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Sent: Thursday, February 12, 2026 9:20 AM
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Subject: Budget deliberations

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When possible, I have been watching online the various budget deliberation meetings. I've heard/watched several presentations where departments are congratulated - as they should be - for reducing single full-time complement posts, or otherwise reducing departmental spending.

What I haven't seen or heard is any discussion about the use of consultants.

The response I received from my recent Engage Hamilton query was that \$37,000,000 was spent on consultants in 2023 (the latest year available). Similar amounts were spent in prior years: \$185,084,000 between 2019-2023.

By very conservative estimates, that would equate to several hundred full-time staff. Every year.

I have heard the argument that hiring of consultants is, in fact, fiscally prudent as it a) allows for very industry specific skill sets, and b) negates the necessity of hiring/training/retaining these skill sets on a permanent basis.

I might agree with this argument if, in fact, the highly qualified consultants were retained only for specific, necessary, industry-specific, short term projects with specific, measurable, end goals, and for tasks which could not reasonably be carried out by existing staff.

Considering, however, that tens of millions of dollars seem to be spent every year with, seemingly, under-reported results/benefits, I find this argument difficult to accept.

Janice Currie
(Ward 12)

Sent from my iPad