



LAWSON

Ottawa deserves better.

ALEX LAWSON FOR MAYOR

Back to Basics Budget.

Zero in 2027. One per cent in 2028. At or below two after that. Fix the bucket, put every dollar to work, and hold the line without cutting the services people count on.

01 / OVERVIEW

Zero per cent in 2027.

Your property tax rate will not go up in the first Lawson budget. Not one point. Here is how we pay for it.

2027 PROPERTY TAX RATE

0%

No rate increase in the first Lawson budget

Paid for by the savings in Section 03.

WHAT ZERO HAS TO COVER IN 2027

\$79 million

The mayor's 2.5% cap, the housing money and the small business tax cut

Section 03.

IDENTIFIED IN THIS PLAN

\$77M to \$148M

A year, from plugging leaks and growing the base. Midpoint about \$112 million

Section 03, Briefs 1 to 6.

THE TERM

0%, 1%, 2%, 2%

Zero in 2027, one in 2028, at or below two after that

Section 03.

Ottawa does not have a revenue problem. It has a leaky bucket problem. Fix the bucket, put every dollar to work, and Ottawa can hold the line without cutting the services people count on.

City Hall has raised the property tax rate in every budget this term, 3.75 per cent in 2026 alone. Each time, it said there was no other way. There is. The City signs more than \$2 billion a year in contracts, pays consultant rates for work it orders every few weeks, budgets overtime at two thirds of what it actually spends, and lets departments spend down their budgets in December so they do not lose the money in January. We are overpaying for things like speed bumps and memorial trees. We are buying in bulk, but paying more.

These are just a few of the leaks. This plan plugs them. The zero year is the one that matters most, because every dollar not taken in 2027 is a dollar not paid in 2028, 2029 and 2030 either. After it, the plan sets the rate for the rest of the term so you can hold us to it: one per cent in 2028 as the first full year of savings lands, and at or below two per cent in 2029 and 2030. Every dollar found above that line goes into getting the basics right, not into next year's spending.

Every figure in this plan comes from the City's own budget, contract and audit records, and every one is explained in the six briefs that follow.

Over the term. The mayor's plan raises your rate 10 per cent over four years. Leiper adds a 1 per cent levy every year to an increase he will not name; at the 3 per cent a year we assume for him, that is 16. Saravanamuttoo has not committed yet. This plan raises it 5, and names every dollar that makes the difference.

Alex Lawson

0%, 1%, 2%, 2%. Every line of savings named.

5%



Mark Sutcliffe

2.5% a year at his own cap. His last budget was a 3.75% increase, and his savings have no list.

10%+



Jeff Leiper

A 1% levy every year, guaranteed, on top of an increase he will not name. He voted against the mayor's 2.5% cap and has spent the term arguing it wasn't enough. We assume at least 3% per year.

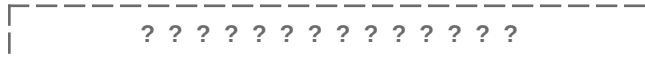
16%



Neil Saravanamuttoo

Has not committed yet. A spending review first, and an "honest conversation" about the infrastructure deficit.

?



02 / THE CHOICE

Three ways to handle a leaky bucket.

Mark Sutcliffe keeps the bucket leaking. Jeff Leiper wants to pour more in. Alex Lawson fixes the bucket. Neil Saravanamuttoo has not committed yet.

CANDIDATE 01

Mark Sutcliffe keeps the bucket leaking.

A cap of 2 to 2.5 per cent for 2027 and 2028, and a promise of another \$250 million in savings without a single line item. Of the \$252.7 million he calls savings from his first term, about \$26 million (10 per cent) came from City Hall running leaner. Nearly half was capital "efficiencies" the City does not itemize. His term ran 2.5, 2.5, 3.9 (for urban homes) and 3.75 per cent.

CANDIDATE 02

Jeff Leiper wants to pour more in.

He will not set a cap or name an increase. He says the City should assess the need first and set the tax number after. He voted against the mayor's 2 to 2.5 per cent cap in 2022 and against the 2026 budget, and his criticism of the mayor this term has been that the number came before the need, and that it wasn't high enough. The one figure he has given is a 1 per cent infrastructure levy on every property tax bill, every year, on top of whatever that assessment produces.

CANDIDATE 03

Alex Lawson fixes the bucket.

Zero in 2027, one per cent in 2028, at or below two after that, paid for by plugging the leaks, growing the tax base and getting a better price on everything the City buys. No bus routes cut. No reserves drained. No fee increases hiding behind the zero.

CANDIDATE 04

Neil Saravanamuttu has not committed yet.

He promises a spending review and an "honest conversation" about the infrastructure deficit, and will not commit to any tax target until it is done. Voters are asked to decide first and find out the number later.

03 / THE PLAN

Zero. Then one. Then at or below two.

The rate for every year of the term, and what each year has to cover.

What a year has to cover. Running the City costs more every year: wage settlements, the price of materials and contracts, the police budget, interest on debt the City has already taken on, and transit. Under the current mayor that pressure has run about \$155 million a year, and he has covered it with tax increases, assessment growth and "efficiencies" that are mostly not real. A Lawson budget does not carry two of the things inside that number: new programs with no funding source, and more money for OC Transpo before the schedule is fixed. Without those, the pressure the City actually has to manage is about \$100 million to \$120 million a year before growth, or \$65 million to \$85 million after the \$35 million a year that new homes and businesses add to the tax base.

WHAT EACH YEAR HAS TO COVER

YEAR	RATE	NEW ROOM (RATE PLUS GROWTH)	PRESSURE AFTER GROWTH	SAVINGS THE LEDGER MUST SHOW
2027	0%	\$35M	\$65M to \$85M, plus \$21M of promises	\$85M to \$105M
2028	1%	\$59M	\$65M to \$85M	\$125M to \$165M, cumulative
2029	2%	\$84M	\$65M to \$85M	\$145M to \$205M, cumulative
2030	2%	\$85M	\$65M to \$85M	\$160M to \$240M, cumulative

New room is what each year's rate adds (about \$23.4 million per point on the 2026 base) plus about \$35 million a year in assessment growth from new homes and businesses.

The \$21 million of promises in 2027 are two things Alex has already committed to: protecting the roughly \$12.5 million a year the vacant unit tax clears for affordable housing when it is repealed, and raising the small business tax discount from 15 to 25 per cent, about \$8.4 million a year.



Where the money comes from. Each saving below is estimated per year at full value and explained in the brief noted. Full value does not arrive on day one. The contracts list, open procurement and in-house engineering take a year to bite, so 2027 counts them at part-year, and 2028 is the first full year.

THE SAVINGS, AT FULL VALUE

SAVING	PER YEAR	BRIEF
Your money in plain sight, and the first price should be the last price	\$29M to \$62M	Briefs 1 and 2
Office hiring discipline: not refilling one in four office departures	\$12M to \$15M	Brief 5
Keep 25. Return 75. Ending use-it-or-lose-it budgeting	\$6M to \$12M	Brief 3
Overtime control outside transit	\$5M to \$10M	Below
Annual value-for-money audits of City departments	\$5M to \$10M	Below
Stop renting the same expertise (half counted, to avoid double counting)	\$4M to \$6.5M	Brief 6
A fine is a fine for everyone	\$2M to \$4M	Brief 4
Competitive bidding for City services, leaner council office budgets	\$3M to \$5M	Below
AI does the paperwork. People do the work. Direct savings after licences	\$1.8M to \$5.2M	Brief 5
Total savings	\$68M to \$130M	
Business-led growth through the Jobs and growth plan, year one	\$9M to \$18M	
Total with growth	\$77M to \$148M	

Three lines have no brief of their own. Overtime: the City spent \$99.4 million on overtime in 2025 against a 2026 budget of \$65.2 million; departments outside transit are held to the budget, starting where the gap is widest. Audits: every department is reviewed on a rotation, with the findings public and the savings booked. Competitive bidding and council budgets: services the City runs itself get a competing bid, and councillor office budgets go back to what they were before the 2025 increase.

