

**Report to  
Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Board of Health  
Conseil de santé d'Ottawa  
1 November 2021 / 1 novembre 2021**

**and Council  
et au Conseil  
3 November 2021 / 3 novembre 2021**

**Submitted on November 1, 2021  
Soumis le 1 novembre 2021**

**Submitted by  
Soumis par:  
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**Ward: CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE      File Number: ACS2021-OPH-PCS-0007**

**SUBJECT: 2022 DRAFT OPERATING BUDGET FOR THE OTTAWA BOARD OF HEALTH**

**OBJET: BUDGET PROVISOIRE DE FONCTIONNEMENT POUR 2022 POUR LE CONSEIL DE SANTÉ D'OTTAWA**

## **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That, at its meeting of November 1, 2021, the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:**

- 1. Receive and table the 2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health; and**

2. Direct staff to forward the 2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health to Ottawa City Council on November 3, 2021, as part of the City Council's tabling of the City of Ottawa 2022 Draft Operating and Capital budget; and

That, at its meeting of November 29, 2021, the Board of Health for the City of Ottawa Health Unit:

3. Approve the 2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health;
4. Upon the Board of Health's approval of the 2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health, direct staff to forward the report to Ottawa City Council, for consideration on December 8, 2021 as part of the City Council's approval of the City of Ottawa 2022 Draft Operating and Capital budget; and
5. Upon approval of the 2022 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 2022 Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission, to the Ontario Ministry of Health (MOH) for consideration based on the approved 2022 Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health.

#### **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

Que, lors de la réunion du 1 novembre 2021, le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa :

1. reçoive et dépose le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2022 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa; et
2. demande au personnel de transmettre le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2022 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa au Conseil municipal d'Ottawa lors du dépôt des budgets préliminaires de fonctionnement et d'immobilisations de 2022 de la Ville d'Ottawa le 3 novembre 2021; et

Que, lors de la réunion du 29 novembre 2021, le Conseil de santé de la circonscription sanitaire de la Ville d'Ottawa :

3. approuve le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2022 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa;
4. demande au personnel, une fois le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement

**pour 2022 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 8 décembre 2021 dans le cadre de l'approbation, par le Conseil municipal, des budgets préliminaires de fonctionnement et d'immobilisations de 2022 de la Ville d'Ottawa; et**

- 5. demande au personnel, une fois le Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2022 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**

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

The Ottawa Board of Health, through Ottawa Public Health (OPH), seeks to improve, respond to and promote for the health and well-being of Ottawa residents and to ensure the effective delivery of public health programs and services. The public health unit's core functions are population health assessment, surveillance, health promotion, disease and injury prevention, health protection, stakeholder engagement and communications, and emergency preparedness and response.

The proposed operating budget for the Ottawa Board of Health reflects the principle budget priorities for 2022, which aim to address the COVID-19 pandemic response requirements while implementing OPH's [strategic directions](#) and monitoring programs and service outcomes to reflect and maximize the funding allotment OPH currently receives and anticipates receiving from its major funders – the Government of Ontario and the City of Ottawa. Under normal circumstances the budget would be developed to ensure OPH meets provincial requirements, as outlined in the Ontario Public Health Standards: Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability, the Organizational Requirements and the 2021 Public Health Funding and Accountability Agreement. However, for 2022, the focus is on protecting Ottawa residents from the risk of further spread of the COVID-19 virus in the community, continuing to reinstate programs 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 2021

In 2021, OPH's financial focus was to sustain the COVID-19 response while maintaining critical public health programs and services. The mitigation of the spread of COVID-19 in the community was a top priority and the restoration of core and essential public health programs and services was a goal. OPH undertook periodic assessments and reviews of its programs to seek opportunities to achieve savings and manage costs prudently.

The first two quarters were very challenging with the highest rates of COVID-19, hospitalizations and outbreaks ever reported. COVID-19 vaccinations were starting to become available in January 2021 and the rollout of the vaccine program required hiring of additional resources. OPH worked with the City of Ottawa to rapidly scale up its vaccine program and set up mass and pop-up clinics to achieve high COVID-19 vaccination rates.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 response, many OPH programs continued to be suspended as a result of the public health measures implemented to mitigate COVID-19 spread. Similar to 2020, over 75% of base staffing resources were shifted to support OPH's response to the pandemic and the COVID-19 vaccine program.

