

Meeting Transcript - January 19, 2026 (CM)

Mayor Bryan Paterson 6:57

All right, folks, good evening. Everybody. Welcome to our first night of budget meetings. Congrats to those who made it through the snow, and I know that we have a number of people online as well. So with that as an official call to order, first, I will ask if there are any disclosures of potential pecuniary interest. Councilor Amos.

Councillor Don Amos 7:36

Sorry. McLaren, thank you. Through you, I don Amos Council for the City of Kingston. Declare my possible pecuniary interest, specifically with respect to Report 26-033, proposed 2026 operating and capital budget. I'm an employee the seniors Association Kingston region, which receives funding from the City of Kingston through a Memorandum of Understanding agreement.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 7:58

Okay. Thank you very much. Are there any other disclosures of pecuniary interest? Okay, moving on. Then we do have an addendum to approve, which just notes some additional communications. Can I get a mover and a seconder for the addeds Please? Moved by Deputy Mayor Hassan, second by councilor Osanic? All those in favor. Okay with that, then we'll move to item four, which is the introduction of the 2026 budget. So if the slides are ready,

Mayor Bryan Paterson 9:20

hey. So with that, we'll move to the 2026, proposed operating and capital budgets, which I am pleased to present to council tonight. If I could just go to the next slide, please. Okay, so I'm just going to say this right off the top. I want to sincerely thank the entire corporate management team and senior staff for the work on this year's budget. I think it's fair to say, without exaggeration, this was an incredibly challenging budget process. I think everybody around the table is aware of the cost pressures that we are facing as municipality the same time understanding that cost of living continues. Used to be a major priority and concern for our residents, so being able to find the line between those two was very difficult. Think it caused a number of work, of lot of work, a number of different options and ideas that we had to work through. But again, this was a team effort with staff, and so I think that we've got it right. And definitely look forward to your comments and questions as you work through this. So if we go to the next slide, just a quick review of the direction that I gave staff in putting this budget together. So first, a the city's annual operating budget reflect a property tax levy for agencies and boards that is separate from municipal services prior to preparing the 2026, budgets. If you recall, this is the second year that we've done this, and the reason why is because my strong mayor powers do not apply to external agencies, so I am not able to direct anything to the external agencies. Obviously, that's up to all of us as we sit on these different boards to try to obviously press for different budget outcomes, but obviously, my direction only applies to the municipal budget itself. B prepare an operating and capital budget for municipal services based on a property tax increase that is among the lowest of other large cities in Ontario, and then the increase is no higher than 2.5% including a 1% capital levy. So the municipal operating budget comes in at an increase of 2.35% with the external agencies an additional 1.4 and so keep in mind that that includes a 1% capital levy. That means that from operating point of view, we're looking at a 1.35% increase. So again, that's a very challenging target, and again, staff worked really hard to be able to hit that number c, prioritize repair of city roads by including an additional 15 million in dedicated funding in the capital budget, thereby increasing total spending on road repair from 60 million to 75 million in 2026 again, that priority comes from the discussions that I've had from all of you around this table, understanding that this is a huge priority in our in our community, that is by far the most amount of money we've ever put towards roads in a given year. I go to the next slide, please. D continue to make further investments in housing solutions with funding in the capital budget of up to

\$10 million in operating funds to support new transitional housing and subsidized housing projects. E prioritize investments to improve safety, security and cleanliness in city parks, the downtown core and other public spaces in the community, as well as strategic investments to improve the city accessibility coordination, support for services and programs. F include new resources to help facilitate business investment in the city, recognizing that given the uncertain economic outlook, both locally and nationally, it is critical for the city to make it easier and faster for businesses to make new capital investments that bring new jobs and prosperity to Kingston. Next slide, please. G, include the necessary debt financing in the city's long term capital planning with existing budget parameters to enable the construction of a new pool facility in the Invista Centre, starting in 2020. H review existing city services as necessary to identify efficiencies, potential opportunities to redirect funds from areas that do not maximize value for taxpayer dollars or are not aligned with City Council's current strategic plan towards initiatives noted in this budget direction, I pause the annual incremental levy increase for the green CIP program at point one 6% for the 2026 fiscal year, as the program continues to have sufficient capacity with the \$400,000 currently levied on a yearly basis. And Jay prepare a report and draft 2026, annual budget to be presented by the mayor to council before February 1, which is happening today. Next slide. Now this is not including all cities across Ontario, but one of the things that you did notice in the budget direction is that our property tax increase would be amongst the lowest of other large cities in Ontario. You can see from this graph that we do come in among the lowest. Now I'm just going to make a couple of comments here. You will see a few cities Ontario that do have lower property tax increases this year. However, they are generally cities that have had much higher tax increases over the last few years. So for example, Toronto, they are proposing a 2.2% tax increase this year, but that was after 6.9% last year, 10% the year before, and 7.7 the year before that. So one of the goals here is not just to be lower, but to be lower consistently year after year. And I'm very proud of the work we've done as council and staff. That we have hit that target every single year of our term. Next slide, please. So obviously, the external agencies are a big part of our budget. We're going to be focusing on their presentations this evening, and then we will hear from Miss Kennedy on the overview of the budget. And then we will have the department. So you'll see there. Those are the tax increases that are proposed for each of our external agencies. I'm not going to give commentary on these there. I'm going to let each of each of our agencies present their budgets. The one thing I will note, though, is the outlier is the southeast public health 14% decline in their budget, and that is largely because of the merger with the other public health units to the east and west of us. So with that, we'll move into our presentations, and so moving along, if we are ready, we'll move to our first presentation, which is the Kingston Economic Development Corporation. I'll invite Donna Gillespie, Chief Executive,

Donna Gillespie 16:24

evening, it's my pleasure to be here once again to present our 2026 budget and related portfolio priorities for the coming year. Joining me this evening is our board chair, Cathy Campbell-Wilson, and we also have director of business development, Shelley Hurstwood in the audience in case questions get technical a little later on, but I'll turn it over to Kathy to introduce the budget.

Cathy Campbell-Wilson 16:52

Great. Thanks very much. Donna, so the development of our budget required quite a significant discussion this year with the finance committee and at the board level in order to maintain the services that kedco provides and ensure that we had a balanced budget. So in the last few years, we've had great success we believe in securing new funding for programs such as the feddev helix Life Sciences Initiative and two additional provincial programs that are not publicly announced yet to date, and staff

were directed to try and continue to seek out additional funding and other sources to support the initiatives and prioritize activities to the best of our mandate and the approved strategic direction. So this year, similar to the last few, as an organization, we continue to face cost of living increases, growing cost of supplies and services and workforce pressures to attract and retain the best talent. Thanks, Donna, so we approved a budget, a balanced budget by leveraging your dollars, the municipal dollars, to secure upper levels of government funding. And to that end, we're requesting an investment of approximately 1.6 million, which reflects a 4% increase of just approximately 63,000 over what we requested in 2025 and this overall represents 39% of our total operating budget. And as a board we've provided direction over the years to maintain and grow and support the services that we're providing, and so I'm pleased to report to staff that they have consistently secured new funding sources.

[FLAG: Unknown Speaker 18:56 — likely Donna Gillespie because this fragment falls within Gillespie's main presentation block; possibly Cathy Campbell-Wilson if a speaker handoff coincided with the audio dropout. Editor should check audio.]

Levels,

[FLAG: Unknown Speaker 19:17 — same reasoning as above]

commitment to the corporation comes from four

Donna Gillespie 19:33

important to note that without the municipal support, we would not be able to secure the level of provincial and federal funding that we do, this has grown our services to better serve local businesses and increased our ability to focus on development of our strategic clusters of sustainable manufacturing and Health Innovation Life Sciences. Overall in 2026 our total up.

Donna Gillespie 20:00

Significant new programs such as feddev helix Life Sciences launched in 2025 which brings much needed wet lab space to the community, in partnership with Providence care and funding to support scaling life sciences companies advance their technology readiness levels. We have also recently and quietly been

Donna Gillespie 20:26

will wind down or sale. Additionally, we are awaiting another significant provincial announcement, which will position Kingston and its ecosystem assets as a leader in the advanced material sector and provide financial support for companies to work with local partners on their path to commercialization. We are also working closely with the province to secure funding to support our businesses navigating the changing trade landscape and find new market opportunities in terms of leveraging your provincial dollars. Our provincial funding is linked to multi year service contracts with the Ontario Ministry of Economic Development, job creation and trade to deliver small business and start up support services, resources and programs throughout the city and surrounding rural area. These programs provide 120,000 company plus and Summer Company programs new for 2026 are the multi year funding agreements to deliver programs to support transitioning businesses and commercialization of new technologies, as discussed earlier, federal funding comes through. Can generation and travel related costs for attracting foreign direct investment. These matching funds are focused on advancing the priority sectors, in addition our feddev life science funding initiatives for

Donna Gillespie 22:04

seven and partner funding is secured to support Kingston young professionals in the annual Top 40 under 40 awards, Kingston newcomer Entrepreneur Awards and cost recovery events.

Donna Gillespie 22:24

Our expenditure expenditures, likewise, can be broken into four core areas our portfolio, expenses supporting business retention, expansion, startups and entrepreneurs and attraction and aftercare, wages and benefits, grants for businesses

and overhead related costs in December of last year, you signed a new five year service level agreement with the Corporation, which details our core portfolios and related KPIs for reporting for 2026 we have reduced the budget for attraction efforts, recognizing that economic uncertainties until Kuzma is renegotiated will delay many investment decisions. This change in budget also reflects that as a community, we have less shovel ready employment land currently available at this time, what we can be doing is working with our municipal colleagues and private land owners on ensuring the inventory for development is serviced and ready for investment and growth when there is more clarity on the world. Benefits, invest in a team of 12 full time employees who support the core portfolios and delivery of programs. This includes three program specific staff and our summer student, economic development intern. Overhead at 8% supports rent our physical office in downtown and a new satellite office at fractal at 945, Princess Street. The contract services for city is and T and city financial services, professional services such as legal auditors, General, marketing communications and digital platforms, professional development, Donna Gillespie 24:06

supporting Business Retention and Expansion, a strong focus will continue this year on supporting expansion into new non US trade markets and diversification of supply chains. There's also great potential for a local dual use technologies that can be introduced into defense and government procurement opportunities, our staff will closely work with municipal colleagues to facilitate local expansions and streamline processes and timelines to support their growth in 2025 we realized a high level of local expansion in ongoing investment in Kingston, with over \$80 million in capital investment including IPG can coil snap cab, cyclic materials demonstration facility and undo. In addition, Kingston saw 72 million.

Donna Gillespie 25:07

Mentioned earlier. We are funded by the province to deliver Small Business Enterprise Center Services for Kingston and area. We are one of 49 aspects across the province supporting startups, entrepreneurs and small businesses, building on work that we've started in past years, we continue to grow ourselves.

Donna Gillespie 25:46

And portfolio markets themselves, Kingston and the strategic clusters identified in the integrated strategic plan, we'll continue to refine our sub sector.

[FLAG: Unknown Speaker 26:09 — likely Donna Gillespie; same audio dropout pattern as 18:56 and 19:17]

Pipeline of potential domestic and foreign direct investment. Our marketing strategy continues to focus on raising Kingston's

Donna Gillespie 26:26

showcase entrepreneurs, business owners and those thinking of launching a business in Kingston, we have a very active online presence and showcase our local business success through stories, articles, posts and videos. In 2025 we created 45 company spotlights. We call them company of the week, which generated over 75,000 impressive impressions. All of these activities build on momentum we've realized in past years.

And highlights of 2025, investment includes over 500 business inquiries. Feel

[FLAG: Unknown Speaker 27:12 — likely Donna Gillespie; same audio dropout pattern] also qualified more than 500

Donna Gillespie 27:26

does hold reserves. The intent of these reserve funds is to support new, non recurring activities or initiatives that cannot be covered by the annual operating budget. Current examples of committed funds by motion in

Donna Gillespie 27:50

25 audit will begin in February, and up to date cash holdings will be available in our audited financial statements at the AGM in April and then Online, while the after restrictions and shutdown commitments change. Each

Mayor Bryan Paterson 28:37

with that, we'll move to our second presentation, which is tourism Kingston, we'll invite Megan Knott, Chief Executive Officer.

