

**Report to:  
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health  
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa  
30 January 2023 / 30 janvier 2023**

**and Council  
et au Conseil  
1 February 2023 / 1er février 2023**

**Submitted on January 30, 2023  
Soumis le 30 janvier 2023**

**Submitted by  
Soumis par:  
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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE      File Number: ACS2023-OPH-PCS-0001**

**SUBJECT:** 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health

**OBJET:** Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2023 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That, at its meeting of January 30, 2023, the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:**

- 1. Receive and table the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health; and**

2. **Direct staff to forward the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health to Ottawa City Council on February 1, 2023 as part of the City Council's tabling of the City of Ottawa 2023 Draft Operating and Capital budget; and**

**That, at its meeting of February 27, 2023, the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:**

3. **Approve the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health;**
4. **Upon the Board of Health's approval of the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health, direct staff to forward the report to Ottawa City Council, for consideration on March 1, 2023, as part of the City Council's approval of the City of Ottawa 2023 Draft Operating and Capital budget; and**
5. **Upon approval of the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health by the Board of Health and Ottawa City Council, direct the Medical Officer of Health (or delegate), on behalf of the Board of Health, to forward the 2023 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission, to the Ontario Ministry of Health (MOH) for consideration based on the approved 2023 Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health.**

#### **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que, lors de la réunion du 30 janvier 2023, le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa :**

1. **reçoive et dépose le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2023 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa; et**
2. **demande au personnel de transmettre le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2023 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa au Conseil municipal d'Ottawa lors du dépôt des budgets préliminaires de fonctionnement et d'immobilisations de 2023 de la Ville d'Ottawa le 1 février 2023; et**

**Que, lors de la réunion du 27 février 2023, le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa :**

3. **approuve le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2023 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa;**
4. **demande au personnel, une fois le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2023 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa approuvé par le Conseil de santé,**

**de transmettre le rapport au Conseil municipal d'Ottawa afin que ce dernier puisse l'examiner le 1 mars 2023 dans le cadre de l'approbation, par le Conseil municipal, des budgets préliminaires de fonctionnement et d'immobilisations de 2023 de la Ville d'Ottawa; et**

- 5. demande au personnel, une fois le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2023 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa approuvé par le Conseil de santé et le Conseil municipal d'Ottawa, de transmettre ce budget approuvé au ministère de la Santé de l'Ontario (MSO) aux fins d'examen dans le cadre de la demande de subvention des programmes.**

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Protecting Public Health and Well-being**

The Ottawa Board of Health, through Ottawa Public Health (OPH), prioritizes health protection and the prevention of illness and injury with a responsive stance that promotes health and well-being for all of Ottawa's people. The science of public health, population health assessment and surveillance guides all work, including emergency preparedness and response. To be effective, the delivery of public health programs and services must be equitable and accessible, and is increasingly focused on priority neighbourhoods and populations. OPH strives to respond to the trends in a way that integrates cultural safety.

The proposed operating budget for the Ottawa Board of Health focuses on lessons learned from COVID-19, input from Ottawa community members and partners and the OPH team. The OPH team is applying its resources in a manner that allows agility, preparedness, and recovery, that is prevention oriented and promotes equity and reconciliation with First Nations, Inuit and Metis people. The budget supports a forward-thinking approach of building on partnerships to promote a collaborative approach to wellness, creating the infrastructure and plans for resourcing to modernize our digital solutions, doing OPH's part to reduce the impact of climate change and support interventions impacting determinants of health like housing.

The budget for 2023:

- is a balanced budget
- maintains a level of COVID-19 pandemic response lower than in 2022, with 100% provincial funding, and

- anticipates ongoing budget pressures to carry out OPH's mandate into 2024

Budget 2023 is informed by the potential risks associated with ongoing recovery and the need for continued surveillance and vigilance, including the potential for greater resurgence of COVID-19 and other respiratory illnesses and infectious diseases; and continued upward trends in population growth and demand for services. The budget reflects the need for a continued COVID-19 pandemic response in 2023 while working to meet the health unit's requirements under the Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS).