OPH began restoring additional core programs during the summer and into the fall. Decisions on which programs to restore were based on community needs and where there was a measurable health burden. Restored core programs are Dental Health, Healthy Growth and Development, School Immunizations, Mental Health and Substance Use, and Sexual Health and Harm Reduction. Adding additional programs put pressure on the 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.

New digital solutions such as Case & Contact Management (CCM), COVax to manage the vaccine program, appointment booking system for community-based COVID-19 vaccine clinics, Workforce scheduling tool, Bruce the virtual assistant chatbot, etc. were also launched or developed in order to meet expanding requirements. In an effort to continue the modernization momentum and to build capacity, OPH has begun a process to review and re-evaluate the scope of the electronic public health records (EPHR) system that was put on hold since the beginning of the pandemic.

As a consequence 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 over expenditure of \$61M. As outlined in that report, the Ontario Ministry of Health has provided all health units with an assurance that there will be a process to request reimbursement of 2021 COVID-19 Extraordinary Costs, thus it is anticipated that Provincial funding will fully offset all pandemic related costs therefore balancing the budget. The forecast is still subject to change due to factors such as school re-opening requirements, further waves and surges of cases, the effects of the Delta variant and the fall influenza season, new provincial requirements, or other unpredictable circumstances. OPH staff continues to monitor the situation and a full reconciliation will be completed during Q1 of 2022.

### **Budget Directions and Assumptions**

The 2022 draft budget was developed based on the following assumptions:

- Sustain the COVID-19 response and critical public health services
- Take the necessary measures to respond to COVID-19
- Continue the COVID-19 vaccine program
- Continue to restore public health services and programs

The draft budget assumes that the base provincial funding increase will remain at 0% for all programs, it incorporates inflationary/growth base increases from the City of Ottawa of \$1.065 million and it presumes that the Ministry of Health will fund all one-time extraordinary costs related to the COVID-19 response. It also assumes that the 70% provincial / 30% municipal funding formula will not change and incorporates City support costs of approximately \$10M.

In light of the high vaccination rate and the recent vaccine mandates, OPH is expecting a lower level of hospitalizations due to COVID-19 related illness and a reduction in COVID-19 cases after the winter season. The 2022 plan is to maintain the current response level until the end of April. In May, a gradual process of de-escalation of the pandemic response is expected to be initiated and a reduction of the additional resources down to 75% of existing levels. A further reduction of the response is expected in July to approximately 50% of existing levels and then again in the last quarter of 2022 – down to 30%.

The redeployment into COVID-19 response roles of OPH staff who support other critical public health services has increased the risk of negative health outcomes, particularly for less advantaged populations. OPH will continue to assess the community needs and the ability to reinstate additional services and programs as capacity demand allows.

Lastly, the draft budget does not include provisions for activities related to providing COVID-19 booster vaccines to the general public. Such budget impacts are currently unknown. A full costing to administer booster vaccines will be provided to the Board of Health if identified in Provincial plans.

### **2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health**

OPH has prepared estimates for the 2022 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 2022 budget development, as outlined in the ([Proposed 2022 Budget Direction, Timeline and Consultation Process](#)).

For 2022, OPH is presenting a draft balanced budget of \$123 million, which is broken down as \$75 million base funding and \$48 million one-time funding. It includes provincial revenue of \$95 million, a City of Ottawa contribution of \$26 million and other sources of revenue totaling \$1.1 million.

The base budget increase of \$1.065 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 remaining addition of \$47.7 million is the one-time request related to COVID-19 and OPH's need to maintain the fall 2021 response level through the winter, before decreasing the intensity of the response over the year. Areas of additional expenses largely due to greater staffing levels required for the response include:

- Routine operation of services 7 days a week, with additional staff on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Case & Contact Management - Meeting Ministry and Federal guidelines to follow-up with residents who test positive for COVID-19 and their close contacts within specified timelines and reporting requirements to Public Health Ontario.
- School Support - Working with local school boards to implement provincial standards and guidance. Areas of focus include providing infection prevention and control advice, supporting testing and surveillance, delivering Mental

Wellness support, and facilitating knowledge exchange with stakeholders and the school community. The demand for mental health promotion continues to grow.

