on approved positions

KEY COST DRIVERS – FUNDING PRIORITIES

Total 2023 Base Budget expenditures of \$3.665 million gross reflecting an increase of \$0.926 million in spending above 2022 projected year-end actuals, predominantly arising from:

- Interim budget request of \$0.882 million for 8 new permanent positions and related set-up and ongoing costs in response to Council direction on EX34.7 – Review and Considerations for a Housing Commissioner Role or Function in its July 19, 2022, meeting. Please see [Agenda Item History - 2022.EX34.7 \(toronto.ca\)](#). Additional positions may be required in the future after the new Housing Commissioner function has been setup and as the office develops a better understanding of the requirements, which will be gained through experience in delivering the new function
- One-time budget request of \$0.088 million related to website redesign and annual report design.

EQUITY IMPACTS OF BUDGET CHANGES

No significant equity impacts: The changes in Ombudsman Toronto's 2023 Operating Budget do not have any significant equity impacts.

2023 OPERATING BUDGET KEY DRIVERS

The 2023 Operating Base Budget for Ombudsman Toronto is \$3.665 million gross or 33.8% higher than the 2022 Projected Actuals. Table 2 below summarizes the key cost drivers for the 2023 Budget.

Table 2: 2023 Operating Budget by Revenue / Expenditure Category

Category (In \$000s)	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 Projection*	2023 Budget	2023 Change from 2022 Projection	
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	%
Provincial Subsidies							
Federal Subsidies							
Other Subsidies							
User Fees & Donations							
Licences & Permits Revenue							
Transfers From Capital							
Contribution From Reserves/Reserve Funds		200.0					
Sundry and Other Revenues		0.1					
Inter-Divisional Recoveries							
Total Revenues		200.1					
Salaries and Benefits	2,114.3	2,344.6	2,543.1	2,592.9	3,361.4	768.5	29.6%
Materials & Supplies	5.5	3.0	5.4	2.2	5.5	3.3	152.1%
Equipment	8.7	7.4	4.7	3.2	48.3	45.1	1416.5%
Service and Rent	53.9	67.8	135.3	140.2	249.4	109.1	77.8%
Contribution To Capital							
Contribution To Reserves/Reserve Funds	10.4						
Other Expenditures							
Inter-Divisional Charges							
Total Gross Expenditures	2,192.7	2,422.8	2,688.5	2,738.5	3,664.6	926.1	33.8%
Net Expenditures	2,192.7	2,222.7	2,688.5	2,738.5	3,664.6	926.1	33.8%

*Projection based on 9 Month Variance

Key Base Drivers:**Salaries & Benefits:**

Increase in salaries and benefits of \$0.769 million in gross expenditures is related to the net impact of:

- Interim request of \$0.826 million for 8 new permanent positions in response to Council direction on EX34.7 – Review and Considerations for a Housing Commissioner Role or Function in its July 19, 2022 meeting. This budget request is for part-year covering requirements for 9 months.
- Decrease of \$0.056 million to re-align the budget to actual requirements related to 18 existing positions. The 2022 actual salaries and benefits reflect Council-approved COLA and other salary adjustments with offsetting funding reflected in the Corporate accounts while the 2023 budget request for these existing positions excludes one time salary adjustments in 2022 and any 2023 COLA and other salary adjustments per Corporate budget guidelines.

Equipment:

Increase in equipment of \$0.045 million largely related to setup and ongoing costs for computer hardware, software licenses, and furniture related to the above-mentioned interim request for 8 positions in response to Council direction on the Housing Commissioner Role or Function.

- Economic factor adjustments.

Services and Rents:

Increase in services and rents of \$0.109 million is related to one-time budget request for website redesign (\$0.080 million), one-time annual report design (\$0.008 million), increase in software licensing and subscription costs (\$0.008 million), and economic factor adjustments.

2024 & 2025 OUTLOOKS**Table 3: 2024 and 2025 Outlooks**

(\$000s)	2023 Budget	2024 Incremental Outlook	2025 Incremental Outlook
Revenues			
Revenue Changes			
Total Revenues			
Gross Expenditures			
Salaries and Benefits		309.7	(4.0)
Inflationary Impacts		4.3	3.0
Services and Rens		(131.6)	
Total Gross Expenditures	3,664.6	182.4	(1.1)
Net Expenditures	3,664.6	182.4	(1.1)
Approved Positions	26.0		

Key drivers

The 2024 Outlook with total gross expenditures of \$3.847 million reflects an anticipated \$0.182 million or 4.98% increase in gross expenditures above the 2023 Operating Budget. The 2025 Outlooks expects a decrease of \$0.001 million or 0.03% under 2024 gross expenditures.