How the ledger builds. The table below shows what the plan can plausibly have found by each budget, counting part-year in 2027, full value from 2028, and attrition and growth compounding after that.

THE LEDGER, YEAR BY YEAR

YEAR	MUST HAVE FOUND	PLAN CAN SHOW	WHAT CARRIES THE YEAR
2027	\$85M to \$105M	\$75M to \$100M	Hiring discipline, overtime, council budgets, Keep 25 at year end, the City's own routine efficiencies; contracts and consulting at part-year
2028	\$125M to \$165M	\$125M to \$150M	First full year of the contracts list and open procurement, amendments down, year two of attrition, in-house engineering hires, fine collection running
2029	\$145M to \$205M	\$150M to \$185M	Contract savings at two cents on the dollar, consulting in house, audits recurring, year three of attrition, growth plan revenue rising
2030	\$160M to \$240M	\$170M to \$210M	Everything at full value, attrition compounding

In 2027, the tight year, the plan sits inside the range with the City's routine efficiencies. From 2028 on, the 1 and 2 per cent, plus growth, carry the ongoing pressure while the reforms carry the rest.

What this plan does not count. Federal money for policing protests and national events in the capital is real money Ottawa is owed. It is counted in the policing plan, where it pays for more cars on the road, not here. The \$47 million a year the 2026 budget assumed from the Province taking over LRT costs has not arrived. If it comes, it goes to the basics. If it does not, that is a hole whoever is mayor inherits, and this plan does not pretend otherwise.

The stress test. If 2027 turns out as bad as 2026, when the City needed 3.75 per cent, the pressure after growth is about \$82 million, and with the two promises about \$103 million. The midpoint of this plan covers it.

Every figure is an estimate built from the City's own budget, contract and audit records. Where the research elsewhere gives a range, this plan uses the low end.

04 / YOUR BILL

What it means for your tax bill.

The average urban home in Ottawa paid about \$4,590 in property tax in 2026. Here is that bill under each plan.



THE AVERAGE URBAN HOME, 2027 TO 2030

PLAN	2027	2028	2029	2030	FOUR YEARS
Alex Lawson: 0%, 1%, 2%, 2%	\$4,593	\$4,639	\$4,732	\$4,826	\$18,790
Mark Sutcliffe: 2.5% a year, his own cap	\$4,708	\$4,826	\$4,946	\$5,070	\$19,549
Jeff Leiper: his 1% levy and an estimated 3%	\$4,777	\$4,968	\$5,167	\$5,373	\$20,285
Saved under Lawson vs. Sutcliffe	\$115	\$187	\$214	\$244	\$759

WHAT THE AVERAGE HOME PAYS MORE BY 2030, COMPARED WITH TODAY

Alex Lawson

5% over the term

+\$233 

Mark Sutcliffe

10% over the term, at his own cap

+\$477 

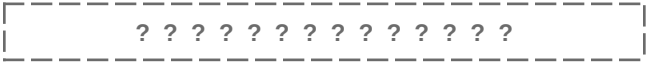
Jeff Leiper

16% over the term: his 1% levy on top of the 3% a year we assume, since he will not name a number

+\$780 

Neil Saravanamuttoo

No tax target given

? 

The zero year is where the value is: every dollar not taken in 2027 is a dollar not paid in 2028, 2029 and 2030 either.

The mayor's cap covers 2027 and 2028 only. He has said nothing about 2029 and 2030. The table carries his own cap through the term; his record for the last four years averaged 2.9 per cent. Leiper has named only the levy. His row assumes a 3 per cent base increase each year, a half point above the mayor's cap he voted against, plus the levy, 4 per cent a year in all; his real number could be higher or lower, and he has not said which.

05 / THE RULES

What we will not do.

A tax pledge is only worth something if it is honest. Six rules.

RULE 01**Raise taxes to cover waste.**

Fix the leaks first, before anyone is asked to pay more.

RULE 02**Drain the reserves to fake a freeze.**

Brampton froze property taxes for years while its strategic reserve fell from about \$200 million to under \$10 million. That is not a plan. It is a bill sent to next year.

RULE 03**Fine people more just to raise revenue.**

Parking meters come out. We collect what we are owed. We do not go hunting for more.

RULE 04**Cut the services people count on.**

No bus routes are cut to balance this plan. No bus driver, paramedic, firefighter or snowplough operator loses a job.

RULE 05**Add a program without naming what pays for it.**

No new spending without a named saving. Any motion Alex brings that adds ongoing spending will name, in the motion itself, the saving that pays for it.

RULE 06**Spend the headroom.**

Every dollar found above the 0%, 1%, 2%, 2% line goes to getting the basics right: roads, snow clearing and transit reliability. The savings ledger is published with every budget so you can see what was promised and what was delivered, side by side.

06 / THE RECORD

Savings that aren't.

Mark Sutcliffe says he found more than \$250 million in savings at City Hall, and promises to do it again. Read the City's own tables and only about one dollar in ten came from City Hall running leaner.

What the \$252.7 million actually is. The City's budget documents list every item. Grouped by what each one really is:

- Capital "efficiencies" the City does not itemize, \$115.0 million (46 per cent). One line a year. Cheaper bids, smaller projects or work pushed to later years: the City does not say which. The last one matters most. When a road rebuild budgeted for this year is pushed to 2028, the City books the difference as an efficiency. The road still has to be built, at 2028 prices, and the potholes stay until then.
- Transit, \$67.0 million (27 per cent), including \$10 million from what the City calls "bus route optimization." Less service is not efficiency.
- Revenue and funding changes counted as savings, \$15.6 million (6 per cent): \$7.5 million in interest on City bank balances, \$2.9 million from a new provincial and federal funding model for the City's child care centres, fee reviews and sponsorships. More money for child care should go to child care. It is not a saving at City Hall.

- 2023 operating savings that were never itemized, \$11.3 million (4 per cent).
- Police service savings, set by its own board, \$8.9 million (4 per cent).
- "Workforce management," positions left empty longer, plus discretionary trims, \$8.5 million (3 per cent).
- City Hall actually running leaner (fleet, facilities, insurance, IT contracts, LED lights, waste), \$26.3 million (10 per cent).

What the budget books show.

- \$7.8 million. In the 2026 budget's own line-by-line table, the "service initiatives and savings" column nets to \$7.8 million across the whole tax-supported City.
- Not one position. The budget's staffing table has a column for jobs changed by efficiencies. For 2026 it reads 0.00 in every department: \$44.9 million in claimed efficiencies without a single position removed.
- Spending up 13.4 per cent. Tax-supported spending rose 13.4 per cent from the 2024 budget to the 2026 budget, and the City added 867 tax-supported positions.
- Overtime budgeted at two thirds of reality. The City spent \$99.4 million on overtime in 2025 and budgeted \$65.2 million for 2026. Police spent \$28.4 million; their 2026 overtime budget is \$14.5 million. OC Transpo spent \$32.6 million; its 2026 budget is \$22.3 million.
- Budgets set below what was already spent. The 2026 police budget (\$414.9 million) and transit budget (\$491.2 million) are both below what each actually spent in 2025 (\$417.6 million and \$503.7 million).
- A windfall, not a reform. CBC reported that a sizeable chunk of his savings came from windfalls beyond the City's control, notably the end of the federal carbon tax lowering fuel costs. That money is not in the \$252.7 million table; it sits in the fuel lines of the budget, where it lowered the pressure for one year. It only happens once.