- Infection Prevention & Control – Monitoring and responding to any resident or health care worker who tests positive for COVID-19 in institutions such as long-term care facilities, childcare facilities and congregate settings. Work in this area includes outbreak management at case-positive facilities, developing guidelines for use by facility staff, reviewing existing directives, pre-emptive visits to ensure preparedness, operating a phonenumber specifically for outbreaks, and compiling reports to submit to Public Health Ontario.
- Communications & Community Operations – Managing all communications with various external/internal stakeholders as well as providing support to community partners with information, resources and guidance. Messaging to stakeholders must be continuously adapted as the pandemic requirements and response changes. Cultural adaptation is also a priority, which includes work with community leaders and organizations that can help build supports for populations at higher risk of harms from COVID-19 and other challenges to health.
- Vaccine Program - Storing, distributing, and administering vaccines, ensuring maintenance of vaccine cold chain and storage protocol, monitoring vaccine safety and tracking vaccine coverage.
- Surveillance & Medical Consultations – Analyzing and interpreting COVID information, outbreaks, clusters, and societal impacts data, providing ongoing public and provincial reporting and providing technical guidance for case and outbreak investigations, specific settings and practices.
- Emergency Response Phone Line – Responding to all COVID-related calls and e-mails from the general public, schools, childcare centers, workplaces and health care providers.
- Logistics / Information Technology / Finance / Staffing Support – Providing support services to the entire organization, such as new digital application solutions, hardware support, procurement, asset tracking, staff scheduling, etc. required to respond to the pandemic.

The 2022 budget reflects best estimates of what is required to continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic while limiting impacts on the health and wellbeing of Ottawa residents. These estimates do not reflect the potential for a much higher and ever-

present risk of resurgence of COVID-19 and are based on careful projection of current surge capacity demands and then improvements in 2022. OPH expects the need to sustain some level of pandemic response for the foreseeable future in light of the highly transmissible Delta variant, potentially waning vaccine immunity and the current lack of vaccination amongst the youngest population.

## **RURAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no rural implications associated with this report.

## **CONSULTATION**

Following the tabling of the 2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health at the November 1, 2021 Board of Health meeting, the budget report will be tabled at the November 3, 2021 Council meeting. The Board will consider the budget for approval at its subsequent meeting on November 29, 2021 and submit it to Council on December 8, 2021 as part of the 2022 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 at [Ottawa.ca](http://Ottawa.ca).

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

<b>Budget Process Date</b>	<b>Budget Process Date</b>
2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health tabling and presentation at Board of Health meeting	November 1, 2021
Widespread circulation of draft budget via web based and social media channels with opportunities for online and direct feedback	November 1, 2021 – December 8, 2021
2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health tabling at Ottawa City Council, including Boards and City Departments budgets	November 3, 2021
Public Delegations and 2022 Board of Health Operating Budget Approval	November 29, 2021
Final 2022 City Operations and Capital Budget Approval	December 8, 2021



Budget Process Date	Budget Process Date
at Ottawa City Council, including Boards and City Departments budgets	

Residents can also comment on the draft budget via email at [healthbudget@ottawa.ca](mailto:healthbudget@ottawa.ca), on Twitter @ottawahealth using the hashtag #OttHealthBudget2022, on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/ottawahealth](https://www.facebook.com/ottawahealth) 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 November 29, 2021 or register to speak at the Board's virtual meeting on November 29, 2021 at 5 pm. 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 – 2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health – English

DOCUMENT 1 – Budget provisoire de fonctionnement pour 2022 pour le Conseil de santé d'Ottawa – Français

## DISPOSITION

The Ottawa Board of Health will consider for approval, the 2022 Draft Operating Budget for the Ottawa Board of Health at its meeting on November 29, 2021. Staff will forward the report to Ottawa City Council for its consideration, as part of City Council's 2022

Budget process and to the Ministry of Health, for consideration as part of the Annual Service Plan and Budget Submission application process.