Megan Knott 28:55

Thanks, Mayor Paterson, members of council, staff and community partners. My name is Megan Knott, and I'm here to present the 2020. Present the 2026 budget on behalf of tourism Kingston, staff and board. So a little bit about us in 2025 I thought I would just reflect on how we did it as a community in terms of tourism impact. So in 2024 we saw about a 5% increase in visitation overall. And the good news story for 2025 of course, not all statistics in is about an 8.4% increase in visitation. Great news story. Think about that when you ask me a lot of questions later, impact of tourism. So visitation, year to date, of course, all not numbers accounted for, yet was about 2.2 million visitors to our community, which equated to about \$457 million in general economic impact. And just to give you some context, I do have 2024 numbers. So those visitor numbers are about 2,000,300 96 million in visitor spend. So but 15% increase overall in 2025 projected revenues. So just general roll up of how the budget is presented for 2026 so municipal support of 1.77 5 million. Matt, again, a reminder, that's the municipal accommodation tax collected through our hotel system and our STR system. So that equates to about 2 million the mat 35% of course, the mat is divided into two buckets of funding, if you will. And so that mat 35% will go to support our creative industries sector in 2026 then we as staff, try to work with different levels of government as well as community partners on securing grant funding. We always hope that that number increases. Certainly post pandemic, the ability to get grants in a tourism sector was probably much easier than it is year to date, but we continue to try TK generated revenues. So we work in seven different sectors, all of which, I guess, rely on community stakeholder partnerships, if you will, to generate some revenue to offset costs, as well as our Visitor Information Center right across the road at 209 Ontario, in terms of expenses, so wages and benefits about 2 million. But that includes year round Visitor Information Center staff. Our marketing is about 1.8 million. Administration is about 475,000 visitor services costs, of course, to run the center is 168,000 and direct costs to do the seven sector sales segments that we do is 496,000 I'll just note that certainly we do work in sales and marketing, but we also work in Investment Attraction, and I think it's really important and unique that we have a community partner that really works well with our municipal partners as well as other community members to not only initiate but invest in larger infrastructure projects, which I think then contribute to the increase in visitation and the increase in job creation. So some of these non inclusive, but of no film studio which we continue to work through, an animation studio which is now officially open, of course, in Portsmouth village, continuation of potentially a deep water port in our community, whether temper or long term in nature, again, conference center continue to work through those conversations, as well as supporting the potentially new aquatic center where we get our vision and Our mission and our strategies as it relates to budget requests is obviously our integrated destination strategy. So we've done three of these since inception at tourism Kingston. These are all linked, of course, in your budget binders, electronically as well as our annual plan. So although not printed, certainly details out how the integrated destination strategy connects to each sector that we work in, and then the results. Of course, we come to council quarterly and report in those results, as well as our other community partners. Certainly, we emphasize community impact of the sectors we work in. We really make sure that we're gathering those industry insights and the data to present to you quarterly, and really just make sure that we're making efforts to see your year over year results increased per sector. Marketing and Communications is one of the seven sectors we work in. So certainly, just making sure that we enhance the tourism Kingston slash Kingston brand that we, you know, so proudly, integrate into everything that we do, as well as our community partners that have been able to amplify and adapt that. Making sure that we're having a local voice to visitors, it's

very important to make sure that our communication is equal to the people that live, work and invest in our community as it is to the visitors that come, making sure, you know, our local voices are thoughtful in our channels, and then this year, really highlighting FIFA. I know, you know, that's a general event that causes a lot of fanfare. And certainly, although we're not a FIFA host in particular, we're certainly a community that will see travelers come through it, as those travelers are long haul travelers, are long haul travelers, and will come from market to market, as well as the 10th, 10th Anniversary of, I can't believe that's been the final concert of The Tragically Hip here in Kingston. So those two things on our mind for sure, travel trade certainly making sure that Great Lakes cruising, as it relates to talking to cruise operators, stopping Kingston, spend time in Kingston and continue to increase the amount of cruises that choose Kingston as a port, certainly making sure that we do a really great job of localized experiences for large trade shows. So rendezvous Canada is in Toronto this year. That's an International. No trade mission type experience where there's a lot of tour group operators there, and we're going to host pre and post fam tours in each one of these slides, I will detail out that we have a road map of success so in the last two and then the four going forward, just making sure that we have highlighted the economic impact of each of the sectors. I'll stop here at sport, because councilor Amos, I'm sure, is going to have a question after these budget presentations about it, but certainly just reinforcing the fact that we really drive room nights, which is really important, as well as supporting local and larger scaled events throughout 2026 some of them notably esport, a large curling event, the OHL draft, and making sure that we connect those local sport organizations to opportunities for more funding to advance the things that we want to see, especially in those nice periods business events certainly were at capacity with the infrastructure we have. So if we had the ability to open up the conference center proper, we would certainly see the trajectory of economic impact of business events flourish, but making sure that we promote Kingston as a year round destination, and of course, our visitor center, which is the hub of community and the place where most, if Not all, visitors, start their experience in Kingston film and media. So we do obviously support the creative industry sectors. We have goals there which relate to budget requests, certainly in our film and media, large or big budget productions, as well as small making sure job creation is paramount in this particular sector, including the producer accelerator program, meaning we're just training producers who can then create films locally in our community, which then dovetails nicely to job creation as well as our Music Office. So certainly, the Kingston music strategy was, which was birthed out of the city of Kingston's office, Cultural Office, making sure we support that in everything that we do is related to all the other sectors I just spoke about. So with that, certainly, I'm here tonight to ask for the budget for 2026 as presented, allocated to tourism Kingston. And I'll probably just note that we've changed a few ways on this sort of budget, P and L, if you will. And so in actual fact, we're asking for a 3% increase overall in municipal funding. Why that looks differently is because we've actually put more effort into the creative industry sector in terms of funding through the mat, 35% as opposed to municipal funding. So that percent change, although different as presented tonight, really is a reflection of just how we've laid out the budget, and I've detailed it down here at the bottom. So I'm happy with that to answer any questions, and

Mayor Bryan Paterson 38:02

thank you for your time. Okay, thank you. Are there any questions? Councilor, Miss Councillor Don Amos 38:09

Thank you. Patterson, through you. Thank you for the presentation. Can you talk a little bit about return on investment?

Megan Knott 38:32

Yeah, excellent question, and through you. Mayor Paterson, so first I'll talk about the visitor economy and the impact that those dollars equate to so certainly, there's

formulas to suggest that the economic impact of tourism as related to every dollar that a community sees exponentially. It grows 10 times within the community because of job creation, because of longevity of the initial spend, and how that kind of builds on one another. I think certainly is important to note too, that for every dollar invested, it certainly is a it's measured. And so we have actually locally, and I think you've seen it because you're on our our board, Councilor Amos and councilor Stephen, the ability to articulate that through our research dashboard. And so what we do is every sporting event, every business event, anything that we incentivize through the sectors that we work in, we're able to measure the return on that investment to community. So whether that's through hotel stays, whether that's through food and beverage, whether that's through retail or other miscellaneous like gas or whatever the case may be, in terms of the transactional pieces, I think it's just really important to note that tourism investment grows economies by just virtue of the fact that it's all year and it works in and touches many. Different sectors. Esport is interesting. It's something that we're exploring and something that we're going to host this year as a trial at Slush Puppie Place, actually. So it's something in the creative industry sector where we're working in traditional music, traditional film. But what else is there out there? And sort of, you know, sort of these esport pieces of community are here, locally and nationally. They can sell out places like Scotiabank place, for example. So you have 50,000 attendees watching these actual esport live televised, actually events. OHL draft is important. It's the first one that's happened in person since 2019 I want to say, No, I lied even further than that in the last 20 years. I don't think we've had a live event. So that's going to be great. What's interesting about that event is it dovetails nicely on the meetings and conference part of that particular event that those pre and post pieces they're going to happen with the ability to expand that to a seven day experience in Kingston, just versus, you know, a one day draft and will happen in the downtown core. For sure, it'll really take about 2000 room nights to support that event, which is a great feat for a June which is kind of on the impetus of what we call mean leisure travel season.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 41:24

Okay, seeing no other questions. Thank you very much. And now we'll move to our third agency, which is the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, and we'll invite up General Manager,

David Ellingwood 41:49

David Ellingwood, General Manager at Cataraqui Conservation, and

David Ellingwood 42:10

in developing our budget, a few key considerations is to continue service delivery at current levels. Look at our capital asset in the in the short term and long range.

Look at staff compensation capacity, consider our administration facility and adjusting to our new place of business at Battersea road as well as provincial and federal funding, and taking into consideration us. So we did have our draft budget together in September and sent that out for municipal review in October, November, and brought that back on December 3 for full authority to approve that budget.

Grateful to have input from representatives from the City of Kingston, Councillor Oosterhof, as our vice chair in 2025 and we also had councilors Stephen

David Ellingwood 43:25

evening me there. So in our in our budget, we have different categories of service, and this is a requirement for the for conservation authorities. We divide our services into category one and corporate services, which are mandatory programs, things like drinking water, Source Protection, development review, flood forecasting and warning and host of other things. And then category two and three are ones that we need to have an agreement with our participating municipalities. So Category Two is municipal based services, and this is applicable to Kingston for water management control structure, like the dam and little cat. And also category three is locally

supported programs, and this would be things like education and public programming and water monitoring watershed monitoring. We put those costs together look for other sources of revenue, and then the remainder falls to our municipal partners. For 2026 the total budget is \$6.9 million and dividing into the different categories, we'll focus on corporate services in category one. We did try to keep the cost down in this particular area of the budget. So 2.6% was the combined operating and capital increase. And then there's two pluses on there. The board back a few years ago, agreed to phase in. The cost of the administration facility lease by initially having it at 100% reserves and then declining the reserve amount by 25% each year over four years, and the same method for phasing in a position in the development review team. So that gives a total of 4.6 in another slide, will show you what that means for City of Kingston, and doesn't translate into that exact amount. Overall good news, I think, is that our expenses are up just 1.3% from the previous year. So our sources of revenue, you'll see the obvious, large part of the pie there is municipal, and it's 50% of our budget. We have internal recoveries with things like we call it work by others, and things kind of pass from one department back over to another. Fees are about 10% of our budget. The province is a fairly small piece at 4% which is for drinking water source protection, at 100% of that program, and a another amount of that's been the same for about five years, and half of what it was for for the previous 30 years. And that goes towards our flood forecasting and warning program. We use a little bit of our reserves, and then other is different things like interest income, revenue from leases that we have. So we take their costs for municipalities, and we receive the current value assessment each year, and that gives us the percentages shown on the chart here. Kingston is about 61% and it's they're fairly consistent year to year. It can fluctuate a tiny bit depending on how your current value assessment does relative to other municipalities in the area. So overall, through the budget we see in our category one in Corporate Services, a change of about \$82,000 for the City of Kingston. In that section specific properties, there's a special levy that city of Kingston provides towards the Lemoine point conservation area. We're actually seeing a decrease of about \$12,000 control structures and ones like the little cat dam, that's fairly flat there, and then category three, locally supported services, a small decline in that amount. So in the bottom corner there, you'll see the change for City of Kingston this year is 3.31%

David Ellingwood 47:47

just the notes that I made there, Lemoine. Point is we get a special contribution from the City of Kingston towards that which helps maintain that important Recreation Area. Looking ahead to future years. So we are looking at a general decrease over the next few years. We see some kind of positive things, we think, for revenues and expenses being under control and capital forecast. We do put that together, we look ahead for 10 years, and we've got a new database with all the different projects included in it, as I think you'll find with municipal projects, there's many that are kind of unfunded. Good at this time, where the source of revenue for those is not determined, but the need is known. So we we are working to decrease that deficit as best we can. We do have a reasonable amount of reserves to get by for the next, for the next while, and seek external grants to supplement that. So that's the main numbers in our budget. There again, the 1.3% in expenses, the municipal apportionment being more than that, because there's what we anticipate is some decreases in revenue. I mentioned the provincial funding that's flat or going down a tiny bit. Our interest income is expected to decrease again this year, which is difficult to make that up. Did want to finish off by talking about the central changes to conservation authorities. Very much appreciate the discussion that your council had and the motion that you passed. In this regard, I would note that it generated a lot of interest across the province. AEMO, provided. Towards this, I'd say dozens. It's probably closer to 100 municipalities in the province, past motions and the general theme was the business case for it hasn't been presented very well as to why you would want to

get rid of existing CAS and consolidate them into these much larger Cas, there are great concerns about the governance for that and the loss of local accountability. I mentioned for four Bureau councilors that are members of the Conservation Authority Board as well as other committees, including budget review and personnel so they have you have direct input into the decisions made and where the money goes, and it's a real reflection on the programs that we offer to the community. We have maple madness coming up. I'll put in a little plug for that. That's just six weeks away. We have our great maple program out at little cat for development review the province and conservation Ontario, we've agreed to targets for that cataract conservation meets provincial targets 99% of the time, and it meets your municipal plan review targets 90% of the time. We have among the lowest fee schedules of any conservation you to update things like the recent updates to the St Lawrence River floodplain mapping as well as Lake Ontario shoreline mapping. So we've got a 60 plus year history and a lot of strong ties with Q.