The tax record. 2023: 2.5 per cent. 2024: 2.5 per cent. 2025: 2.9 per cent on the citywide levy, 3.9 per cent on the bill for urban homes once the 8 per cent transit levy is counted. 2026: 3.75 per cent.

His last 2.5 per cent promise lasted two years.

He is promising 2 to 2.5 per cent again, and another \$250 million in savings, without publishing a single line item. Cutting bus routes is not efficiency. Interest on the bank account is not a saving. And a promise without a list is not a plan.

07 / BRIEF 1

Your money in plain sight.

Ottawa signs more than \$2 billion a year in contracts. Every penny on the dollar we save is \$20 million we don't have to take from you.

The problem.

- \$4.1 billion in two years. City staff approved more than 3,600 contract awards and amendments over \$25,000 in 2024 and 2025 under delegated authority, before counting contracts Council approves directly and OC Transpo's early-2024 contracts, which were reported separately.
- Published late, and only the big ones. Awards are released twice a year in batches, and only above \$25,000. Residents and competing companies see the price after the money is committed.
- Contracts that grow after they are signed. Nearly one in three consulting dollars (\$108 million of \$353 million in 2024 and 2025) went to amendments to contracts already awarded.
- No competition on the biggest file. \$188 million for electric bus charging and electrical work went to Enviro over two years, without a competitive bid. Enviro is a company owned by Hydro Ottawa, which the City owns, but it is not a City department and its staff are not City staff; the City pays its hourly rate card like any contractor. The City's own Auditor General found the deal was cost-plus, with a 15 per cent margin at the top of the range the City had benchmarked, and said it could not give assurance the deal was value for money.

- Ottawa pays more for the basics. A speed hump costs \$15,000 to \$20,000 here, by a councillor's own account, and about \$4,000 in Toronto. A memorial tree with a plaque costs \$1,750 plus tax here and \$738 in Toronto. Ottawa buys these by the hundred and still pays double.

What the plan does.

MOVE 01

A live, searchable, plain-language contracts list.

Every contract, with no minimum dollar amount, updated as work is awarded, not in six-month batches.

MOVE 02

Consultants and consultations included.

The studies, the reviews and the outside advice go on the list too.

MOVE 03

Open procurement, so more companies can bid.

More open bidding means more bidders, and more bidders means sharper prices.

Why it saves money. Prices drop for three reasons. More companies see the work and bid on it. Every bidder can see what the last job cost, so padded prices stand out. And contracts that grow quietly after signing become visible, so they grow less. Each of those is measured in the results that follow.

Where it has worked.

- Montreal: after the Charbonneau inquiry broke up the sidewalk cartel and the city opened its contracts to an inspector general, the price of a sidewalk fell from \$150 to \$200 a square metre to \$100 to \$120, and the number of firms bidding went from four to as many as 17.
- Waterloo Region: when Ontario opened the region's construction tenders to every qualified bidder in 2019, bids per project rose from 3.7 to 5.5 and winning bids came in about 14 per cent lower, about \$24 million over two years.
- US state highway resurfacing (Brookings, 2024): each additional bidder cut costs 8.3 per cent, about US\$30,000 per lane-mile. States that gave bidders detailed plans and itemized cost estimates, instead of just a total, paid about 17 per cent less.
- European Union: contracts above the public advertising threshold drew about 12 per cent more bids and 8 per cent lower prices.
- Paris: transparency combined with negotiated contracting on public housing cut bid prices 26 per cent.
- Ukraine (ProZorro e-procurement): health-care buyers on the open platform saved 15 per cent on average, and 35 per cent where three or more companies competed.
- Colombia: open procurement data brought 17 per cent more bidders on average, 21 per cent more on open tenders.
- Paraguay and Nepal: once contract changes were published openly, amendments fell from 19 per cent to 3 per cent (Paraguay) and 13 per cent to 2 per cent (Nepal).
- Toronto: competing bids for garbage collection west of Yonge saved \$11.9 million a year, and cost per household fell from \$166 to \$129.

What it could mean for Ottawa. One cent on the dollar on about \$2 billion a year is about \$20 million, close to one point of property tax (\$21.8 million in 2026). Two cents is about \$40 million. Five cents is about \$100 million, more than this year's entire 3.75 per cent increase. These figures show scale, not a forecast. The results elsewhere ran from 8 to 35 per cent. Part of any saving lands in the capital and water budgets as well as the property tax, which means less borrowing and lower water bills.

Estimated annual savings: \$20 million to \$40 million a year.

That is 1 to 2 cents on the dollar on about \$2 billion a year in contracts, roughly one to two points of property tax. When every company that wants City work can see what the last job cost, the next bid comes in sharper. Transparency is not a lecture. It is how you get a better deal.

The first price should be the last price.

Contractors who bid on City work know the formula: bid low, then make it up on the extras.

When the City sends out a request for proposals without fully understanding the job, or leaves out what will change along the way, the project runs over time and over budget every time. Clear scope up front means the first price is the last price far more often.

What Ottawa's own records show. City staff approved more than 3,600 contract awards over \$25,000 in 2024 and 2025, the two most recent full years the City has published. More than one in four were changes to contracts already signed.

- All amendments to signed contracts, 2024 and 2025: 955, worth \$582 million.
- Amendments excluding planned electric bus orders (the largest: 124 more buses, \$214 million, bought as an option): about \$361 million.
- Consulting: nearly one in three dollars went to amendments. 459 amendments, \$108 million of \$353 million.
- Construction contracts: 212 amendments, \$81 million.
- Amendments awarded without competition: 144, worth \$89 million. These are changes where staff used the by-law's non-competitive clauses, deciding that only one supplier was acceptable or that no alternative existed, instead of going back to the market.

Examples. Manotick watermain link, phase 2: amended three times, \$11.6 million. Adisoke library construction: one amendment, \$6.9 million. Engineering oversight at the Robert O. Pickard sewage plant: amended five times, \$6.2 million. Not every amendment is waste; some are planned options or next phases. That is why every one should be public.

Why it happens, and what it costs.

- Metrolinx. Ontario's Auditor General found the provincial transit agency handed one contractor \$1.7 billion in add-on work without competition, on top of the original deal. Once a contract is signed, the extras go to whoever already holds it.
- Montreal. The city's engineering consulting contracts grew from \$37.7 million in 2012 to \$294.4 million in 2024, with about 20 per cent in cost overruns, according to a 2025 study. The sidewalk cartel was broken; the professional services problem was not.
- Ottawa. The City's own Auditor General found the Envari bus charging deal was signed with no fixed price and no fixed timeline, on a cost-plus basis. That is the structure that cannot control changes after signing.
- Incomplete contracts are expensive. A study of California highway paving contracts in the American Economic Review found that changes after signing cost 7.5 to 14 per cent of the winning bid, and that bidders adjust their bids when they expect the contract to change.