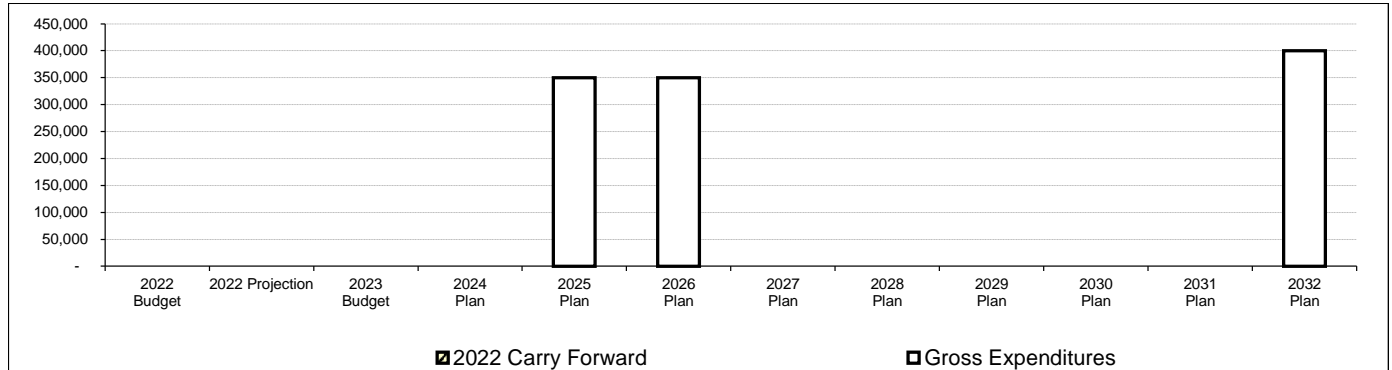
These changes arise from the following:

- Annualization of \$0.242 million for salaries and benefits of 8.0 permanent positions in 2024 and reversal of one-time set-up costs related to Council direction on the Review and considerations for a Housing Commissioner Role or Function.
- Salaries and benefits adjustments related mostly to two additional working days in 2024 and one additional working day in 2025 compared to 2023.
- Reversal of the 2023 one-time budgets for website redesign and annual report design.
- Economic factor adjustments for non-payroll items

2023 – 2032 CAPITAL BUDGET AND PLAN

2023 – 2032 CAPITAL BUDGET & PLAN OVERVIEW

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



In \$'000's	2023 Capital Budget and 2024 - 2032 Capital Plan												Total 10 Year Plan
	2022		2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	
	Budget	Projected Actual											
Gross Expenditures by Project Category:													
Health & Safety & Legislated SOGR													
Service Improvement & Growth													
Total by Project Category													
Financing:													
Debt													
Debt Recoverable													
Reserves/Reserve Funds													
Development Charges													
Provincial													
Federal													
Other Revenue													
Total Financing													


Changes to Existing Projects (\$0.0 Million)	New Projects (\$1.1 Million)	Capital Needs Constraints (\$0.0 Million)
	<p>The 2023-2032 Capital Budget and Plan includes two new projects related to the project below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR</i> 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. 	

Note:

For additional information, refer to [Appendix 6](#) for a more detailed listing of the 2022 and 2023-2031 Capital Budget & Plan by project.

2023 – 2032 CAPITAL BUDGET AND PLAN

\$1.1 Million 10-Year Gross Capital Program


Enhanced Resiliency
\$1.1 M 100%
<i>Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR</i>

How the Capital Program is Funded

City of Toronto		Provincial Funding	Federal Funding
\$1.1 M 100%		\$0.0 M 0%	\$0.0 M 0%
Debt	\$1.1 M		

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

COVID-19 Impact and Recovery

N/A

Appendix 2

2023 Affordability Measures

N/A

Appendix 3

Summary of 2023 Service Changes

N/A

Appendix 4

Summary of 2023 New / Enhanced Service Priorities Included in Budget

N/A

Appendix 5

Summary of 2023 New / Enhanced Service Priorities Not Included in Budget

N/A

Appendix 6

2023 Capital Budget; 2024 - 2032 Capital Plan Including Carry Forward Funding

Project Code	(In \$000s)	2023 Budget	2024 Plan	2025 Plan	2026 Plan	2027 Plan	2028 Plan	2029 Plan	2030 Plan	2031 Plan	2032 Plan	2023 - 2032 Total	Health & Safety & Legislated	SOGR	Growth & Improved Service
OM001	Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR 2025			350	350							700		700	
OM002	Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR 2032										400	400		400	
Total Expenditures (including carry forward from 2022)				350	350						400	1,100		1,100	

Appendix 6a

2023 Cash Flow and Future Year Commitments Including Carry Forward Funding

N/A

Appendix 6b

2024 - 2032 Capital Plan

Project Code	(In \$000s)	2024 Plan	2025 Plan	2026 Plan	2027 Plan	2028 Plan	2029 Plan	2030 Plan	2031 Plan	2032 Plan	2024 - 2032 Total	Health & Safety & Legislated	SOGR	Growth & Improved Service
OM001	Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR 2025		350	350							700		700	
OM002	Ombudsman Case Management System SOGR 2032									400	400		400	
Total Expenditures			350	350						400	1,100		1,100	

Appendix 7

Reporting on Major Capital Projects: Status Update

N/A

Appendix 8

Capacity to Spend Review

N/A

Appendix 9

Summary of Capital Needs Constraints

N/A

Appendix 10

Inflows and Outflows to/from Reserves and Reserve Funds

2023 Operating Budget

N/A

2023 – 2032 Capital Budget and Plan

N/A

Appendix 11

Glossary

Approved Position: Permanent or temporary positions that support the delivery of City services and service levels as approved by Council.

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.

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

Tax Supported Budget: Budget funded by property taxes.