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Town of Aurora

Committee of the Whole Report

No. FIN26-012

Subject: 2027 Budget Timeline and Process

Prepared by: Jason Gaertner, Manager, Financial Management

Department: Finance

Date: April 14, 2026

Recommendation

1. That Report No. FIN26-012 be received; and
2. That the proposed budget timeline as detailed in Table 1 be approved.

Executive Summary

This report outlines the budget process for the 2027 budget:

- The Town will review and adopt the first year (2027) of the Mayor's multi-year budget, including all related tax and user rate impacts
- The 2027 capital budget and an updated 10-year capital plan will be provided for Council's review
- The Town's long term capital asset management funding gap will need to be addressed as part of this multi-year budget
- A budget engagement strategy has been developed in support of this budget
- The 2027 Budget is planned to be released on January 6, 2027 with adoption by March 2, 2027 at the latest

Background

The Town of Aurora has adopted a multi-year budgeting framework. Under this framework, the Town adopts the first year's budget of its term and receives an accompanying forecast of the next three budgets. In the second year of the Council

term, the Town adopts a three-year operating budget, including all related tax and user rate impacts. Using multi-year budgets and forecasts improves fiscal health and service delivery through:

- better coordination of budgeting and strategic priorities
- greater certainty for departments in managing expenditures and service levels
- improved fiscal discipline of the organization
- streamlined budget reviews that focus on key changes in assumptions and the reasons driving the change
- allowing staff to develop budgets with fixed targets in place, allowing for an early response to manage circumstances and budget constraints
- reducing uncertainty about future year tax levy or user rate increases
- providing longer term outlook to outside organizations that rely upon the Town for a share of their funding, which enables them to plan and deliver their programs more effectively

As per the *Municipal Act, 2001* a municipality's multi-year operating budget must be readopted on an annual basis. The Town's readoption process will focus on any changes to the previously adopted multi-year budget.

Analysis

The Town will review and adopt the first year (2027) of the Mayor's multi-year budget, including all related tax and user rate impacts

The 2027 budget represents the first year of a new multi-year operating budget cycle. The Mayor's 2028-30 multi-year budget will be presented to Council for review and adoption by December 2027.

The 2027 budget, which reflects the Town's identified funding and staff needed to deliver core services, manage growth and implement any identified new initiatives, will be presented to Council for review in early January 2027. As part of the budget review process Council may propose amendments to the budget.

The 2027 capital budget and an updated 10-year capital plan will be provided for Council's review

Council will be presented with a similar capital package to what was reviewed as part of the 2026 budget process. The package will include three primary components being:

1. Any proposed 2027 capital project authority increases. The budget will clearly indicate which capital budget authority was approved in prior years and what authority Council is being asked to review for 2027. The budget package will include all individual asset management and growth & new capital project financial details.
2. A 2027 10-Year Capital Budget continues to include both the total required project budget commitment along with the expected cash outflows for all capital projects. The Town will adopt the capital budget authority for each project as part of the 2027 capital budget. This full budget will reflect the total budget that is being committed to each project for 2027. For projects that take multiple years to complete, the budget will also show how much is expected to be spent/completed in each year. This will reflect the actual planned cash outflows for the project and will be captured in the Town's 10-year capital plan and funded from reserves as they are expected to occur. Similarly, individual asset management and growth & new capital project financial details will be shared only with Council members for their review.
3. A summary of all previously approved capital projects that have recently concluded and been closed by staff.

The Town's long term capital asset management funding gap will need to be addressed as part of this multi-year budget

On September 24, 2024, Council approved a short-term funding strategy in support of the Town's short term asset management funding gap challenges. Next steps include the continued refinement of the Town's capital plan to align with the approved asset management plan's defined levels of service. Staff will provide an informational report to Council at an upcoming meeting outlining the Town's anticipated long term asset management funding gap including recommended funding strategy(ies) which will be presented to Council for review as part of the 2027 Budget.