Where shining a light worked. After contracts and their changes were published openly, contract changes fell from 19 per cent to 3 per cent in Paraguay and from 13 per cent to 2 per cent in Nepal.

What Your money in plain sight does. A live, searchable list of every contract, with no minimum dollar amount, updated as work is awarded. Amendments are contract awards, so they go on the list as they happen. Consultants and consultations included, the part of City spending where changes after signing are most common. Open procurement, so more companies bid and there is less room to make it up on the extras.

Estimated annual savings: \$18 million to \$45 million a year.

That is what it saves if extras on signed contracts fall by 10 to 25 per cent, on about \$180 million a year in changes, excluding bus orders. Part of this overlaps with the savings from Your money in plain sight, which is why the two briefs are counted together in Section 03. Every 10 per cent fewer extras is about \$18 million a year, close to a full point of property tax.

09 / BRIEF 3

Keep 25. Return 75.

Every taxpayer knows the story. It is the end of the year, a department has money left, and if it does not spend it, it loses it next year. So it spends.

A Lawson City Hall changes the rule: departments keep 25 per cent of what they have left at year end, and the other 75 per cent goes back to the tax base.

The problem. Under use-it-or-lose-it rules, a dollar saved in December is punished twice: it is taken back, and next year's budget is cut to match. The manager who runs a lean operation loses. The one who rushes to spend wins. Nobody should be surprised when the last weeks of the year look like a shopping spree.

What the research shows.

- 4.9 times the spending in the last week. A Harvard and Stanford study of US federal contracts found agencies spend 4.9 times more in the final week of the fiscal year than in a typical week: 8.7 per cent of the year's spending in one week.
- Lower quality. IT projects bought in that final week were two to six times more likely to be rated poor quality.
- Letting departments keep a share fixes it. The US Department of Justice can carry a slice of its budget into a multi-year technology fund. Its year-end IT spike disappeared, with no drop in quality.
- Ottawa is not immune. In 2018 the federal government rush-ordered 34,000 smartphones for 27 departments in the last six weeks of the fiscal year, about \$23 million, because the money would otherwise lapse.

Where it has worked.

- Government of Canada: since the mid-1990s, federal departments have been allowed to carry forward up to 5 per cent of their operating budget into the next year. Parliament's own research service says the rule was designed to reduce year-end spending, and Treasury Board reported no March spending spikes in the years after it banned them in 2012.
- Calgary: carries forward unspent one-time operating budget from one year to the next under a Council policy, \$221 million from 2024 to 2025, so projects are finished properly instead of rushed to a March deadline.
- Bloomington, Indiana: departments that spend less than budgeted keep 50 per cent of the savings for their own priorities. In 2016, \$3.9 million in savings and extra revenue was split: \$1.5 million back to departments, \$1.2 million to vehicles and equipment, \$1.2 million to reserves.
- US Department of Justice: a carry-forward fund for IT. Year-end IT spending stayed near normal, with no quality drop.

How it works in Ottawa. At year end, whatever is left in a department's budget is split. 25 per cent stays with the department that saved it, to use on its own priorities the next year. 75 per cent goes back to the tax base instead of being spent for the sake of spending. This is not new spending. The 25 per cent is money Council already approved for that department this year; the rule only changes when it can be spent, and takes the other 75 per cent off the table for good.

What it could mean. In 2024, the City finished the year with a \$38.3 million surplus on the tax-supported budget. Under this rule, a year like that means about \$9.6 million rewarded to the departments that saved

it and about \$28.7 million back to the tax base, more than a full point of property tax. Illustration only: the year-end surplus also includes revenue changes. The rule applies to what each department has left.

Estimated annual savings: \$6 million to \$12 million a year.

That is 0.5 to 1 per cent of the roughly \$1.16 billion a year the City spends on contracted services, materials, equipment and supplies, in year-end spending that no longer happens. On top of that, 75 per cent of what departments have left goes back to the tax base: about \$28.7 million in a year like 2024. Keep 25. Return 75. Reward the people who save, not the people who spend.

10 / BRIEF 4

A fine is a fine for everyone.

We are not going to fine people more to raise revenue. We are going to collect what we are owed.

A Lawson City Hall gives everyone more time to pay at the lower rate, and makes sure a fine left unpaid for two years is collected from a tax refund like any other debt to government.

Not a cash grab.

- Parking meters come out. Under the Free up parking plan, every on-street parking meter in Ottawa is removed, and no posted parking limit anywhere in the city will be shorter than two hours. The Province shut off Ottawa's 60 photo radar cameras in November 2025, so that revenue is already gone. Less revenue from fines is the point, not a problem: this plan is costed on fewer tickets, not more.
- More time to pay at the lower rate. Ottawa offers a lower early-payment amount, \$50 instead of \$70 for an overtime parking ticket, and only this spring approved moving the window from 7 days to 15. A Lawson City Hall extends it well beyond that, so people who mean to pay have time to do it at the lower price.

Fewer reasons to be fined, more time to pay. But a fine that is owed should be paid, by everyone.

The problem. As of September 2025, drivers owed the City of Ottawa \$92 million in unpaid parking, red-light camera and photo radar fines: \$68.1 million in parking fines going back to 2001, \$15.8 million in photo radar fines and \$8.1 million in red-light camera fines. The photo radar cameras are gone, but \$10.3 million of those tickets was still unpaid in August 2026. In 2024 the City wrote off \$2.6 million in parking fines so old they could no longer be collected. Most people pay their fines. Every unpaid fine is money the rest of us make up on the tax bill.

Why the tax refund, and not licences or property tax.

- Suspending a driver's licence only works on people who drive. A fine owed by someone without a licence goes uncollected.
- Adding the fine to the property tax bill only works on people who own property. Renters walk away; owners pay.
- Taking it from a tax refund or credit works on nearly everyone, because nearly every adult files a tax return. The same rule for owners and renters, drivers and non-drivers.

How it works.

STEP 01

New fines only.

Nothing changes for fines already on the books. The rule applies to fines issued after it takes effect, so everyone knows the deal in advance.

STEP 02

Two years to pay before it goes to the CRA.

Only a fine still unpaid two years after it was issued is sent for collection from a federal tax refund or credit.

STEP 03

Working with Queen's Park.

The CRA Refund Set-Off Program is open to federal, provincial and territorial governments, not to cities directly. Ottawa will ask the Province to carry the City's unpaid fines into it as a debt to the Crown, or to negotiate access on the City's behalf. No Ontario city has done this yet. Ottawa will be the first to ask.

STEP 04

Built-in fairness.

The CRA program already protects low-income households: certain credits are paid out in full, not taken, when family income is below a set threshold.

Where it already works. British Columbia referred unpaid health premium accounts, out of \$422 million in arrears, to the CRA for collection in 2020. Saskatchewan's financial regulator joined the program in 2023 to collect money owed to the Crown.

Estimated annual savings: \$2 million to \$4 million a year once running.

That is what collecting 5 to 10 per cent more of the roughly \$36 million a year in parking and red-light camera fines is worth, after what collection agencies already recover. It applies to new fines only, and it is deliberately lower than it could be: with the meters out and the photo radar cameras gone, there will be fewer tickets, and this plan does not go looking for more. The bigger effect is behaviour: when an unpaid fine follows you to your tax refund, more people pay early and on time.

11 / BRIEF 5

AI does the paperwork. People do the work.

City staff should spend their time fixing roads, approving homes and serving residents, not retyping forms.

A Lawson City Hall expands automation to take the paperwork off their desks. No layoffs. No personal information going into AI. People make every decision that affects a resident.