Councillor Paul Chaves 51:47

You and thank You for the report. I will admit there are a few lines which sort of jumped out at me. Syringe wise, first one being special Levy, cat one, water. Learn at 39% I just wonder you could sort of explain,

David Ellingwood 52:08

yes, so for our water control structures, we do have a number of those structures that have large expenditures coming up, the ones that the City of Kingston are involved with are not among that group. In the immediate future, there will be a dam safety study needed at the little cat dam, but that's not until 2029 we're building reserves at a reasonable pace to to achieve that project. Some of the other ones funded by, say, loyalist Township and the municipalities in the eastern part of our jurisdiction, those structures don't have large reserves, and they have dam safety studies and other repairs. The safety studies come in around \$60,000 each. So for those ones, it's it requires a in costs for those particular municipalities over the next couple of years to meet that requirement.

Councillor Paul Chaves 53:06

Okay, thank you. It was just a large increase. So sort of caught my eye. Another one being line 550 watershed science, it went up 96% or 96,071%

David Ellingwood 53:19

Yeah, through your worship. So watershed science, the increase in there is it's not a municipal apportionment related increase, it's one that's funded by a grant. And these are grants we're getting for invasive species control and Phragmites control. The Phragmites has grown quite a bit. We have a number of municipalities. Facilities and St Lawrence Parks Commission and others that are participating, participating in our eradication efforts.

Councillor Paul Chaves 53:47

Thank you for that. Yes, I have heard that they have gone into the area and throughout Ontario. So my final question, which is more of a crystal ball type thing, if the conserv conservation areas, do combine, what happens to the reserve funds,

David Ellingwood 54:07

Your Worship? That's a great question. And so we know that some like our watershed control, our water control structures have specific participating municipalities. So those two one or two or three or four municipalities have percentages that they've contributed, you could easily identify which part of that reserve would be attributable to each municipality the other one's more general. When it comes to an amalgamation, I would expect there'd have to be some process to evaluate how much each Conservation Authority is bringing to that and how much each municipality is bringing to that new relationship. And make some adjustment when you would set up the new agency, but a lot of the reserves would.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 55:13

Next, we will move to the southeast to public health, and so I'm going to turn things

over online. We have sir, Dr. Oglaza, welcome, and I will pass it over to you.

Councillor Brandon Tozzo 1:08:20

Proposal. Thank you, Mayor Paterson, through you. Dr. Oglaza, I miss being on public health with you. Nice to see you. Question is about, could you just delve a little bit more about the legacy debt? Because you touched a bit about that, of where that came from. It's just the sources and the implications of it. What kind of legacy debt is there? Just how is that showing up on the.

Councillor Brandon Tozzo 1:10:03

Just to follow up. So you're not talking about service reductions, but potentially staff reductions at Southeast while you get

Councillor Wendy Stephen 1:10:35

student, thank you, Mr. Mayor. I am just looking at the letter that we got from southeast public health. And I'm not sure if this is a question for Dr. Oglaza Or maybe Mr. Mayor. It's for you. I'm not sure. But after the merger, so based on the harmonization of the 2025, municipal Levy, the City of Kingston paid an extra, basically, \$945,000 that we now have to put towards future municipal levies. Have you, I think, Mr. Mayor, I'm talking to you. Have you and staff discussed how we would like to approach that as a city? Is this we're going to do a lump sum? Are we going to spread it over four years? Has that discussion happened, or is that coming

Mayor Bryan Paterson 1:11:17

later? I think I'll, I'll pass that over to

CFO Kennedy 1:11:24

So yes, we have had some discussions on that. We have a couple of chunks of money that we've been looking at. So there is that approximate 900,000 plus that the three municipalities, actually 900 would be for the city share of the three municipalities that we've been contributing over the years and as part of the harmonization, that contribution has gone down. So that started in 2025 so I have been working with Mr. Wickson, actually, to determine what we do with the 2025 amount, whether that comes back as a cash flow.

CFO Kennedy 1:12:03

Will notice in our budget for 2026 that 900,000 we used 600 of that towards our bottom line, so we brought that in, but you'll see there's also a transfer to reserve of the other 300 we've put that into our agency stabilization reserve, knowing that there is the potential for increased costs as this harmonization piece, and as some of the transition happens, we're putting a little bit away to try so that we won't have a big increase in a future year. There's also some money that's sitting on the public health balance sheet that relates to previous surpluses for the three municipalities. Again, we've had some discussion.

Councillor Don Amos 1:12:54

Davis, thank Mayor Paterson, through you. Thank you, Dr. Oglaza, for your presentation. You hinted a couple times about stabilization and a merger, the merger that has taken place with between the three the three units and Councillor Tozzo briefly touched on a question I was wanting to ask, and you indicated there was, there was legacy deficits that were there, did all three health units that were merged? Did each of them have their own legacy deficits? And then is that deficits going forward? You hinted that it has to be addressed. So are we looking at Miss Kennedy just kind of opened the door a little bit by saying more money is being set aside for potential 2026 or 2027 2028 further increases to help with that stabilization and also the legacy.

Councillor Don Amos 1:15:27

Talked about program harmonization and the potential for further staffing, either reductions or hirings. And so my fear, I'll be frank, going forward, is in 2020 28 the City of Kingston, as probably the largest contributor to the budget, is going to be hit the hardest with a with a fairly significant increase with that. So are you anticipating you right now? You've indicated you've got 20, roughly 20 programs that

are moving forward. Are you anticipating more hirings throughout the region? And if there are regionally based, are those employees regionally dispersed with their budgetary pressure points?

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:18:09

Steves, thank you and thank you for the presentation. Again and again, there are a few light items that sort of popped out at me, so I was wondering if we bring him up, he could probably explain under the expenses, one being travel, increase of \$229,000 up by 44%.

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:21:00

Because didn't the regional offices. Each of three entities have offices throughout its region, so I'm still wondering why they'd be increased.

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:21:43

Okay, still doesn't make sense, but we move on. So there are two other expenses that went down significantly, public program specific materials and supplies, as well as professional contact service contract services. The first one went down by 526,000 the other one by 186,000 the other one by 186,000 concern here being is this affecting programs?

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:23:42

Be an being at the it being shared you, but you're saying basically the program specific materials and supplies do.

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:24:09

Scratching my head on that one. I want to move on. There may be questions coming afterwards. So then I see this one, very general, saying other expenses, basically, when it doubled in size, 140 \$745,000 what's in that category?

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:25:01

Okay, that makes me worried. So we have an increase of other expenses by double, and we don't know what it's for. Is that what you're saying?

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:25:46

Okay, so we have almost million dollars in unfit items. Okay, last question, hopefully this will go off a little better. So one time volunteer merger support I see here, 220 25 basically 1.5 million. 2026, 1.8 5 million, which is increased at \$360,000 a little confused, if it's a one time funding, why is it two years?

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:26:59

I would quite say that one time was little misleading. Thank you.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 1:27:05

Okay, thank you. Next is councilor Glenn do.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 1:35:44

Okay, if there are no other questions, we will move on. Our next presentation is Kingston access services, and we'll invite Bryan Basford, Executive Director, to the podium.

Bryan Basford 1:36:02

Good evening. Your Worship. Thank you. And through you this presentation, I'm happy to be here again, presenting the 2026, capital and operating budgets for Kingston access bus services. For those of you that don't remember, we are the oldest operating specialized transit provider in the province of Ontario, and the second oldest in the country, because we still argue with Edmonton as to who started first. It was within a matter of weeks. All that being said, 2025 was a an interesting year for us. We had some of the similar challenges that we had in 2024 were a little bit magnified by our difficulties recruiting in 2024 so staffing driver vacancies reduced our overall ability to provide our on service hours for a large portion of the year. One of the driving factors for that we found, we had three training classes for us that resulted in zero net hires. The first two classes, what we identified was, no matter how hard we told folks during the interview process and during the onboarding process that it was a very physically demanding job, people didn't quite understand it. So after that second class of zero trainees, we shifted our training to provide

more hands on in the first week. Historically, we were Week One was all classroom. Was all the videos in the hands on training in the classroom, whereas now it's day one in the classroom. Days two, three and four are on the road, actually doing the standing, and as a result, we have seen a much better retention in the second half of 2025 with a lot more positive feedback from our trainees as they went into revenue service. They felt more prepared for the year ahead. We did have some dispatch turnover in some of our part time dispatchers, which arguably dispatcher, is one of the most difficult roles to replace, because it's experienced that you cannot replace and you cannot replicate elsewhere. We have hired two new part time dispatchers that are one has been with us for just under a year. The other has been with us for just under a week. We have high hopes for the retention of those and to be able to continue that that trend, but that being said, some of our milestones for 2025 we were able to bring in three small vehicles into our fleet. You guys may have seen the vehicles kind of floating around town, little ProMaster vans. We brought these in for two reasons. One, to increase our ability to serve smaller areas. The downtown core is a little tight for our cutaways. Some of our hospital settings are are difficult to get in and out of, so we're trying to be more nimble and respond to the demand that we have, but also be mindful of our carbon footprint with smaller vehicles, smaller engines, lower fuel consumption. So the three vehicles right now are brought in as a pilot project to see if we actually do see the return on investment with lower fuel lower maintenance costs, and our ability to provide service into areas that we had. Metric that I am most proud of was actually we reduced our overall staff turnover by 7% and when you're an agency of 44 people, that is huge. Recruiting is difficult across the transit sector, all across Ontario, all across Canada, all my colleagues, we scratch our heads together trying to figure out, what can we do to bring more drivers on board, when the questions we need to be asking is, what can we do to keep our drivers? I have three drivers that are 20 plus years, and then I have a huge gap down to 10 years. Then after my 410 year drivers, I'm down to five or less. So making sure that we make the right investments into our staff, into our team. I have a dispatcher that has been with me now for 32 years. So trying to make sure that we sure that we keep that staff to be able to provide that longevity, to provide that level of knowledge into the next generation of transit operators, into the next generation of dispatchers and into the next generation of leadership is going to be crucial for our future successes. We were also able to reduce our unmet demand. So these are the trips that we've not been able to accommodate. We saw a huge spike in 2024 for a number of reasons that I discussed last year, went up to 5.02% of our overall numbers. We brought that down to 4.4% with some creative scheduling, again, bringing in smaller vehicles, bringing in more more productive training classes to be able to get drivers on the road and into service sooner. And then the other thing. We did later in the year was we actually extended our dispatch service hours after the pandemic. We shut our dispatch office down at five o'clock during the week and at four o'clock on Saturdays and two o'clock on Sundays. We've gradually been increasing those hours. So now we are back out to 8pm where we were pre pandemic for our Monday through Friday. We're currently at 6pm on Saturday. Dispatch call center hours to allow for easier opportunities for folks to book, but also more control of our service through our peak times and through our after hours, our ridership, we did see a slight dip in 2025 versus 2024 part of that was fewer days. The other part of that was some challenging weather events later on in the year, we are very weather dependent. A lot of our programs will shut down in the event of snow, rain, hail, particularly windy days. We do have a lot of our programs that cancel, so we did see a significant jump in cancelations year over year, and particularly in the winter months, where our weather is more impactful for us, but we're still on the upward trend, looking at the numbers, looking at our existing ridership, we are still trending upward, back towards our pre pandemic. We are still outpacing several of our colleagues in the province of like sized agencies, and

