

# CITY OF HAMILTON

## MOTION

General Issues Committee (Budget): February 13, 2026

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR M. SPADAFORA.....**

**SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR M. FRANCIS.....**

### **Build Budget Better: An Amendment to the Draft 2026 City of Hamilton Budget and Financing Plan**

WHEREAS, in her Mayoral Directive to Staff on October 7, 2025, directing the City Manager and City Treasurer to prepare the 2026 Budgets (Rate Supported and Tax Supported) Mayor Andrea Horwath referenced that:

- a) “the ongoing economic uncertainty caused by U.S. tariffs, together with continued affordability challenges faced by Hamiltonians makes it clear that the 2026 Budgets must respond to the needs of our community”
- b) “feedback from residents throughout the year, reinforced during Budget Engagement sessions, as well as input from members of Council and the priorities outlined in the 2026 Outlook report of September 11, 2025, underscore the need to prioritize affordability...”
- c) “all items referred to the 2026 Budget process by Council, as well as Business Cases provided in the outlook, must be reconsidered within a Hold the Line fiscal framework”
- d) “Hamiltonians are stretching every dollar - the City of Hamilton must do the same”
- e) “staff are directed to prepare a proposed Hold the Line tax budget targeting a maximum increase of 4.25%...”,

WHEREAS, the Mayor’s proposed tax budget proposes a 4.25% increase;

WHEREAS, during times of financial restraint, distinctions must be made between needs and wants; with needs warranting immediate funding and wants warranting future considerations;

WHEREAS, deferring difficult decisions on significant spending cuts will exacerbate affordability challenges faced by Hamiltonians ultimately resulting in more dire situations in the future;

WHEREAS, Hamiltonians expect their elected municipal leaders to exercise the same fiscal restraint and responsibility that they exercise with their own financial household;

WHEREAS, it has been common in recent years for actual expenses to be well below budgeted amounts as evidenced under the “Key Facts” of Report No. CM25007(a) entitled “Building Better: Project Portfolio Update – REVISED” presented at the November 12 General Issues Committee meeting which notes that as of September 30, 2025, \$11.7 million of the \$30.4 million initially budgeted in 2025 (now restated as \$38.825 million) has been spent or committed and that as of December 31, 2025, \$15.9 million of the restated \$38.825 million has been spent;

WHEREAS, on page 133 of 304 within the 2026 to 2035 Capital Financing Plan (Discretionary Tax Supported Net Capital Funding 2026-2035 Forecast), a whopping \$61.286 million has been budgeted for “Cybersecurity Recovery Build Back Stronger Strategy” in 2026 despite the aforementioned unspent allocated funding; and,

WHEREAS, at the January General Issues Committee Budget meeting, it was noted by staff that the Climate Change Reserve has a balance of approximately \$800,000 remaining.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the 2026 City of Hamilton Budget and Finance Plan be reduced by \$3.9 million as follows:
  - (i) That the 2026 Capital Levy **BE REDUCED** by \$2.5 million, reflecting the deferral of capital project 3302348302 climate change action plan to the 2027 budget process;
  - (ii) That the 2026 Capital Levy **BE REDUCED** by \$700,000, reflecting the elimination of capital project 2059999999; and
  - (iii) That the Capital Financing Plan for 2026 **BE AMENDED** to reflect a reduction in tax supported debt of \$8.1 million and a 2026 capital levy reduction of \$719,000, reflecting the deferral of proposed 2026 tax capital budgets of the following projects:
    - (1) \$828,000 representing a reduction to the capital levy of \$73,000 from 3502557005 - Museum Collections Management Application;
    - (2) \$126,500 representing a reduction to the capital levy of \$10,000 from 3502557011 - Corporate Document and Records Management;
    - (3) \$5,733,000 representing a reduction to the capital levy of \$507,000 from 3502557012 - Enterprise Resource Planning System;
    - (4) \$543,000 representing a reduction to the capital levy of \$49,000 from 3502557021 - Transit Scheduling and Dispatch System; and,
    - (5) \$895,000 representing a reduction to the capital levy of \$80,000 from 3502657001 - Critical Infrastructure Replacement and Refresh.