What Ottawa already does. The City has made a start, and the start is the proof that the rest can be done.

- Process automation: 6 projects in 2025, 9 more underway. 245,000 manual steps and 44,000 staff hours saved, about \$2.03 million in staff time plus \$410,000 in direct savings. The City's own list includes leave approvals, appointment bookings and service request routing, document sorting for HR and Provincial Offences files, agent-assist tools for 3-1-1 staff, and resume screening for high-volume hiring.
- Microsoft Copilot: more than 3,200 staff, 114,000 prompts in one month. Drafting and finding information, kept inside the City's own systems.
- Street asset mapping: being rolled out. Camera footage from 7,000 kilometres of road scanned automatically for signs, signals, streetlights and pavement markings, replacing manual review.

What is counted, and what is not. None of the staff-time figures below go into the savings table in Section 03. The City already pays for these tools; what it has not done is turn the hours they save into budget savings. Those hours are absorbed inside departments. This plan counts them once, through office hiring discipline: when the paperwork takes less time, a position that comes open does not need to be refilled. The only lines from this brief in the savings table are the direct savings, after licences.

Where we expand it.

MOVE 01

Office tools for staff, about \$17 million a year in staff time.

Drafting, searching and summarizing, with the tools the City already licenses. A UK government trial of 20,000 staff found about 26 minutes saved per person per day, by the staff's own reporting. Counted here at 20 minutes a day for 3,200 users. This is time the City is already saving and not yet banking.

MOVE 02

More process automation, \$15 million to \$20 million a year in staff time.

Grow from 6 projects to 50 over the term, at the City's own results so far. The next ones are the same kind of work in the departments that have not started: permit intake and routing, invoice matching, inspection scheduling, fleet and facility work orders, and the paper forms that still move between departments by email.

MOVE 03

Permit pre-checks, \$1 million to \$2 million in staff time, and faster housing approvals.

Drawings checked against the rules before a reviewer sees them. Honolulu cut review time from 73 to 32.5 days, and review rounds from 3.4 to 1.4. Staff still approve every permit.

MOVE 04

Road and asset condition, \$0.5 million to \$1 million in inspection time.

Potholes, faded lines and damaged signs logged from cameras on City vehicles. Faces and plates blurred first.

MOVE 05

Contract and spending checks, \$1.4 million to \$2.8 million recovered.

Flag purchasing card rule breaches, duplicate invoices and contract changes after signing. The Auditor General found 12 per cent of sampled card purchases broke procurement rules and only one was caught in reconciliation. Business data, not personal data.

MOVE 06

Faster invoice processing, \$1 million to \$2 million in added discounts.

Suppliers offer the City a discount, often 1 to 2 per cent, for paying within 10 to 15 days. The City earned \$2.3 million that way in 2024 and missed more by paying late. Automation matches the invoice to the purchase order and the delivery slip so it is ready to approve on time. A person approves every payment. Nothing pays itself.

Where AI stays out.

- Personal information. Tax accounts, benefits, by-law complaints, payroll, HR and fines are handled with fixed-rule automation only. No personal information goes into an AI model, and no model is trained on residents' data.
- Decisions about residents. A person makes every decision that affects a resident.
- French translation and art. Translation is done by French speakers. Art and visual design are done by artists the City hires. That is the work, not the paperwork.

- Out in the open. A public list of every AI and automation tool the City uses, what it does and what data it touches.

Estimated annual savings: \$33 million to \$40 million a year in staff time, plus \$3.4 million to \$6.8 million in direct savings, less about \$1.6 million a year in licences.

Staff time becomes budget savings without layoffs: the freed-up time absorbs a growing city, so fewer positions need to be added or refilled as people retire and move on. That is the office hiring discipline line in Section 03. Let AI do the paperwork, so City staff can do the work. Your personal information never goes into it.

12 / BRIEF 6

Stop renting the same expertise.

If the City hires an outside firm to do the same kind of job dozens of times a year, every year, that is not specialist work. It is a permanent job being paid at consultant rates.

A Lawson City Hall builds that capacity in house and saves the outside firms for the work that truly needs them.

The same work, over and over. Ottawa awarded 1,490 consulting contracts in 2024 and 2025, worth about \$353 million once the electric bus program, insurance and IT system contracts are set aside. Leaving out one-off projects like Lansdowne, much of it is the same work, ordered again every few weeks:

- Road and sidewalk design and contract administration: about 200 contracts a year, \$40.0 million a year, in every six-month report.
- Construction inspection and materials testing: about 35 a year, \$23.6 million a year. These are the inspectors who stand on a road or sewer job to check the contractor's work, and the lab testing of asphalt, concrete and soil compaction that goes with it.
- Sewer, watermain and stormwater design and contract administration: about 70 a year, \$14.5 million a year.
- Bridge and structure inspection: about 25 a year, \$6.1 million a year.
- IT contract staff in named roles (developers, analysts): about 10 a year, \$4.4 million a year.
- Building and facility design: about 75 a year, \$3.4 million a year.
- Geotechnical and environmental site assessments: about 27 a year, \$2.0 million a year.
- Land surveying: about 10 a year, \$0.6 million a year.

Total repeat work: about 450 contracts a year, \$94.6 million a year. The same firms come back again and again: one engineering firm appears on more than 140 City contracts in two years, and two others on more than 60 each.

Why in house costs less.

- The rule is the problem. Council has made buying professional engineering from outside firms a required part of the City's business model. Engineering is 67 per cent of all the professional services the City buys.
- Contractors cost more for routine work. Canada's Parliamentary Budget Officer found federal IT contractors cost 22 to 26 per cent more than public servants doing the same work. A Louisiana state transportation study found in-house design 17 to 19 per cent cheaper than consultants on routine road and bridge jobs, and an Oregon audit found about 20 per cent.

- Ontario has already done it. The Province's Auditor General found Metrolinx was paying contract IT staff more than twice what it paid its own staff for the same roles, and that bringing outside consulting roles in its capital projects group in house would save \$10 million to \$15 million a year. Metrolinx cut its IT contractors by three quarters in a year and hired 90 in-house positions.
- Heavy consultant use goes with higher costs. Brookings (2024) found US states that rely more heavily on consultants paid about 20 per cent more per lane-mile of road work.
- Knowledge stays with the City. Staff who design a street are still there when it needs fixing, and they know what the last contract should have cost.

Not everything comes in house. Specialist work will still go to outside experts when it is needed: major bridges and structures, rail and LRT systems, rare technical skills, independent safety reviews, and short-term peaks the City should not staff for all year. The target is the routine, repeat work, not the specialist work.

Estimated annual savings: \$7 million to \$12 million a year.

That is what it saves if half of the \$94.6 million in repeat work comes in house at 15 to 25 per cent lower cost. Part of it lands in the water and sewer budget and the capital program, as lower water bills and less borrowing. Section 03 counts half of it, to avoid double counting with the contract savings. Hire for the routine. Contract for the rare.

13 / WHY ALEX

I know what things cost.

I build houses for a living. Every job starts with a number, and the number has to be right.

If I get it wrong in the client's favour, I eat the difference. If I get it wrong the other way, I lose the job to somebody honest. You learn pretty fast that you don't find waste by shouting a number from the parking lot. You find it by looking at where the money actually goes.

That's what we did with the City's budget. We didn't start with a slogan and work backwards. We started with the contracts, the overtime, the consultants and the year-end spending, and we wrote down every dollar and where it comes from. You can check every one of them.