outpacing

Bryan Basford 1:41:25

our demand has continued to outpace what we've been able to service, and I'll talk about that a little bit more down the road. An interesting note, some of you may have seen this in some reports that I've sent out. We currently have 8268 registered passengers with Kingston access bus services. We have 31 vehicles in revenue service that represents 5.6% of the population of the city of Kingston, based on the 2024 estimates that are eligible and registered to use our service. It's just an interesting point to note. I've put that question out to my colleagues around the province. Haven't gotten many responses yet to see, because I feel like we are punching well above over the last few years, 2021 2022 obviously post pandemic recovery years, we did see those, the operating surpluses with significant amount returned back to the city. However we we started to normalize in 2023 and 2024 with some small surpluses that were contributed to our our reserve funds to provide some additional flexibility for us to be able to generate some some interest revenues, to be able to reduce our our footprint on the ratepayers dollars, but also allows us the ability to have some stability in the event of any uncertain times that I'm sure we're all facing in our budgets. At this time, we have an estimated surplus of 165,000 I say estimate. I say estimated. We are still reconciling our November and December books. We hired a new finance and accountant last year who has been excellent at helping us clean up some legacy issues. You will notice that we had quite a bit of bad debts that were finally written off from collections from folks who had passed on several years ago that for whatever reason, were kept on the books. I have no explanation for that, but we were able to finally correct that and get our numbers back to where they should be. Looking into 2026 our revenue breakdown. 2025 we're 220,000 for our passenger revenue was our budget. You'll notice a 10.9% increase. Most of that increase is due to the increase in fares, where we matched fares with Kingston Transit back in March, was unbudgeted at the time, and so it does reflect, like a larger increase, it is in proportion with the estimated increases that we're expecting in ridership for the year. Miscellaneous revenues, we're expecting a decrease this year. Unfortunately, the the mid pandemic boom in folks wanting to buy our used vehicles to convert them into motor homes has busted, and we're not seeing the revenue generated from the sale of used equipment that we had in previous years. So we are using our retirement

Bryan Basford 1:44:03

generated a little bit less revenue, but it has helped offset some of our maintenance expenses, financing from the City of Kingston. We were at 3.8 to 3.8 2 million in 2025 with a request of 4.05 7 million this year represents an increase of 6% which is down

Bryan Basford 1:44:24

the budget, my staff and I this year trying to look at it through the lens, what can we do better with what we have, and how can we be better stewards of the repairs money, knowing we're all feeling squeezed. So we made several, several changes now that we've had two years of budgets from my submissions to review to make sure that we were

Bryan Basford 1:44:47

on the expense side, the biggest increase for us as far as \$1 amount goes, is in driver wages and benefits. We are in year now we will start year three of a four year collective agreement. We. Years of this collective agreement in order to reach a four year deal and provide us with some certainty going forward, and also build up some goodwill with the union as we go into the next negotiations in 2028 we are seeing benefits from that, with our reduction in our driver turnover and the labor relations aspect has improved quite a bit. Based on that alone, dispatch wages and benefits shows a 12 and a half percent increase year over year. That does look like a large increase, most of that is due to the added dispatch hours that we've added back in as

well as the the planned additional hours to return us to our pre pandemic dispatch hours this year, in fiscal year 2026 admin wages and benefits is a 5.3% increase, which is in inch transportation expenses. This is one area where we scrutinized incredibly hard to get this down to a 0.6% increase. We've looked over our fuel budgets, and we've we've taken a chance on reducing our fuel budgets again this year, we went down two and a half percent last year, we felt comfortable based on the stability of the fuel market over the last two years to go down another two and a half percent, but we did identify that later as a potential risk going into 2026 and fiscal 2027 our occupancy costs are 3.4% that's in line with our inflationary increases for our rent, our utilities and our our mandated Lee leasehold improvements, miscellaneous costs, which are audit, legal, General Insurance, was 2% increase. Again, moderate increase, based on our assumptions for costs this year, we have some RFPs going out this year that we are hoping to generate some savings to keep that at that 2% increase for that line item and again, board costs, 52.9% not a large sum of money, but just as we're seeing increasing costs all across all across the agency, for paper, for copy supplies, for coffee, for food, we also did see some increases in our insurance as well, through no fault of our own. The General Liability market in Ontario has taken kind of a beating this year, and we bore some of the brunt of that with our with our budgets. There some of the significant variations, again, 7.8% increased CBA, salary and pension contributions, as well as our additional service hours. One thing that you will see in our budget submission this year, for a driver perspective, we're looking to add 5000 additional service hours on the road. That is two and a half full time equivalent positions to be able to again, tackle that unmet demand, to be able to put the busses. We put the first route out in December to kind of capture an afternoon lull we were seeing. We were not able to meet a lot of our trips between 3:30 and 6:30pm so we've put a what we term a flex shift in that time to be able to provide an additional vehicle on the road to provide that service. And thus far, we that was one of our areas where we've seen the biggest ability to accommodate some of our waitlisted trips. Again, dispatch wage and benefits. That's all related to the increase in the dispatch hours and the associated wages and fringes that go along with that. Admin and wages is increased. Salary and Fringe occupancy is our computer maintenance, new software licenses. But we have seen some savings on our phone. We were able to consolidate some of our phone lines and some of our services with bell as our service provider to generate some savings in that line operating budgets for 2026 again, we're at 4.34% a 6% change we are we are projecting now, based on our current assumptions, that we're going to be able to continue to see our request for funding come down based on again, the front loading of the first two years of my budgets to be able to provide the service and get us the number of vehicles on the road that we feel we need at this time to meet our existing and known needs. As far as capital funding goes, we had to completely revamp our capital budgets for this year and for our outlying years, unfortunately for us, we have seen a 40% increase in the purchase price of our vehicles from the last time we purchased in 2022 our 2022 vehicles were finally delivered in 2024 have been in service now for a year and a half. They were roughly 140,000 up to now 220,000 based on vehicles we ordered at the end of 2025 the trade war and the tariffs have started to hit us hard in areas like we did not expect. So this year, we're looking to buy four replacement vehicles and one expansion vehicle in order to be able to provide the additional service hours and give us a couple of extra spare vehicles as we have more vehicles on the road, obviously that also try

Bryan Basford 1:49:30

looking to do some upgrades to our vehicle camera system to allow for remote downloads, which will increase the longevity of the system, because we're not physically pulling hard drives any longer.

Bryan Basford 1:49:49

Dispatch licenses, because we are adding service hours, adding vehicles and adding

dispatchers.

Bryan Basford 1:50:00

To all of our required services for the year. So our 2026 capital funding request comes in at 1.145 million, going out to 2030 starting in 2027 I'm confident and comfortable after this year to go down to a replacement plan of three to four vehicles per year versus five to six. It's going to provide us that stable level of service. And again, obviously, if the need of the service increases, obviously, so too will our ask. But we're also exploring some other funding opportunities, with the dedicated public transit fund, trying to advocate for more investment into specialized transit through that fund, going out, also putting in some computer hard

Bryan Basford 1:50:44

budget risks this year, the biggest budget risk, obviously, is going to be our fuel prices. We've been very, very fortunate over the last few years to have stable fuel prices. Our fuel vendor has been very good to us to keep our discounts stable and steady per liter. But it has also come with the possibility that if we see the the trade escalations continue to disrupt markets, it's obviously going to trickle down, and we'll have to evaluate accordingly. I'm still comfortable that we can, we can absorb some increase, not a large increase, but we would, we would deal with that when the time comes, some of the other trade strains that we're going to be dealing with. Obviously, the vehicle prices have been a huge sticker shock for us, now, significantly reducing our buy our buying power for fleet replacements, vehicle and facility maintenance costs are also going up, as well as other cost. Office supplies, just the simple things that we need to run our day to day are going up due to trade uncertainties, and the market does not like that uncertainty. One of the other things that we've seen starting in December is we've seen about a 60% increase in our phone calls. Increase in our phone call volume in periods of time when we were typically slow, some of that is we are hoping just going to be a seasonal bump as we assist with the the navigation of the accessible taxi program, with with our partners here in the city. So our typically slow times have been not so slow so we are. We're adjusting our staffing accordingly and doing what we can to again, provide the assistance. Knowing that was not a fun time for anybody with that. The other risk for us this year is we do have our maintenance contract up for negotiation. This year, we're going to try to negotiate a one year extension based on our current pricing, with some inflationary increases pending the amenability of our maintenance provider. If not, we'll be going is my presentation. Thank you for your time and through you.

Any questions, okay?

Mayor Bryan Paterson 1:52:29

Thank you very much. Are there any questions? I did see Councillor Oosterhof online. Good evening. Can you hear me? Yeah, we can hear you, please, go ahead. Go

Bryan Basford 1:53:04

thank you for your question, and through you Your Worship. That is our current registered passengers. We do go through pretty regularly and remove folks who have been to see storm moved away if they've notified us. We have 5206 who are currently inactive. Of that list, those are the folks who have not used the service in eight months or more. We do have several seasonal folks that come in. We're expecting to see some of our snowbirds coming back in the next month or so, as they as they come back home for the summertime. So there is obviously some seasonal ebb and flow, and this is something I've actually wanted to start tracking now that we have the systems to do it, to be able to monitor where our active is. So from November to today's date, we are a net gain of 24 active passengers sitting at three

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:54:10

and reasonable increases in your expenses with increased service, so I can understand that I do have a couple questions which I'm hoping that I'll feel better with your answers than I did with our previous mentioned fuel supplier. I'm guessing you get a fair, good discount with them. I'm inquiring because we have another presenter later

in the evening, which has this large fleet, and so I'm gonna be asking if they have a fuel supplier. So is there any information you could share in regards

Bryan Basford 1:54:40

to that? Thank you. Through you. We are currently, we are currently working with Esso. Is our current fuel partner. The rrfp would be two years out with them. They do offer us a per liter discount. If somebody wanted to discuss that, I'd be happy to chat with with staff on that.

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:54:56

Okay, thank you. My other question. Is within the expenses. And I keep this fake or general, because you already know there seem to be some ups and downs regards to CPP and EI within 2025 and 2026 I just wonder if you could just share an explanation for those in attendance. Thank you.

Bryan Basford 1:55:19

Thank you. Through you, we noticed as as my new accounting staff and I were going through some errors in some formulas that resulted in some significant overestimations of CPP contributions for our drivers in 2025 and as we went through and finalized and found where the error

Councillor Paul Chaves 1:55:57

you and hopefully next year,

Councillor Brandon Tozzo 1:56:06

through you. Good to see you. I serve on the Kingston access services and have for a number of years. I think what might be helpful also to tell council about is some of the technological innovations that you've put in for some of the services, and how that's really streamlining some of the services, because certainly in past three years I've served on the board, we have the board has more knowledge and information, but there's really been a lot more, a lot more innovations for the organization.

Could you just speak a bit about that? Absolutely.