Most of OPH's work is accomplished through people and the majority of the budget is made up of salary and benefit costs. Every position in OPH's base budget, and temporary roles supported by COVID-19 one-time provincial funding, has been reviewed to examine how to best meet the standards and deliver positive health outcomes by maximizing the funding allotment OPH receives. Over the past year and going into 2023, the focus has been and continues to be on protecting Ottawa residents from the risk of resurgence of COVID-19 in the community, continuing to catch-up on programs and service areas that were reduced or suspended as a result of staff being redeployed to support the COVID-19 response, and recovery efforts to address backlogs in public health services and new community health needs.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **At a Glance: Budget 2023**

Strategic areas of focus for 2023 are: returning to the full scope of public health practice, including chronic disease and injury prevention; promoting mental health and substance use health; and the maintenance of the COVID-19 response while "catching up" with vaccination and other programs that have been impacted by deployment to the pandemic response. While last year's financial focus was on sustaining the COVID-19 response and ensuring people had the protection of COVID-19 booster vaccines, OPH was able to restore more core and essential public health programs and services. Costs were managed through ongoing assessments and program reviews, such that the spending on COVID-19 dropped over the year. The same is expected for 2023 – that regular examination of COVID-19 needs and resourcing will lead to less expenditure on COVID-19 in 2023.

OPH continues to restore programs suspended because of the public health measures implemented to mitigate COVID-19 spread. OPH is measuring the need for catch-up work in the following areas: Dental services, including screening; inspections;

outbreaks; Infectious disease control, including tuberculosis; routine childhood and school-based immunizations; sexual health clinic services; mental health and substance use health and other health promotion services focused on chronic disease and injury prevention.

As OPH has been examining the resources required to return to the full scope of public health practice, the ongoing pressure from infectious diseases continues at a higher level than pre-pandemic. This means OPH may continue to be challenged to meet all obligations under the OPHS. A risk-based approach will continue to be applied.

The increase in programs required for a fulsome and targeted response to COVID-19 based on community needs put pressure on OPH's foundational support teams such as stakeholder engagement, communications, surveillance and reporting, Information Technology, logistics, staffing and finance. OPH monitors the impacts on workload and costs as services and programs continue to be reinstated.

The pandemic shone a light on gaps in how Ontario's public health, health care and social support systems function. More recently, using a health equity lens in all aspects of programs and services has had a positive impact on service delivery models. OPH heard from priority community members that they see recovery as an ongoing process and highlight that the pandemic and its impact are not over. Going forward, addressing community needs beyond COVID-19 will be critical. Accordingly, OPH must continue to build on the success and knowledge gained through the pandemic, such as to bring services to places where barriers to health are greatest. This neighbourhood and population-based approach requires sustaining the relationships and community trust placed in the organization through current partnerships and maintenance of human and financial resourcing for programs responsive to community needs.

Another shift made during the pandemic was to use new digital solutions, such as the Case & Contact Management (CCM) tool, COVax to manage the vaccine program, an appointment booking system for community-based COVID-19 vaccine clinics, a workforce scheduling tool, and Bruce the virtual assistant chatbot, launched or developed to meet expanding requirements. To continue the modernization momentum and build capacity, OPH has launched an electronic public health records (EPHR) system that was put on hold at the beginning of the pandemic.

Because of the changes described above, OPH incurred additional costs in addressing community needs in line with the provincial direction to respond to the pandemic, vaccinate the population and continue essential public health services. A [financial update](#) was provided to the Board at its September meeting, which included a

forecasted expenditure of \$77M on COVID-19, based on the first two quarters' spending. The total spending on COVID-19 in 2022 will likely be lower than this as the year end accounting closes, because the uptake for COVID-19 vaccines and the COVID-19 response was less demanding than in the first half of the year. The Ontario Ministry of Health, as committed, has provided all health units with the reimbursement of 2022 COVID-19 Extraordinary Costs. Provincial funding provided to date has fully offset all pandemic related costs therefore balancing the budget. The province has committed to continue the same process for extraordinary COVID-19 expenses for 2023, though both OPH and the province expect spending on COVID-19 to continue to decrease. OPH staff continues to monitor the situation and a full reconciliation of 2022 expenses will be completed during Q1 of 2023 and reported to the Board.

### **Budget Directions and Assumptions**

The 2023 draft budget was developed based on the following assumptions:

- OPH will continue to respond to COVID-19 through 2023 and seek opportunities to leverage the experience and knowledge from the past two years to maintain public trust and to build pathways to culturally safe and equitable services, recognizing the unique needs of the population served.
- The Province has committed to continuing to fund COVID-19 related extraordinary costs through to the end of the 2023.
- OPH is mindful of the pressures and risks that may impact on the organization's ability to provide services starting in fiscal 2024 and beyond.
- Working with guidance from an active Board, OPH can continue to build strong partnerships and build an understanding of the resources required to support community-informed service and address the current and future population health needs.