City Hall has spent four years telling you there's no way to hold the line without cutting services. There is. Fix the bucket.

We've got a lot of work to do.

Ottawa deserves better.

14 / SOURCES & VERIFICATION

Every figure here is sourced.

WHAT A POINT OF TAX IS WORTH: \$23.4 MILLION

2026 Adopted Budget Book, revenue by category: 2026 property taxation revenue \$2,339.6 million, the base a 2027 increase applies to. One per cent is about \$23.4 million; 2.5 per cent is about \$58.5 million. The City has not published a 2027 budget outlook. The 2026 stress test: Draft Budget 2026 Magazine,

Table 3, tax increases \$81,874,000 (3.75 per cent on the 2025 base, about \$21.8 million per point) and assessment growth \$34,960,000. Assessment growth is already in the City's base and funds the cost of growth, so it is not counted against the need in either case.

<https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/2026%20Adopted%20Budget%20Book%20English%20Condensed.pdf>

BUDGET PRESSURE AND THE AVERAGE TAX BILL

The \$155 million a year run rate is the City's own 2026 arithmetic: a 3.75 per cent increase (\$81.9 million), assessment growth (\$35.0 million) and \$44.9 million in budgeted efficiencies, Draft Budget 2026 Magazine, Tables 3 and 5; it also matches the mayor's plan of 2.5 per cent, growth and \$62.5 million a year in savings. The lean baseline removes new service initiatives (2026 Adopted Budget Book, Operating Budget Changes, page 9) and the 2026 transit levy increase of 8 per cent (2026 Budget Magazine, page 24). The 2026 increase added about \$166 to the average urban tax bill (Capital Current, November 2025), which gives a 2026 bill of about \$4,590; bills in Section 04 compound each plan's rate on that base with no change in assessment. The mayor's path is his own stated cap carried through the term. Councillor Leiper has committed only to the 1 per cent levy (CTV News Ottawa, September 17, 2026; CBC Ottawa, October 2, 2026) and has named no base increase; his row assumes a 3 per cent base increase each year plus the levy (4 per cent a year, about 17 per cent compounded over the term) and is labelled as an assumption. He voted against the 2 to 2.5 per cent budget direction in December 2022 (CBC Ottawa, "Council gives green light to draft budget with 2.5% tax hike cap") and against the 2026 budget on December 10, 2025 (CBC Ottawa, "City budget passes with pledge to make LRT trains run more often"), and has said the City should assess the need before choosing a tax target (CTV, September 2026).

<https://capitalcurrent.ca/ottawa-proposes-3-75-tax-hike-to-pay-for-transit-police-and-other-priorities/>

THE VACANT UNIT TAX BACKFILL AND THE SMALL BUSINESS TAX CUT

The vacant unit tax clears about \$12.5 million a year for affordable housing (\$14.34 million in revenue less \$1.85 million in administration, 2023 occupancy year), protected under the Lawson vacant unit tax plan. The 15 per cent small business discount is worth \$12.6 million on the City side in 2026; going to 25 per cent adds about \$8.4 million a year, per the Lawson small business tax cut plan. Both at votealex.ca.

<https://votealex.ca>

SUTCLIFFE'S 2027 AND 2028 CAP AND \$250 MILLION PLEDGE

Campaign launch, September 16, 2026: property tax increases capped at 2 to 2.5 per cent in 2027 and 2028, and another \$250 million in savings. CTV News Ottawa, September 17, 2026; CBC Ottawa, September 16, 2026. CBC reported that "a sizeable chunk" of his earlier savings came from windfalls beyond the City's control, including the end of the federal carbon tax.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/mark-sutcliffe-ottawa-mayor-2026-tax-promise-9.7346686>

LEIPER'S LEVY AND NO CAP

Jeff Leiper pledged a 1 per cent infrastructure levy on property tax bills, about \$28 a year for the average home, and said he would assess the need before setting a tax target. He has not set a numeric cap. CTV News Ottawa, September 17, 2026; CBC Ottawa, October 2, 2026.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/leiper-pledges-to-add-1-infrastructure-levy-to-property-tax-increases-if-elected-ottawa-mayor/>

SARAVANAMUTTOO'S POSITION

Neil Saravanamuttoo declined to commit to any property tax increase target, promising a comprehensive spending review and an "honest conversation" with taxpayers about the infrastructure deficit. CTV News Ottawa, September 16, 2026.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/saravanamuttoo-promises-spending-review-at-ottawa-city-hall-if-elected-mayor/>

PHOTO RADAR CAMERAS AND THE FINES BASE

Ontario's Bill 56 (Royal Assent November 3, 2025) ended municipal automated speed enforcement; Ottawa's 60 cameras were shut off November 14, 2025 and the City says about \$15 million a year in revenue is gone. Red-light cameras continue (84 in 2026, \$11.3 million in 2024). As of August 5, 2026, 68,418 photo radar tickets worth \$10.3 million remained unpaid. The \$36 million a year base for the collection estimate is parking fines (about \$25 million, CBC 2023) plus red-light camera fines. CTV News Ottawa, November 14, 2025 and August 5, 2026; City of Ottawa Draft 2026 Budget report.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/city-of-ottawa-owed-millions-in-outstanding-photo-radar-ticket-fines/>

ENVARI AND THE AUDITOR GENERAL

Enviri Energy Solutions is a wholly owned subsidiary of Hydro Ottawa Holding Inc., which the City owns; it is not a City department and bills the City on an hourly rate card. Council directed a direct agreement in June 2021 and approved it June 14, 2023. Office of the Auditor General of Ottawa, Audit of Zero Emission Buses, Sprint 4 (August 29, 2023): "no competitive procurement was initiated"; the contract is cost plus with a 15 per cent overhead and profit margin "on the highest end of the range benchmarked by the City"; "We are unable to provide assurance that the 15 per cent overhead and profit margin will yield the best value for money for the City."

<https://www.oagottawa.ca/news/posts/auditor-general-publishes-report-of-the-audit-of-zero-emission-buses-sprint-4-enviri-contract/>

MONTREAL AND WATERLOO

IRIS (Institut de recherche et d'informations socioéconomiques), May 2025: Montreal engineering consulting contracts \$37.7 million (2012) to \$294.4 million (2024), about 20 per cent overcost. Bureau de l'inspecteur général de Montréal, report to council September 17, 2018: sidewalk prices of \$150 to \$200 per square metre during the collusion period fell to \$100 to \$120 by 2016; four firms held all sidewalk contract value in 2009, 14 to 17 firms competed in 2015 to 2017 (Journal Métro, September 17, 2018; CBC Montreal, September 2018). Region of Waterloo after Bill 66 opened construction tenders in 2019: average bids per project 3.68 to 5.54, winning bids about 14 per cent lower, about \$24 million over two years (Cardus, July 2021, a think-tank study; Daily Commercial News, August 2021).