Bryan Basford 1:56:34

Thank you for your question. Through you, we have seen a an increase in our utilization of our service called route match. It was very underutilized. My first year, we used it for the bare basics, which were scheduling, planning and dispatching, being able to just keep the busses on the road. There was some additional capacity that I built into the system with last year's budget of a service called transit minor, which is a data it's basically a data scraping software that digs around in the back and provides me with some more real time information so I'm better able to track some of the more standard metrics for specialized transportation, which are on time, percentage passengers per hour, passengers per revenue hour, trips per revenue Hour, which helped me as as the executive, gage the overall health of the service. You can have a service that is incredibly on time and incredibly inefficient. You can have one that is incredibly efficient and incredibly not on time, or you can use the sliding scale to balance them out. Those are really the only two options we have. So now having the data to actually back up what's going on on the road and see where we have routes that are underperforming, we've been able to actually add some additional calls to those routes. And if we have some routes that are being a little bit overused, same day changes, medical callbacks, and some of those that also raised up one of the one of the least technologically advanced things that we did this year was our first employee survey. It has not been done

Bryan Basford 1:58:04

response, aside from more busses on the road to be able to provide the service, was increased technology. So we do have our pilot group now of eight drivers soon to go to 10 drivers with mobile data terminals, tablets on the vehicles, provides us real time vehicle data of where they are, how they're traveling, how many passengers they have on board, but also provides us automatic vehicle location and real time updates from the dispatch center to the drivers. So with those drivers that are on the tablets, we've seen a

Bryan Basford 1:58:44

data messaging back to the dispatch center when their vehicle stopped.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 1:58:53

Thank you, Deputy Mayor Hassan.

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 1:58:56

Thank you. Your worship through you. Thank you for the presentation I see another area of little bit increase, about 11.5% is in the pension. So would you like to elaborate, what was the reason for that increase? Thank you for

Bryan Basford 1:59:15

your question. Through you, Mr. Mayor, the negotiations of our collective agreement.

1 percent for our drivers to 4.75% so this is the first year that we will see the quarter percent increase in pension contributions.

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 1:59:34

Also, I like to ask you this question behalf of the

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 1:59:43

it, or we have enough money to improve the scheduling for pickups and drop off the people that a lot of people's this thing to my knowledge.

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 2:00:01

Right? They have to book in advance, like few days so, which is sometimes not possible. So how we can improve that scheduling matters in this budget.

Bryan Basford 2:00:13

Thank you. Through you, Mr. Mayor, the scheduling software that we're using now that we have more real time data will allow us to provide that general efficiency. The additional service hours is going to be the biggest driving factor for us. And I know several, several of the council members have reached out to me over the course of the year with the exact same concerns. And again, when we're when we have over, you know, 3000 active users at any given point in time. And again, with 30 vehicles, it gets difficult to provide those trips. We don't have to book 14 days in advance. We do recommend that folks book The 14 days in advance, and this is one of the areas that we're actually hoping to improve some efficiencies, working with our colleagues at the city for the for the ATP, to be able to because that program can fulfill a need that we couldn't even hope to within this budget to provide that same day on demand service. We offer same day service, but our wait list. As we get cancelations, my scheduler is going through to accommodate the waitlisted calls, so giving my scheduler two additional vehicles on the road at our peak demand times and one vehicle at our kind of sub

Bryan Basford 2:01:25

totally that should be able to reduce their denial rate or their unmet demand to be able to provide that service.

Councillor Wendy Stephen 2:01:34

Thank you. Councilor Stephen, thank you, Mr. Mayor, Hi. Thanks for coming tonight. You had indicated that the vehicle costs for replacement or the new vehicles are increasing quite substantially. I'm just wondering if your team has explored the use of another kind of model of vehicle. I know you showed the picture of the nice lineup of all the busses. They all look great. But is is that what's required to provide the service?

Bryan Basford 2:02:04

Question Through you, Mr. Mayor, that is actually one of my biggest points of frustration, is I have a single fleet type currently, the addition of the ProMaster vans is the proof of concept that a separate vehicle type should increase our ability to provide service, because the vehicles are going to be more nimble. We also have a second, new style of vehicle that is due to be delivered this year. One of the other challenges with fleet is our average wait time went from three to five months now to six to 18 months. Low floor vehicles that I ordered in April of 2025, are now expected to be delivered in June of 2026. If anybody has traveled to Ottawa or

Toronto, you'll see they have some ProMaster vans that look like you take the ProMaster minibus, combine it with our bus, but it is a low floor vehicle with ramps at the rear and the side. Again, smaller vehicle profile able to get to some of the places that our current cutaways cannot get to. Again, demonstrate the proof of concept previous the polite word the previous directive was, we want the same vehicle so that we can schedule everything the exact same way, from a simple

Bryan Basford 2:03:26

ordinarily positive feedback from my drivers who are using the mini busses. And if that continues to go as more positive feedback, and we see the efficiencies in the trips per hour and passengers per hour, that demonstrates, to me, from from a budgetary perspective, that those vehicles have a good place in our fleet. We'll still need to have several our cutaways, because our cutaway vehicles can accommodate five to six mobility devices, and for some of our rec groups and some of our larger group homes that do provide their trips out, this gives us the ability to service those areas, whereas the smaller vehicles would then let us get out back into the rural parts of Kingston and bring folks back into the downtown core and get out of the downtown core with less difficulty than the larger vehicles. So the long answer is that, the short answer is absolutely we are, we are exploring and actively bringing in different fleet

Councillor Wendy Stephen 2:04:12

types. Thank you.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 2:04:15

Okay, seeing no other questions. Thank you very much. Thank you. Okay, next, we'll invite Kingston Frontenac Public Library and so fight Laura Carter, Chief Librarian and chief executive.

Laura Carter 2:04:52

Know we're this far into the pandemic, and we still are muted on Zoom. It's a good start. Thank you. Good evening. And. And I'm pleased to be here to present the Kingston Frontenac Public Library's 2026 operating and capital budget requests. I'm joining council chambers this evening by [FLAG: Otter heard "Nicole burkat" — likely Nicole Burkat (KFPL HR Budget Analyst) because Carter introduces her alongside Board Chair Jennifer Ross; surname spelling unconfirmed, does not appear in official minutes], the library's HR budget analyst and [FLAG: Otter heard "Jennifer Ross" as chair of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library Board — not confirmed in official minutes but name requires no garbling; editor should verify], chair of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library Board, kfpl, serves a large geographic area covering the almost 3800 square kilometers of Kingston and Frontenac County, with 16 branches and two kiosks. We also offer extensive digital resources through our website, and can be often be found offering programs and mobile library pop ups in the community. Kfpls vision is for the library to be a place where communities come together, sparking curiosity and creating possibility for all. We seek to do this through inclusive spaces, services and collections that advance literacies and invite people to learn, explore and connect our values of inclusion, respect, creativity, accountability, sustainability, intellectual freedom and service excellence guide us. Our four strategic directions are aligned with Council's current strategic plan, particularly with respect to fostering a caring and inclusive community and environmental stewardship and climate action. We work closely with our municipalities and with other community organizations to deliver responsible, responsive, but also responsible and impactful services, programs and collections. See if you can count how many times I say Isabelle Turner branch through the rest of this presentation, but the Isabel Turner renovation project has been the focus of our physical space revitalization over the 18 months, and will continue to be well into 2026 we are so excited to welcome the community back to our second largest and busiest branch. This spring, we refreshed our digital presence in 2025 launching a new website and an improved library catalog in October, and we'll be updating the library facilities

plan in the first half of this year and continuing to implement the plan's recommendations. We continue to champion environmental accountability internally in our operations and through community awareness, education and programming, the Kingston Youth Climate Council volunteers design and lead climate education and action that engages area youth. They planned and helped deliver the beyond the page literacy fair at the Calvin Park branch in spring of 2025 and we're proud to offer a series of workshops this year, January through April with sustainable Kingston, the work in strategic in strengthening strategic partnerships and operations, is a little more behind the scenes, but no less important. In 2025 we redesigned our reservation and overdue notices with card renewal reminders and a Library newsletter redesign. Next up for 2026 strong partnerships help us serve our communities better. The photo on this slide is from the Lunar New Year program held at the central branch in February 2025 this was in partnership with the Chinese Canadian Association of Kingston and district, an event we are thrilled to host again in 2026 the full title of our fourth direction is facilitating energizing experiences rooted in inclusivity and diversity and continued listening learning and evaluation took place in 2025 to ensure the library is offering responsive and inclusive services. We've advanced our truth and reconciliation commitments by translating the statement of solidarity and acknowledgement into indigenous languages and through a community inspired artwork commissioned for the Isabel Turner branch, one of the ways we measure how well we are doing in achieving our mission is through tracking levels of library use. In 2025 we had close to 500,000 visitors to the library, many of whom rely on us for computer and internet access. I'm particularly proud of the active card holders. Number over a third of our service population has used, renewed or signed up for a library card in the last two years. That's a 20% increase since January of 2024 with 391,230 digital checkouts and 669,480 physical items borrowed. Even with our busiest branch closed, it was a very good year for the library. When you factor in item renewals, use of other learning and research tools, that's a total library resource use of 1,382,873 for 2025 that figure doesn't include use of library spaces, questions answered by library staff and program attendance. So total library use is actually much higher still in a cost of living crisis, there is no better place to be than the library. If you multiply the average cost of an item. Which is \$25 for physical items. By the number of items borrowed, you get 25,000,567 \$196 worth of value from the \$950,000 that was invested into the Library's collections last year. So I wanted to put a Dr Evil meme into my slides and my comms person said, No, but that is a very large number. And again, that is only reflecting the sort of return of investment on the library items borrowed. Again, not looking at all the other services and spaces that we provide. During Canadian Library month in October, we asked people to tell us what the library means to them. While the \$25 million number is very impressive, some of the stories we heard convey convey the impact of the library better than numbers ever will. David told us the library has provided a wonderful and accessible way to spend time with my younger brother reading story books together, weekly library visits have become a treasured part of my routine. And Mary had this to say, as I have aged, my circle has become much smaller, both in friendships and ability to travel, both in cost and lack of transport. The library allows me a safe and vibrant way to collect with others, an environment which is enriching in the access to both reading material, age related connection and the fact it's free certainly helps my low budget. Thank you so much. Every dollar invested in the public library is an investment in community connections, learning and belonging. So given that this is the last year of this council, you're probably tired of this slide, but I will remind you that the library was established in 1998 through an agreement between the City of Kingston and the county of Frontenac. And the City of Kingston covers 80% 87% of our operating funding the county 13% facilities costs are not part of this formula, and it is applied after the provincial subsidies and self generated revenue is applied. So the City of Kingston does provide funding for the five branches in the City of

Kingston for us to clean and maintain those branches. This is an unshared cost in the kfpl budget, and explains the percentage difference in increases between the two municipalities. The facilities costs in the county of Frontenac are reflected in the township budgets, so utilities, capital costs, maintenance and cleaning and they are not reflected in the library's budget. Our budget pressures are virtually the same as I presented last year. Inflation higher, overall operating costs, limited revenue streams. We are very reliant on municipal and provincial funding. Subscription models, tariffs are continuing to challenge us, and the impact of Kingston's mental health, addictions and housing crisis is still there, following a 69% increase in incidents reported from 2022 to 2023 incident levels have remained elevated with 722 incident reports filed in 2025 the Kingston Frontenac Public Library's 2026 operating budget request is 9,000,603 \$481 which is an overall increase of 4.93% over 2025, figures. We went line by line through the budget to bring in as low as possible and below what we had projected it to be last year. Salaries, wages and benefits account for 75.3% of the library's budget, and are increasing by 4% related to negotiated wage increase, salary grid progressions and benefit cost increases. Collection materials, including online resources, account for 10.1% of the budget and are increasing by 2.53% within that line, there's a 1.5% increase for adult, child and youth popular materials, which includes ebooks and downloadable audio books, a 6.29% over the previous years for electronic resources. That's based on usage analysis for pay per use products and is allowing us to maintain current service levels. We have a small increase for magazines and newspapers again, covering annual product increases and the reinstatement of newspaper magazine subscriptions for the Isabel Turner branch, total shared system wide expenditures are increasing by 5.37% all service contracts are increasing more than the 1.5% Target, typically closer to 3% reopening the Isabel Turner branch is driving up this line, along with the facilities expenditure line, which is projected to increase by 24.46% a little over \$105,000
Laura Carter 2:14:53

this percentage increase is artificially high as this line decreased by 19.55% last year. \$104,000 as the Isabel Turner operating expenses were removed, and again, these facilities costs are only charged to the City of Kingston. On our revenue side, the overall budget increase of 4.93% means a 5.27% increase for the city and a 4.06 increase for the county, the provincial public library operating grant is projected to remain at \$297,138 where it has been for more than 25 years. Self generated revenues are projected to increase slightly with non resident fees and printing photocopier revenues expected to increase related to the reopening of the Isabel Turner branch later this year, funds for functional or operational capital projects such as shelving, furniture equipment are included in the library's capital requests, while costs related to capital construction and maintenance are included in the municipal budgets unshared capital requests so City of Kingston only are \$30,000 for new janitorial equipment at the central branch and shared capital requests subject to that 8713 formula include \$100,000 for branch revitalization, and \$146,100 for cyber security, software and equipment upgrades. The total City of Kingston capital request for 2026 is 2026 is \$244,107 oops, sorry, I skipped through the capital slide. I think so. As part of our operating projections I'm giving you the next three years. I would note that again, 2027 is a little higher than normal, as we change back into our operating budget, and then it stabilizes again for 2028 and 2029 Thank you.
Mayor Bryan Paterson 2:16:51

Okay, thank you very much. Questions Councillor Ridge,
Councillor Ridge 2:16:55

well, thank you so much for the presentation and
Councillor Ridge 2:17:06

had two questions for you. So the first one is, when did the province you mentioned that the libraries depended upon both municipal and provincial funding? When was the last time the province updated their funding for libraries?