The draft budget assumes that the base provincial funding increase will remain at 0% for all programs in 2023, and that COVID-19 expenses will be 100% funded by the province, as described above. The 2023 budget also assumes that the 70% provincial / 30% municipal funding formula for cost-shared programs, and the provincial approach to offset the funding formula shift from a 75% provincial contribution in 2019, with mitigation funding of about \$3 million for OPH, will not change in 2023.

The budget incorporates the municipal tax-supported increase of 2.5% and revenue from growth to increase OPH's base funding with a contribution from the City of Ottawa

of \$1.240 million. This results in a total growth to the OPH budget of 1.5% from 2022 to 2023.

### **2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health**

OPH has prepared estimates for the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health in consultation with the City's Finance Department and in line with the City's guidelines for 2023 budget development, as outlined in the ([Proposed 2023 Budget Direction, Timeline and Consultation Process](#)).

For 2023, OPH is presenting a draft balanced budget of \$128 million, which is broken down as \$77 million base funding and \$51.1 million one-time funding. It includes provincial revenue of \$99 million, a City of Ottawa contribution of \$27 million and other sources of revenue totaling \$1.4 million.

The base budget increase of \$1.240 million addresses cost of living and benefit adjustments determined by collective agreements. Increases in this area will be fully funded by the City of Ottawa.

The \$51.1 million is the one-time funding request related to COVID-19 and OPH's need to maintain the response level through the winter, before an expected decrease in the intensity of the response over the year.

Considerations point to greater budget pressures into 2024 as a result of the disruption that pandemic response continues to have on OPH's core programs and services. Priorities of urgent concern include: immunizing children against vaccine-preventable diseases, particularly the growing number who don't have access to a family doctor; preventing the spread of infectious diseases other than COVID-19; addressing the mental health and addictions needs of Ottawa residents, recognizing populations disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; and the growing need to support parents to give their children a healthy start in life. Due to a lack of family physicians who are able to accept newborns in Ottawa, OPH has seen increased demand for home visits and drop-in clinics for parents and their young children. The challenge is that OPH is not able to meet the demand within its existing funding allocation for the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program, which is supported by Ontario's Ministry of Children, Communities and Social Services.

Further, with its successful launch of the electronic public health record (EPHR) and other tools that have positively impacted OPH services, some gaps still exist in the health unit's ability to meet the full scope of dynamic client and community digital needs.

Additional human and financial resources are required to facilitate further growth in this area.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

OPH employee, community partner and stakeholder feedback has been incorporated into priorities for how resources will be used to advance population health in 2023.

Following the tabling of the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health at the January 30, 2023 Board of Health meeting, the budget report will be tabled at the City Council meeting of February 1, 2023. The Board will consider the budget for approval at its subsequent meeting, on February 27, 2023, and submit it to Council on March 1, 2023 as part of the 2023 Budget process.

The process for consideration of the Board of Health budget is outlined below, and additional information about the City's community consultation process can be found on [Ottawa.ca](http://Ottawa.ca).

**Table 1: Process for Consideration of the Board of Health Budget**

<b>Budget Process</b>	<b>Dates</b>
2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health tabling and presentation at Board of Health meeting	January 30, 2023
Widespread circulation of draft budget via web based and social media channels with opportunities for online and direct feedback	January 30 to February 27, 2023
2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health tabling at Ottawa City Council, including Boards and City Departments budgets	February 1, 2023
Public Delegations and 2023 Board of Health Operating Budget Approval	February 27, 2023
Final 2023 City Operations and Capital Budget Approval at Ottawa City Council, including Boards and City	March 1, 2023

Budget Process	Dates
Departments budgets	

Residents can comment on the draft budget via email at [healthbudget@ottawa.ca](mailto:healthbudget@ottawa.ca), or, by calling the Ottawa Public Health Information Line at 613-580-6744, Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Residents are also invited to make written submissions to the Board of Health in advance of its meeting of February 27, 2023 or register to speak at the Board's virtual meeting on February 27, 2023. Registrations must be received by the Board of Health Secretary ([Diane.Blais@Ottawa.ca](mailto:Diane.Blais@Ottawa.ca)) before 9 a.m. on the day of the meeting.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal impediments to implementing the recommendations in this report.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Financial implications are outlined within the report.

### **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

DOCUMENT 1 – 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health – English

DOCUMENT 1 – Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2023 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa – Français

### **DISPOSITION**

The Ottawa Board of Health will consider the 2023 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health for approval at its meeting on February 27, 2023. Staff will forward the report to Ottawa City Council for its consideration, as part of City Council's 2023 Budget process and to the Ministry of Health, for consideration as part of the Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission application process.