<https://journalmetro.com/actualites/montreal/1800826/lindustrie-du-trottoir-nest-plus-problematique-juge-le-big/>

FEDERAL CARRY-FORWARD AND MARCH SPENDING

Federal departments may carry forward up to 5 per cent of operating appropriations; the Library of Parliament describes the mechanism as designed to reduce year-end spending (Research Publication 2025-10-E; Senate National Finance Committee, October 1996). CBC, April 2018: Shared Services Canada ordered about 34,000 smartphones for 27 departments in the last six weeks of the fiscal year, about \$23 million; Treasury Board reported no March spending spikes in 2013 and 2014 after its 2012 ban. Calgary carry-forward of one-time operating budget, \$221.2 million from 2024 to 2025, Council Policy CFO004.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/march-madness-fiscal-smartphones-1.4634779>

METROLINX AND IN-HOUSE STAFF

Auditor General of Ontario, Metrolinx Operations and Governance, December 2020: contract IT staff cost "more than twice" equivalent full-time staff, about \$157 million over five years; \$1.7 billion of non-competitive add-on work awarded to Accenture. Follow-up, 2022: a Ministry of Transportation review found Metrolinx could save \$10 million to \$15 million a year by bringing external consulting roles in its capital projects group in house; IT contractors cut from 243 (March 2021) to 58 (July 2022); 90 in-house positions requested.

https://www.auditor.on.ca/en/content/annualreports/arreports/en22/1-06metrolinxgov_en22.pdf

MEMORIAL TREES

City of Ottawa Tree Dedication Program: \$995 plus HST without a plaque, \$1,750 plus HST with a granite plaque. City of Toronto Commemorative Tree and Bench Program: new tree with engraved plaque \$738.

<https://ottawa.ca/en/living-ottawa/environment-conservation-and-climate/public-spaces-and-environmental-programs/tree-planting/tree-dedication-program-former-commemorative-trees-program>

THE \$252.7 MILLION AND ITS PARTS

2026 Budget Magazine, Table 5: 2023 to 2026 budget efficiencies total \$252,672,000 (operating \$137,648,000, capital \$115,024,000). Components grouped by the campaign from Draft Budget 2024 Report Table 1 (pages 18 and 19), Draft Budget 2025 Magazine Table 5 (page 35) and 2026 Budget Magazine Table 5 (page 38): capital \$115.0 million; transit operating \$67.0 million including "Bus Route Optimization" \$10.0 million (2024); interest income \$7.5 million, child care funding model \$2.9 million, fee and parking reviews, fire alarm strategy and sponsorship \$15.6 million in total; 2023 operating \$11.3 million, unitemized; police \$8.9 million; workforce management strategy and discretionary savings \$8.5 million; fleet, facilities, insurance, IT, LED and waste \$26.3 million.

<https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/Document%205%20-%20Draft%20Budget%202024%20Report.pdf>

THE TAX RECORD

2023 and 2024 at 2.5 per cent (CBC Ottawa). 2025: citywide levy 2.9 per cent, transit levy 8 per cent, overall 3.9 per cent for urban homes (Draft Budget 2025 Magazine, page 24). 2026: 3.75 per cent overall (2026 Budget Magazine, page 24).

<https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/Draft%20Budget%202025%20Magazine.pdf>

\$7.8 MILLION, ZERO POSITIONS, 13.4 PER CENT AND 867 POSITIONS

2026 Adopted Budget Book, Operating Budget Changes (page 9): "Service Initiatives / Savings" column, total tax-supported program, net \$7,804,000. Full Time Equivalent Budget Changes (pages 13 to 16): "Service Initiatives / Efficiencies" column 0.00 in every department. Total tax-supported program expense \$4,134.5 million (2024 Adopted Budget Book) to \$4,686.3 million (2026 Adopted Budget Book), up 13.4 per cent; tax-supported FTEs 15,947 to 16,815, up 867.

<https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/2026%20Adopted%20Budget%20Book%20English%20Condensed.pdf>

OVERTIME, AND POLICE AND TRANSIT BUDGETS BELOW ACTUALS

2026 Adopted Budget Book, page 1: overtime 2025 actual \$99,406,000, 2026 adopted \$65,191,000. Police (page 311): 2025 actual \$28,366,000, 2026 budget \$14,471,000. Transit (page 328): 2025 actual \$32,602,000, 2026 adopted \$22,300,000. Net requirements: police 2025 actual \$417,594,000 versus 2026 adopted \$414,882,000; transit 2025 actual \$503,650,000 versus 2026 adopted \$491,171,000.

<https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/2026%20Adopted%20Budget%20Book%20English%20Condensed.pdf>

BRAMPTON'S RESERVE

Brampton's strategic reserve fell from \$200 million in 2021 to \$9.5 million in 2023 while the city held property taxes flat since 2018. CBC Toronto, June 4, 2024.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/brampton-strategic-reserve-fund-taxes-1.7214210>

GROWTH, AND THE BUSINESS SHARE OF IT

2026 total levy growth \$37.2 million; commercial and industrial share \$1.93 million. City of Ottawa, 2026 Tax Policy and Other Revenue Matters report to Finance and Corporate Services Committee, April 7, 2026, as used in the Lawson small business tax cut plan. The year-one growth estimate of \$9 million to \$18 million is a campaign estimate from the Jobs and growth plan.

<https://pub-ottawa.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=305531>

CONTRACTS AWARDED UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY, 2024 AND 2025

Open Ottawa, Contracts Awarded Under Delegation of Authority, four half-year reports (January to June 2024 all departments, July to December 2024, January to June 2025, July to December 2025): 3,691 line items totalling \$4,136.6 million. OC Transpo's January to June 2024 contracts were reported separately to the Transit Commission (84 items, \$323.7 million) and are not included. Amendments identified by the City's "Contract Approval Request Type" field: 955 amendments and extension-amendments, \$582.0 million; excluding the New Flyer and Nova Bus electric bus options (\$221 million), about \$361 million; 144 amendments with a non-competitive rationale, \$88.9 million. Consulting: 1,490 items coded "PE = Specialized Expertise," with the Envari zero-emission bus program, group insurance, IT system and food procurement contracts set aside, about \$353 million, of which about \$108 million were amendments. Repeat-work categories are the campaign's grouping of the City's contract descriptions. Reporting rules: Procurement By-law 2000-50, section 39(1), semi-annual reports for contracts over \$25,000.

<https://open.ottawa.ca/api/search/v1/collections/dataset/items?q=delegation%20of%20authority>

ENVARI ZERO-EMISSION BUS AWARDS

Envari Energy Solutions, zero-emission bus program, all under Procurement By-law section 22(1)(d), non-competitive: \$55.3 million (January to June 2024), \$26.0 million (July to December 2024), \$100.9 million and \$5.4 million (January to June 2025), \$0.1 million (July to December 2025). Total \$187.7 million. Council approved the Envari arrangement in June 2023; the dollar awards were made under delegated authority.

[https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/Contracts%20Under%20Delegation%20of%20Authority%20January%201%20to%20June%2030%202025-AODA.pdf)

[Contracts%20Under%20Delegation%20of%20Authority%20January%201%20to%20June%2030%202025-AODA.pdf](https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/Contracts%20Under%20Delegation%20of%20Authority%20January%201%20to%20June%2030%202025-AODA.pdf)

SPEED HUMPS

Councillor Glen Gower, Kittiwake traffic calming feedback summary, March 13, 2025: "a typical cost of about \$15,000 to \$20,000 each, including materials, installation, signage, and project management." City of Toronto staff report, May 16, 2025 (Ward 3 speed humps): "approximately \$4,000" per hump, installation estimate.