Laura Carter 2:17:20

So this is my 20th year at kfpl this year, and it was well before that no one likes to hear that the 90s were actually that many years ago. So it was, it was the early to mid 90s, I believe the last time they looked at it. And so it is based on our population at that time, we are actually slightly better off than some other like sort of GTA communities, which have grown exponentially in those years, but that we have received that level of funding for the province for, yeah, 25 to 30 years, they do occasionally provide one time grant funding or project based funding, but that's, you know, difficult, because then we have to sort of do more work and come up with projects to be able to access that, that funding.

Councillor Ridge 2:18:07

Thank you so much. So through you your worship, potentially, before Britney Spears had a number one hit, excellent. So my second question is that you mentioned the cost pressure. Mind going into a bit more detail about where those cost pressures exist in terms of your operational budget.

Laura Carter 2:18:29

Thank you, and Through you, Mayor Paterson, so they appear directly in contracted services. So we do have a security guard for every hour that the central branch is open. We also have early morning patrols because we have experienced people camping out at the door to the central branch because it is fairly sheltered. And so we do have mobile patrol costs as well, where we have sort of immediate security issues. We also call upon our security companies mobile patrol to help us for people who are trespassing or there may be concerns about safety for library staff where you don't see it and it's very hidden, is the cost in staff time in reporting, investigating and following up on incidents. So we spend a significant amount of time pulling video footage, for example. And then I think in the staff well being and morale, honestly. So we, we've, we've had these, these very high levels for the last few years. And I should say all those incidents include other facilities related ones. They're not all related to behaviors in the library, and so we are spending a significant amount of time dealing with with issues, and that takes away from our capacity to do other.

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 2:20:03

Worship and through you, just one quick question, I am noticing under the branch operation system wide expense, it's the one big expense Professional Services has been increased 61 point 38% can you please highlight this what kind of services they are and what was the reason to be increased that high.

Laura Carter 2:20:25

Thank you, and through you. Mayor Paterson, so where some of the lines are smaller amounts, when we do increase them, it's a very large percentage. So that line has our legal fees and our audit costs, so the bulk of the increase and a small amount for consultant fees if we need to do that, but the bulk of it is through audit costs and legal fees.

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 2:20:51

And the other line on this page is allocated shared services. This is also increased about 100,000 or 31 point 63% was that.

Laura Carter 2:21:04

Thank you. And through you, Mayor Paterson, that's part of the facilities costs. So allocated shared services is the amount that we are paying actually back to the city of Kingston to facilities management and construction services we've been working closely with over the last several years, so they are supporting us in things like elevator contracts and fire and life safety. The City of Kingston does own the buildings that we operate from, and the increase, again, to that line is related to the Isabel Turner branch operating costs coming back into the budget for 2026 we've taken them out fully for 2025

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 2:21:41

the last question is, last year, we have quite a few incident in the different

library for the different reasons. Did the this budget has enough resources available to not the control, but you know, pre ready for the preemptive security or to prevention for those incident to not take place.

Laura Carter 2:22:09

Thank you for your question, and Through you, Mayor Paterson, so that is a tough one to answer. The library is open to absolutely everyone, and working with the public involves a certain amount of risk and unpredictability. So I guess I would say no. I mean on the whole, on a day to day basis, I don't feel like as librarians and library staff and information professionals, we are adequately equipped to deal with the high level of needs that we see coming into our buildings, particularly in the City of Kingston. And so my pitch, as it always is, when we talk about these is we need investments from higher levels of government in mental health, addictions, health care, housing. And so when the library is one of many places that that everybody in our community can use and and so we certainly do our best. I mean, we have security, we have trained staff, we connect people with resources. We regularly call on the welcoming streets team and the addiction and mental health crisis teams to help support people in need, home based housing, but on a on a daily basis, we are spending a lot of our time and capacity dealing with those issues, rather than looking to maybe innovate more Library Services.

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 2:23:29

Thank you for very admiring comments, and I appreciate the services. Thank you, Councillor Wendy Stephen 2:23:37
Steven. Thank you, Mayor Paterson, just one.

Laura Carter 2:23:54

Thank you, and through you, Madam Mayor Paterson, so we You may recall the central branch renovation when we did move the date a few times, so we are waiting on a firm date for delivery of shelving, for example, before I really fully commit. So I would say that it will be and we do have a library board meeting later this week. So I would say we should look in the May, June, early June, sort of area is my, is my hope for reopening? And yes, absolutely, mayor and council, Frontenac county warden and council will be, will be invited. And once we get occupancy of the building, there may be opportunities as well to tour the board and council through the building before we even open.

Councillor Wendy Stephen 2:24:45

Thank you, Mr. Mayor, very excited to see the new build will be great. Thank you, Councilor tozo,

Councillor Brandon Tozzo 2:24:52

thank you, Mayor Paterson, through you. I too. Love libraries. Big champion of the great work you guys do. But. The questions on one of the comments in your slide was a brunch at Rideau heights, or reading brunch. Can you just send me more information on that? I'd love to learn more about that, because I always love to know what services are offered my library. Not a question, well, question, but not budgetary related.

Thank you.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 2:25:15

Okay, seeing other questions. Thank you very much. Ms Carter, okay, just looking at the time and our agenda, what I'll propose is that we will do the next budget presentation, which is downtown Kingston. Then we will take a break, and then we will come back and we will do police and then the full budget overview. So with that, I'll invite Marijo Cuerrier to the podium for the downtown Kingston BIA presentation.

Marijo Cuerrier 2:25:52

Good evening, Mayor Paterson, councilors and staff, thank you for having us, or all of us tonight, my partners and myself and I just want to thank you, first of all for the support that you offered during 2025 and I really look forward to 2026 continuing some of those collaborations and partnerships with people in the room. Want to remind everybody of our purpose, which is downtown Kingston BIA is a little bit different

than some of the other people that are presenting this evening. First of all, our purpose together. We are cultivating a community of shared joy, pride, optimism and prosperity in downtown Kingston. So we're centrally focused in the downtown, and also we're the money that we use to run the organization is primarily from our levy. The levy is collected from property owners within the business improvement area boundaries, which is set by the municipal act, whose buildings are zoned for commercial and industrial use. And just as a reminder for those that are not familiar with our boundaries, I just wanted to put that up on the screen so you can have a quick look at that, but basically it's Brock princess and Queen, and then it sort of flares out at the bottom all the way down to the water. So I wanted to talk about levy first. So 2025, levy was 1,571,000 I had asked this has already gone through our board for approval, and the board has approved a 3% increase. It was also presented at our fall general meeting. So the 3% increase comes up to 47,001 43 increasing our 2026 levy to 1,618,000

Marijo Cuerrier 2:27:43

on top of that, we're predicting about \$722,000 worth of supplementary revenue. Supplementary revenue in our cases come a case comes from municipal support, federal and provincial support, grants, sponsorships. We have a new music festival this year that we're working on. So we have some revenue opportunities there as well as BIA sales revenue. So our 2026 budget altogether is 2,341,204 I just wanted to quickly go over some annual plan highlights. I actually meant to bring our annual plan. For those of you that weren't at the Fall general meeting, I'll make sure that that gets delivered to you. So I'll just quickly go over a couple of things. There's something that we did this year. We had a four year strategic plan. I cut it down to three so that we would finish at the same time that the municipality finishes and that this this particular Council switches over. So we're trying to finish up our plan by the end of 2026 which should be fairly easy. We've done a lot of the heavy lifting. Now we've just got some things that we need to complete. So in the operations department, we have the completion of the wayfinding plan. I just got some of those drawings today, so you'll probably be seeing those in the future. Street maintenance, again, is a big focus, garbage, that kind of thing. Beautification of Ontario and the side streets. Ontario Street and the side streets will be a priority, safety, security and enforcement, and continuing to build those relationships in a holistic manner with enforcement and social services by our sides. In our events and programming, there are two main big things on our plate this year, spirit of winter, February event, which is about to happen in a couple of weeks, is something that we really put a lot of time and effort into. We didn't have the funding that we did the year before. We had 200,000 from the federal government for spirit of winter. We were unable to to secure that kind of funding for this year. So what we did was we sort of did things on a shoestring budget and came up with a revenue opportunity, which are some new snow domes that you're going to see in the amphitheater in a couple of weeks. We put them online. Sale, there were 72 opportunities, and they are almost sold out in 48 hours. So we're actually opening up that program even more. So that just shows you how many people are looking for something fun to do in in the winter months. Sydenham Street. Street activation is always something that continues to build each year. Summer programming, as we always do, and then the debut of our autumn Music Festival, which is coming along nicely, we should be able to hopefully secure our headliner in the next week. So really spending a lot of time and energy on that with our staff resources, our own funding model, which will also include money coming in for people that and the festival under marketing communications. We last year, we grew our Tiktok channel from the woman who helps with that is [FLAG: Otter heard "nageli" — first name of DKBIA TikToc channel manager; spelling unconfirmed; not in minutes; editor should verify with DKBIA], so if you haven't met her, she's a wonderful woman I just wanted to share with you. So we'll continue to grow that channel, but we're probably one of the most influential and largest Tiktok channels in in the region.

Suddenly, we have over four over 7000 followers since June, over 188 reels nageli has produced and over 2 million views already since June. So we'll be spending a lot of time continuing to build that communication channel, along with a lot of other things that are in the annual plan. And we're really going to focus on the history of the historic, the historic stories behind downtown Kingston, more so than we ever have. And then finally, the the last budget department item is business development and communications. We'll we've really started to focus on pursuing additional revenue, big sponsors, big relationships with corporations, and it's going very well. So that's really encouraging. A lot of BIS historic, BIA historically, just really rely on their Levy, but we're really starting to make big strides in hopefully one day doubling our our levy, which would be amazing, and I don't think it's that far away. Enhanced communication to downtown residential community is a big focus of this year, especially because we've got so many new residents coming into our immediate area. So we have some things brewing their development of measurement tools. So we work closely with tourism Kingston on this, as well as some of our own measurement tools so that we don't fall asleep on what's happening in the downtown core when it comes to not only the foot the foot traffic that we're we are responsible for, really at our organization, but also the revenue and vacancy rates and things like that. So we're spending a lot of time and energy on that, and then the advancement of member communication and engagement going forward this year, with some assistance from the municipality, we have a lot of exciting things happening downtown in terms of new assets. So there's enhanced flower bed program coming. It's a two to four year program that public works is working with us on. We've got 24 new baskets on Brock, which you would have seen along the bus station this past year, and we're going to continue doing that, and for the first time since I've been here, we will have bulbs coming up next spring, daffodil bulbs, thanks to, again, partnership with Public Works and all the the bistro tables chairs and the big red umbrellas in the amphitheater, all being replaced by commercial grade furniture, which will really bring that, that level of experience in Springer Market Square up a notch. And then, if you hadn't noticed, on on Princess Street, we now have, we just have big, round holiday bulbs that were sort of on the top of the light standards they had seen their lifespan last year, probably the year before, actually. So we have gotten we've disposed of those, and again, with some assistance from the municipality, we're able to replace them with some new winter banner lights that are a little bit more less focused on the holiday and can be extended a little bit further on either side. We can't keep them through the summer for technical reasons, but it does just give the downtown a little bit of a pop when you go down there in the evenings. I won't go over in detail our budget you do have that would think that was the addendum to your to your agenda tonight. I believe so, but I'll just point out a couple things and possibly answer some questions that might be asked anyway. So you can see our revenue totals are there from 2025 to 2026 comparison the levy. You can see I've already talked about that in the supplementary revenue, so you can sort of see where that's distributed. You'll notice in events. In programming, they had 331 250, last year in terms of revenue, that 200,000 of that was that federal grant. So this year we're actually looking at 408, which is money coming from the festival. So that's just an example. Projected revenues for operations when, when you put all of our subsidies in place, we're all in around anywhere from 20 to 25% over the four, four different departments that we have. So operations is one of them. You'll see that operations, total cost in labor doubled, pretty much doubled, and that's because operations is that my department and I took on a number of staff front that used to be budgeted in the business and development, so all of the welcoming street staff, we also had two subsidized staff last year that were continuing partway through the year with one and full year for the other. So it's just a reallocation of those funds. There's nothing else there. Oh, the contingency 36,000 that we didn't have in 2025 we're trying to start to build our reserve funds back up. They're pretty low at the moment. Marketing

Communications, nothing much has changed there. We have sort of sliced this, this poor department here and there. But anytime we need money, we go to the hit the marketing communications budget and see if we can steal some money from them. Events total, you'll see the main change is event. If you look at artist, expensive events, event expenses, blockbusters, logistics and volunteer expenses. If you take those five items, really, the money has just been reallocated from one year to the next, and it's all around the blockbuster event that's happening. She has a little bit of contingent contingency there to play with. And then business community development is really focused again, on that revenue generating component, as well as some of the data capture that we'll be doing in some of the community outreach. That's it. Does anyone have an Oh, sorry.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 2:37:15

Does anybody have any questions? Councilor Amos, quit.

Councillor Don Amos 2:37:22

Thank you, Mayor Paterson, through you. Ms. Cuerrier, thank you for the presentation. I'm a big fan of the downtown BIA and everything that you do. Could you talk a little bit about?

Councillor Don Amos 2:37:45

Have you written what's what's your observations of the promenades? Are we seeing an increase in traffic? Is it? Is it just staying steady? I'm just curious what the thoughts are, and how many are you offering in 2026

Marijo Cuerrier 2:37:58

so we have gone from two promenades to four promenades and back down to three. And that was driven specifically by the retail advisory working group. There are a number of issues that happen when you start to offer too many promenades, and they're probably pretty obvious. They become watered down. People stop spending money. They're just coming down for that. You know that look and feel of being at the event, and we also have a lot of retailers who just simply don't participate, and then we have big gaps in in the experience. One of the things that we'll be doing this next year coming is with the music festival that's coming that will be held on a promenade day. So promenade will actually be part are, they are wonderful, but it is a delicate, delicate balance. It doesn't help the downtown if the roads closed and there's not activations and activity happening, and that happens from our members, if they don't have staff, don't have inventory, don't have the resources to do it every Saturday, which I think is probably what some people would like, then we're going to suffer overall in the downtown for the year. So we do keep an eye on it, but we are really driven by what the retailers are telling us. Who are the people that you know? See their tills and see what happens on the day.

Councillor Don Amos 2:39:26

So how many are you going to offer then in 2026

Marijo Cuerrier 2:39:29

as far as I know, actually, we have a retail meeting tomorrow. I suspect we'll go with three again. So we'll have our September one, which is mainly students.

Councillor Don Amos 2:39:53

Now the for me, Market Square is our next biggest. Want to say your crew is doing a fantastic job with that. The bowl where various bands are playing, it's great. The Bistro set up, it has a nice vibe to it. So I just want to say, Well done to your team. It's it's appreciated. Thanks.

Marijo Cuerrier 2:40:17

It's collaborative with other other people at the municipality, for sure, but, yeah, it is slowly, slowly getting better.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 2:40:27

Thank you. Councillor Chaves,

Councillor Paul Chaves 2:40:30

thank you. I have no budget questions for you directly. So no budget line issues, so

you're safe there. I did notice that there's you have a number of different events planned for especially during the summer. I'm not sure if you're aware, it's been mentioned earlier today a couple times that there's a small, localized, global event happening this summer. So I'm just wondering if you have anything that's surrounding the World Cup coming up.

Marijo Cuerrier 2:40:55

Oh, that one. Okay, I wasn't sure whether when you said localized, I thought it might be The Tragically Hip. So we are. We work very closely with tourism Kingston, and we will be supporting them in their efforts to ensure that the World Cup is that we feel the financial and economic benefits of that as well as The Tragically Hip. There.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 2:41:34

Is 837, we will take a 10 minute break. Reconvene at 847, for the rest of our.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 2:54:22

To McIntosh is also online as well. So with that, Deputy Chief, I'll hand it over to you. Please take it away.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 2:54:33

Thank you Good evening, and thank you your worship and Council for the opportunity to appear before you. I also want to like to thank all of our city staff who have worked with us to put this budget together, Dez and all your team, you've helped us tremendously. So thank you. It truly is a team effort. We have a number of our sworn and civilian senior command here tonight and also online, and I just want to thank. Them for all their hard work that they've they put forward. It truly is a team effort. Also our Police Services Board, who is online as well, who have approved and we bring this budget together before you tonight, assisting with the presentation. We have our HR director Tracy Ringrose here in person, online, we have our chief designate, Adam McIntosh, who starts on Wednesday, Director of Finance, Scarlet Eyles, senior financial analyst, Monica Purcell, and our Police Services Board Chair, Gail McAllister. The purpose of our budget presentation here today is to provide an overview of the 2026 proposed operating and capital budgets for the Kingston police. Kingston police service, and also our budget objectives will focus on and address operational priorities, maintain public safety and meet legislative requirements we need to account for the inflationary pressures collective agreements and strategic investments in technology training and infrastructure. Our goal is to ensure continued continued delivery efficient policing services for the community. I must further add, and it's not lost on me that police budgets. In this police budget make up a large portion of the municipal budget. Today, we are recommending that the city that city council receives and approve the proposed 2026 operating budget for the Kingston police, resulting a total net budget of \$57,250,135 and further the City Council receive and approve the proposed 2026 capital budget for the Kingston police at a total of \$2.3 million these budgets were approved by the Kingston Police Services Board at its meeting held on November the 27th 2025 the Kingston police mission and vision guide our purpose and future aspirations. The proposed budget supports making the service future ready, advancing our vision of being exemplary operationally through public confidence, while maintaining a realistic spending in 2026

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 2:57:17

our budget purpose balances community expectations, service quality, risk and affordability. Strategic alignment supports Kingston Police Services Board, strategic plan community impact meets demands for effective and efficient policing. Risk and affordability manages operational risk while staying fiscally responsible.

Performance drives progress on key performance indicators for our five strategic objectives, as outlined in our strategic plan, Kingston's Kingston policing is is complex due to a diverse population and our mix of urban and rural areas and our major institutions, some key factors to consider Approximately 35,000 students attends Queens RMC and St Lawrence College. These numbers are not factored into

census. Our CFB Kingston, presence of our custodial institutions, such as our prisons and also we are hub for mental health services, homelessness, hospitals, some of our service pressures that are sorry, some of our service pressures for us to consider as well are things like our bail reform or C 48 our migration to our community safety and policing act that came into effect in 2024 that we still face challenges with and some of our operational challenges for our 911, and mental health calls, homelessness, protests, other areas of our hospital and our very diverse population, very quickly, our mental health calls for service continue to increase year over year. Here's a quick snapshot showing of almost 9% increase for mental health calls. We do have an estimate for our last part of 2020, 25 but we anticipate an increase to 1081 calls for service. Our crime severity index measures the seriousness of police reported crime and tracks changes over time. The violent CSI in Kingston peaked in 2002 with at 82 drops to drop to 66 in 2003 and 64 in 2004 again, this is just a snapshot, but something that we monitor when we measure our crime severity in Kingston. Person,

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 2:59:46

our cop to pop ratio, or when we look at it, number of police officers per 100,000 population is another factor that we measure. This doesn't take into account those institutions that I spoke about earlier. But when we look at the Kingston, King. Kingston number here that comes across at 158 we are in the mid range. Something also to consider is you'll see the number here of 224 and sometimes our numbers aren't exactly as our complement as sometimes we hire as we are having pending pending retirements. This number is from 2023 and just for just for reference. Stats Canada now collects this police data biannual, so we're still waiting for the 2025

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:00:36

update the slot. This slide summarizes staffing levels, including the budgeted sworn staffing complement, the number of members currently off duty are accommodated, and you'll see the data. Data clearly demonstrates an upward trend, which is seen across all of Ontario and even nationally. This is monitored, monitored and not taken lightly. This the staffing levels and the purpose of this funding request will stabilize staffing and address some critical gaps due to those long term absences. We are looking at two new sorry, 10 new sworn members in 2026 six from frontline patrol, three in investigations and one in community response. These are budgeted in the last four months of the year on the basis of fiscal responsibility, as you remember from last time, when we came to council last year, we had budgeted for 25 new members across 2025 and 2026 splitting 13 officers and 12 officers, as indicated, these 10 officers are budgeted in the last last four months of the year, current staffing challenges have changed. Our numbers essentially for front line patrol remain consistent over the last 10 years. Those are deployable people available to take calls for service. The impact of shortages, reduced patrol coverage, increased overtime and strain on member well being. We also have a number of officers in that complement that are seconded to jfos, or joint force operations to a total of 10 officers. These officers are loaned out for a period of approximately three years to more advanced specialist teams that support Kingston police in that JFO. Something to consider is those positions are relatively all funded through revenue, through the provincial stream, and not burdened on our on our tax base. I just like now to pass over the mic to to our chief designate, McIntosh for a few words, I.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:05:40

[FLAG: Chief Designate Adam McIntosh spoke between this timestamp and 3:16:52. Gee says "Thanks, Chief, and I'll pass it over to Scarlett to start going through some of the numbers." McIntosh's remarks are not assigned a separate speaker label by Otter. Editor should split this section and attribute McIntosh's words, which are currently absorbed into the Speaker 8/Gee block, by reviewing the audio.]

Thanks, Chief, and I'll pass it over to Scarlett to start going through some of the numbers that.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:16:52

Thanks Scarlett and in chief for your comments and to our Police Services Board Chair, who's also

Mayor Bryan Paterson 3:17:04

thank you very much. Questions. Councillor Ridge,

Councillor Ridge 3:17:09

thank you your worship and through you. I'm sure there will be additional questions about the staffing, but I'm not going to ask them this evening. I have a question about wait times for mental health calls in for transferring people over. I did a presentation to members of the provincial government last week, and I used the statistics from our November meeting that there was over 1400 hours that office. Transfer people over for mental health calls. Is there anything that anyone can speak to with regards to the strain that that puts on police resources?

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:17:54

Sure through you your worship and thanks for the question. Councillor Ridge and I think we can attribute additional hours above our health. Im reports, to be frank, that come to our board, the data is as good that goes in as comes out. And we know from audits that our apprehensions are actually higher than what we see in our health. Im reports, when we take somebody for a form one or two kgh to be cleared medically. It's a two staff escort. At some points it can be more than a two staff escort, depending on the circumstance, but generally speaking, always a two staff escort, sometimes our staff and as we know the emergency room, which all of us have experienced here that attend the emergency room, on occasion, sometimes our wait times are quite reasonable. I think we show up and we're in and out maybe an hour and a half or two hours. But sometimes we could be at hospital for six or seven and we all look at Kingston as a relatively larger hospital, but when they have trauma cases that come in, it's all hands on deck, and unfortunately it's due to volume, so sometimes our wait times are six or seven hours.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 3:19:14

Thank you, Deputy Mayor Hassan,

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 3:19:21

thank you. Your worship and through you, my question to Scarlett as a 40 non deployable officers or member of the force, how is affect our budget every year, and especially on this budget, the or increasing this budget. How hard is it?