<https://glengower.ca/information/summary-of-resident-feedback-on-proposed-kittiwake-traffic-calming/>

BROOKINGS, PROCUREMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS

Liscow, Nober and Slattery, "Procurement and Infrastructure Costs," Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 2024, US state highway resurfacing. An additional bidder is associated with 8.3 per cent lower costs, about \$30,000 per lane-mile. A one standard deviation improvement in bidding practices (publishing project plans and itemized unit-cost estimates rather than only the contract value) is associated with a 17 per cent decrease in cost per lane-mile. One additional change order correlates with \$25,000 in added cost per lane-mile. A one standard deviation increase in consultant costs is associated with almost 20 per cent higher cost per lane-mile.

https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/Procurement_and_Infrastructure_Costs.pdf

OPEN CONTRACTING RESULTS

Open Contracting Partnership, evidence of impact: EU, about 12 per cent more bids and 8 per cent lower prices above publication thresholds; Paris, negotiated housing contracts combined with greater transparency reduced bid prices 26 per cent; Ukraine ProZorro, health-care buyers saved 15 per cent on average and 35 per cent with three or more bidders; Colombia, 17 per cent more bidders on average and 21 per cent on open tenders; Paraguay, amendments fell from 19 per cent to 3 per cent; Nepal, 13 per cent to 2 per cent.

<https://www.open-contracting.org/impact/evidence/>

TORONTO GARBAGE COLLECTION

CBC News, December 17, 2013: private collection west of Yonge "has saved the city \$11.9 million."
Toronto Life, "Pickup Artists," March 20, 2014: cost per household \$166 to \$129 a year.

<https://www.cbc.ca/lite/story/1.2466736>

INCOMPLETE CONTRACTS

Bajari, Houghton and Tadelis, "Bidding for Incomplete Contracts: An Empirical Analysis of Adaptation Costs," American Economic Review 104(4), 2014: adaptation costs account for 7.5 to 14 per cent of the winning bid on California highway paving contracts, and bidders respond strategically to contractual incompleteness.

<https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.104.4.1288>

YEAR-END SPENDING RESEARCH

Liebman and Mahoney, "Do Expiring Budgets Lead to Wasteful Year-End Spending?" American Economic Review 107(11), 2017: spending in the last week of the fiscal year is 4.9 times a typical week (8.7 per cent of the year); last-week IT projects are 2.2 to 5.6 times more likely to be rated below the central quality rating; the Department of Justice, with authority to roll up to 4 per cent of its budget into a multi-year IT fund, shows no year-end spike or quality drop. Bloomington, Indiana, news release, May 31, 2017: \$3.9 million (\$3.0 million departmental savings plus \$0.9 million extra revenue), split \$1.5 million, \$1.2 million and \$1.2 million. Oklahoma (carry-forward since 1997) and Canada (carry-over capped at 5 per cent of operating budgets): Fichtner, Mercatus Center, "Curbing Wasteful Year-End Federal Government Spending," 2017.

<https://www.nber.org/digest/mar14/use-it-or-lose-it-budget-rules>

2024 SURPLUS AND OUTSIDE SPENDING

Draft Budget 2026 Magazine, Table 4, operating surplus: 2024 tax-supported \$38,318,000 (overall \$44,475,000). City of Ottawa 2024 Consolidated Financial Statements, Note 21: contracted and general services \$484,969,000 plus materials, equipment and supplies \$678,497,000, \$1,163.5 million in total.

<https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/EN%20-%202024%20Financial%20Statement-AODA.pdf>

UNPAID FINES

CTV News Ottawa, September 23, 2025: \$92 million owed, \$68.1 million parking (since 2001), \$15.8 million automated speed enforcement, \$8.1 million red-light camera; about \$8.7 million in defaulted fines sent to collections each year with roughly 69 per cent recovered. CBC News, June 4, 2024: 71,835 pre-amalgamation parking tickets totalling more than \$2.6 million written off. CTV News Ottawa, April 7, 2026: overtime parking fine \$70, early payment \$50, early-payment window extended from 7 to 15 days by the finance committee. Fines revenue base: 2026 Adopted Budget Book, "Fines" \$90.8 million, of which about \$26 million is tax penalties and interest and about \$49 million camera fines; parking fines are booked separately. The \$36 million a year used here is parking (about \$25 million, CBC, 2023) plus red-light camera fines; photo radar revenue ended in November 2025. The savings estimate is a campaign estimate.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/drivers-owe-city-of-ottawa-millions-in-outstanding-fines/>

CRA REFUND SET-OFF PROGRAM

Canada Revenue Agency, Individual Refund Set-Off Program privacy impact assessment: open to any federal, provincial or territorial department, agency or Crown corporation for debts due to the Crown; certain credits are paid to the individual rather than set off when net family income falls below the threshold. Global News, January 10, 2020: BC referred unpaid MSP accounts, out of \$422 million in

arrears, to the CRA. Government of Saskatchewan, August 21, 2023: the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority joined the program to recover debts owed to the Crown.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/about-canada-revenue-agency-cra/protecting-your-privacy/privacy-impact-assessment/individual-return-set-off-program.html>

CITY AUTOMATION AND COPILOT

City of Ottawa response to Inquiry FCSC-2024-03 (September 2024) lists automated flows for leave approvals, appointment bookings and service requests, document classification for HR and Provincial Offences Act files, 3-1-1 agent assist, and research on street sign and pavement crack detection; CTV and CBC, December 2, 2025, report SAP Joule resume screening and GATS mobile mapping in development. Draft Budget 2026 Magazine, pages 55 and 56: six automation initiatives implemented in 2025, nine underway; over 245,000 manual steps and 44,000 hours saved, about \$2.03 million in staff time, plus an estimated \$410,000 in cost savings above staff time. CTV News Ottawa, December 2, 2025: 3,239 staff used Copilot and submitted 114,000 prompts between October 25 and November 23, 2025. 2024 Procurement Year in Review: \$2.3 million in prompt payment discounts in 2024.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/ottawa/article/city-of-ottawa-using-ai-to-scan-resumes-boost-office-productivity>

UK COPILOT TRIAL, HONOLULU PERMITS, PURCHASING CARDS

UK government trial of about 20,000 civil servants, October to December 2024: self-reported median saving of 26 minutes a day (The Register, June 3, 2025). GovTech, August 31, 2026: Honolulu review time 73 to 32.5 days, review cycles 3.4 to 1.4. Office of the Auditor General of Ottawa, Audit of the Purchasing Card Program, June 2024: \$92.6 million in card spending in 2023; 7 of 60 sampled transactions (12 per cent) breached procurement requirements, one caught in reconciliation. Staff time valued at the City's average compensation of about \$133,000 per position (2026 compensation \$2,318.5 million over 17,387 FTEs). Savings ranges are campaign estimates.

<https://www.oagottawa.ca/media/fkshe5pn/document-1-oag-audit-of-the-purchasing-card-program.pdf>

ENGINEERING MANDATE AND CONSULTANT COSTS

2024 Procurement Year in Review, section 5: "The procurement of professional engineering services is a required mandate approved by Council as part of the business model used by the City. By value, professional engineering services represent 67 per cent of all professional services procured by the City last year." Parliamentary Budget Officer, Fiscal Cost of Task-Based IT Contracting, January 16, 2025: contractors 22.0 to 25.7 per cent more costly than public sector equivalents. Louisiana Transportation Research Center, Report 309 (1998): in-house design 81 per cent of consultant cost for roads, 83 per cent for bridges; Oregon audit (2006), about 20 per cent, both compiled in a Caltrans preliminary investigation, 2011.

<https://pub-ottawa.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=242062>

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Savings percentages, the attrition pace, the audit yield, the overtime target and the growth estimate are campaign estimates built on the City figures above. Where the research gives a range, the plan uses the low end.

Authorized by the official agent of the Alex Lawson campaign.