Councillor Jimmy Hassan 3:22:34

Thank you, Chief, and I want to welcome you too as well to Kingston, and good to see you here as well. So my next question is, every year it's been three year I am on the council. Every year, it's not easy for me as a councilor to vote for in the favor of increasing police budget when we are living in the era where is a lot of noise about defunding things and stuff like that. But I understand how important is to provide the security and to our citizen to continue that inflation is on the rise. And you know, we are economy is going through a difficult time or challenging time, so for to meet the requirement even minimum, we need to increase or meet the inflationary, you know, budget or the according to the rate those so, in indeed this budget, how we can improve these services for the citizen? And this is question I asked last three years. So if we approving this much budget, how we can improve the service to the.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 3:32:21

Next is councilor Amos. Thank

Councillor Don Amos 3:32:24

you, Mr. Patterson, through you, chief McIntosh, deputy chief guy and MS isles, thank you for your presentation. It's greatly appreciated. I just want to say a quick note the accommodation, the budget accommodation,

Councillor Don Amos 3:32:46

tale that missiles put up in relation to other police services was a telling tale, and so it's appreciated what what the police services is doing. Chief, very happy to

hear about the health and wellness program. I'm a big proponent of making sure that mental health is taken care of and supported. Also happy to hear about the service level review. I think that's important anytime you can do an internal review of some kind to see what you're doing right, what you're doing wrong, and then build on that, I think that will go well. The only area that I have concerns with that I do hear from my constituents about is service time, response time, and chief, when you indicated that this is a 10 new officers are coming in, and I recognize it's at the back half of this year, but it's a status quo, I am slightly concerned, and I'm wondering if one of you could speak to response time. And I know that there are different types of responses out there. I fully recognize that, but an individual who is in a crisis, who calls the police,

Councillor Don Amos 3:34:18

one one is a comment that my constituents have made that the response time by city police has has been slow at times, and that's probably a recognition that there's events that are happening throughout the city. But do you anticipate, I know you said this was a status quo budget for you, but do you anticipate some reduction in.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:36:21

Thanks, Chief, and through you Your Worship, I couldn't agree with you more. I don't want to call it a status quo budget, but I think that words have been used a couple times tonight when we talk about those 10 bodies coming on board. We all know that people, most people, when they get hired in policing, go to the Ontario Police College for three three months and then come back and coach for another three months. So are we going to see those 10 Bodies Hit the road in 2026 I think reality is, if it's an experienced hire that we get to pick up from another agency, pre trained, that's a great, great option. But those, those officers aren't, aren't around like they used to be, but they do come along every once in a while, as far as response times, I think, like I talked about at the hospital, it's very fluid, and no matter if it's a priority one or three, call to the person calling. Generally speaking, it's not lost on me that most people don't call the police ever, and if they do, they might call the police very rarely, but when they call, regardless if it's a one, two or three, to them, it's a one, and we don't meet their expectations, sometimes, in their moment when they're when they're in crisis, or when they when they pick up the phone and call police, and when you see a hefty price tag, a large budget item on the municipal budget, the expectation of the public is, is that they will get a response in a timely manner. Policing is complex. It's becoming more complex. The demands are more complex. And I think I've had probably conversations with almost every one of the councilors around these tables in the last 12 months about response times and about the you know, the frustrations that members of the community feel at times. I think there is many times when we respond to priority three calls and people are quite satisfied with the call response time. But I couldn't agree with you more when people are in crisis and they call the police they wanted them moments earlier, before they even placed that call. But does this budget really shift that narrative? It would take a large, substantial investment in front line patrol for people to have those immediate impacts when they pick up the phone. And I don't even want to estimate what that number would look like. I think that's

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:38:45

sound framework on what that might look like. But the reality is, if we really wanted to shift that pendulum to maybe what people are experiencing across across the sector, it would need a substantial investment to really see that. When we look at some of our other services across the province, and I'll go quite large, quite some of the larger police services, we're seeing that same conversation around 911 calls around the province. So in Kingston, I think if it's a legitimate 911 call that comes in, I think we do quite well on answering those calls. I know we look at some of our GTA services, some of those 911 calls are sitting in queue just to be answered, let alone responded to. So we are seeing the challenge, you know, provincially,

nationally, North American crawl across North America, but, but I don't want to tell this council that you're the investment in the number of officers will see dramatic impacts. I think something to note that hasn't really been touched on is, you know, when we look at making an expenditure, we we look at the results, but I think the results we're going to see here is that we're not going to fall further behind. So it's. Really is a holding holding budget, and we're not going to see we're not going to see us fall behind, and then in 2027 not only are we going to be putting this study into practice, but we're not also going to be catching up by by falling behind. As director of finance Scarlet I was mentioned the other project projection years simply had a three, or sorry, five sworn officers simply as a holding so that we don't show you a number and then come back and say so it's just we picked the number of five to put a simple holding number in the 2728 29 budgets, just to because we know that, you know, we may be talking about it. If we remove them, it's going to be beneficial to the budget. If it grows, we're not going from zero all the way up, perfect. Thank you.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 3:40:49

Thank you. We still have a couple of other questions. Just want to remind council we still do have a long and detailed presentation yet to come. So just

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:41:05

councillor shakes. Thank you, and I guess on that note, so I want to thank all the civilian and sworn officers for their duty and everything they do for the city. Also want to thank the team for the details report that was given explain the request for budget, unique to some of the other requests we got. Also want to comment I've my past experience worked with long term absences of wship. So I'm glad to hear that a plan is in place. One asks one question when the slides basically the number of officers per population, the number used is that the number of budgeted officers or the number of active officers.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:42:05

The number submitted to Stats Can is our number of sworn compliment, and that includes members that are off on on leave Scarlet, if you want to touch on that or top that,

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:42:24

I'm not going to talk about the staffing levels. I think it's been touched about, and I'm really glad that it's seen as an issue, significant gap, I think was a term that was used, and the overtime is not going to be used to supplement that, because that's the long term plan, there is a concern, which I had on page eight or 37 which is state there are 18 constables per shift. Though the department often operates with reduced staffing levels of eight to 10 constables per shift. Does this mean that there's a reduced number of patrols going on, or reduction in officers in each vehicle, as in, they're not paired.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:43:03

I can speak to that briefly. Our patrol groups, generally speaking, sit around approximately 18. Sometimes they drop to 17 with absences and whatnot that does not include the NCOs or the supervisors. So 17 uniform, obviously, people take holidays that gets whittled down. Few people are generally on courses or training that gets whittled down. And then if we were to have a few call in sick or people be absent, we could be down to, you know, 10, 911, that's usually where we sit on the on the lower end.

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:43:42

So to be clear, is that actual patrols, or is that just officers? That's officers. So there's no reduction in patrols in community.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:43:55

Well, I think if just standard, if we are down to 10, and we could have had 17, or could have had 14, that is that's reduced.

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:44:02

Yes, okay, thank you. Because, as mentioned, there are concerns. I've heard those concerns as well. So when the items also are material, supplies and fees, page 13 and 37 estimate average fuel price of \$1.60 per liter has not gas price been trending lower. I've seen more in a line of dollar 36 so that make the projection more like four and 56k savings of 108,000 so

Unknown Speaker 3:44:44

let me turn that over to you.

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:45:47

A footnote, today's price was dollar 15. Do you have a fuel supplier? They work with this world state

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:46:01

contract because everyone safe

[FLAG: Unknown Speaker 3:46:02 — Otter heard "contract? Yeah, we're on petrol," — likely Scarlet Eyles or Deputy Chief Gee responding to Chaves's fuel supplier question; "petrol" may be a garble of a fuel company name such as Petro-Canada.

Editor should check audio.]

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:46:06

cannabis, okay? Because, because, if we're going to say, No, I know guy. Capital, there's replacement for vehicles. How many vehicles are we planning on replacing this year,

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:46:28

because I'm just inquiring, because it to me, personally, I drive by the station quite often, and coming here and there from the meetings, it just seems that there's A lot of vehicles in the parking lot. So I'm just wondering about the number of vehicles.

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:46:56

Sure I know every time we look at our fleet compliment, we it always draws some attention, approximately 130 approximately 130 vehicles. I'm not going to stand up here and articulate each item. I think we can probably maybe do an exercise one off and see how we we get there. You know, I will throw it there. Trailers are included in that. Four wheelers are included in that. Motorcycles are included in that. With our community volunteers are included in that, court services special constables or 40 officers and Cid, our services unit, which is street crime, drugs. And then, you know, we talk about 18 officers or 19 officers or 20 officers, and then we talk about four NCOs, and then we have overlapping shifts, and then we have officers that are carried over. I think we have approximately, including tactical, about 50 patrol vehicles. Are they all running all of the time? The answer is no. Are they running sometimes all of the time, all of them? The answer that's yes. Maybe I can turn over Scarlett for maybe a more elegant conversation on a

Scarlet Eyles 3:48:56

there's quite a there's quite a few. We have a lot. We have a lot of vehicles that we use for a lot of different departments. And I will just say that one thing that I do want it to mention here is that our future plans do include a comprehensive review of our fleet efficiencies and opportunities for optimization. So we have been, I myself, have been working closely with the director of fleet out the city, and really hoping over the next year that we're going to create more synergies with the city utilize their systems more so they were we're not utilizing the m5 system that the city is using quite to the level that we should. And so I meet with the director of fleet out the city, and we're trying to, we're going to really look at that over the next year and just see if we're optimizing and using vehicles as efficiently as we should be.

Okay?

Councillor Paul Chaves 3:49:55

Thank you, and I understand there's overlap, and I appreciate hearing about the review. Thank you.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 3:50:00

You. Thank You. Councillor Osanic,
Councillor Lisa Osanic 3:50:03

thank you. Your worship through you. Thanks so much for all the information that you provided us in the slide deck. Because it's all really, really interesting. I just have one question about criminal record checks, and so we're using a third party to help with the criminal record checks. Is that to speed it up and right now, what is the best way for someone to get it done as quickly as possible, to still come to the police station, and can they get it done that day? Or how does that work?

Deputy Chief Scott Gee 3:50:37

I can speak really quickly on that and through your worship criminal reference checks can be done in person or online. They go into the same queue. I think our biggest challenge we're hearing right now is wait times. Right those vulnerable sector checks across the sector. People are trying to volunteer. People are trying to get employment, and there's a bottleneck in the system. Our our bottleneck right now is between about 10 and 15 days. We're seeing about two to three weeks for a vulnerable sector criminal record check being done some of our other police partners across the eastern part of the province, some of our larger services are up to nine weeks. We see a lot of challenges by people coming to Kingston police asking if we can assist them. The reality is, is we can't do vs checks out of jurisdiction, because if we need to verify fingerprints, it needs to be done by your home police service. There's a lot of talks at legislation right now about opening up the parameters on vs checks and possibly having third party providers do contracts to speed that up. Those conversations are still ongoing. When you look at the budget, it talked about revenue and new revenue. That's not our front counter. That's a third party that we were doing. Third party checks were doing within our police service. We've brought that online in the last 12 to 18 months, and really formalized it in the last quarter of this year, getting things up and running on a more automated version. So that's a revenue source that we've created by signing onto a partnership agreement. Definitely cost recovery, and also turns out some revenue on the other side, above and beyond our local ones.

Councillor Lisa Osanic 3:52:20

All right, thanks so much for that explanation.

Mayor Bryan Paterson 3:52:27

Okay, seeing no other questions. Thank you folks very much for that. Okay, it is almost 10 o'clock. We need to pace ourselves so we're going to recess now. We will do the overview presentation beginning tomorrow, and then we'll move into department presentations from there. Okay. Have a great evening. We'll see you back here at six.