A budget engagement strategy has been developed in support of this budget

The Town has developed a 2027 Budget engagement strategy which is built upon prior years successful campaigns. This strategy is built upon two primary themes being budget education and providing multiple ways for the public to offer input toward the budget process.

The Town's budget education strategy will use both staff engagement and online tools to increase budget literacy with the acknowledgement that an educated public is more apt to get involved and share their thoughts and ideas for the budget.

The 2027 budget engagement strategy continues to offer multiple ways for the public to provide input in support of the Mayor's budget development including through an online budget survey, or the provision of feedback through multiple channels which will include the 2027 budget web page, ourtownbudget@aurora.ca, or directly to the Mayor's Office. Further, the public may delegate to any of the Town's scheduled budget committee meetings to provide budget input.

The 2027 Budget is planned to be released on January 6, 2027 with adoption by March 2, 2027 at the latest

The budget release is planned for January 6, 2027. This timing considers the pending municipal election and transition to a new Council, while striving to enable staff to proceed with any necessary contract activities for the 2027 fiscal year. By releasing the budget on January 6, 2027, the budget would be deemed adopted by March 2, 2027, at the latest, under the legislated timelines. Table 1 presents the legislated maximum timeline for budget adoption.

Table 1
Legislated Budget Timeline

Meeting / Milestone	Date
Mayor provides budget to members of Council	January 6, 2027
Legislated end of Council amendment period	February 5, 2027
Legislated end of Mayoral veto period	February 15, 2027
Latest date that the budget could be adopted	March 2, 2027

Table 2 presents staff's proposed timelines for the 2027 budget adoption based on the planned meeting schedule. This could result in an earlier adoption budget date of February 26 if the full amendment period is not used.

Table 2
Budget Dates and Milestones

Meeting / Milestone	Date
Mayor provides budget to members of Council	January 6, 2027
Budget overview to Council	January 12, 2027
Departmental operating budget presentations, as well as proposed capital plan review	January 18, 2027
Community Partner presentations as well as any remaining business from January 18	January 25, 2027
Amendments to the Mayor's proposed budget are requested to the Clerk by end of day	January 28, 2027
Special Council meeting to discuss/decide on proposed budget amendments (if required)	February 1, 2027
Last day for the Mayor to veto any amendments adopted during February 1 st meeting – no planned meeting	February 11, 2027
Override / budget adoption	February 26, 2027 (latest)

The Council amendment meeting occurs 27 days after the budget is released, meeting the 30-day amendment period. Council may choose to shorten the amendment period. If not, then an additional special meeting would need to be held before the end of the day on Friday, February 5 to meet the legislated timelines.

Further, time in the process may also be reduced if the Mayor does not require the full 10 days provided to veto amendments (does not require a Council meeting), meaning the override meeting, should it be necessary, may occur in advance of February 26.

While these are the planned timelines, the release of the budget could change at the discretion of the Mayor. Should a new Mayor be elected, they could defer this timeline, however if the budget is released after February 1, 2027, it will no longer be the Mayor's budget and Strong Mayor Powers relating to the budget will no longer apply.

Advisory Committee Review

None

Legal Considerations

The Town has been designated with strong mayor powers. As such, the Mayor is assigned the powers and duties of the municipality with respect to proposing and adopting a budget, including a multi-year budget. The head of council is required to propose the budget for the municipality each year by February 1.

Once the Mayor provides Council with the proposed budget, Council has 30 days to make any amendments. Council may shorten the 30-day period by resolution. The Mayor may veto any proposed amendments within 10 days after the expiry of the 30-day period. A meeting is not required for the Mayor to veto any amendments. The Mayor may also shorten the veto time period. Within 15 days of any vetoes, Council may override the veto, by resolution, on a 2/3 vote of the members of Council.

If Council approves the staff recommendation in this report, then it is approving the timelines for budget approval, including the shortened time period for making amendments.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications as a result of this report.

Communications Considerations

Staff will inform the public about the budget process by posting information to the Town's website. The calendar of budget-related meetings will also be shared on the website, in advertisements and on social media. A communications plan is currently being developed to encourage public engagement in the budget process, built upon prior years successful campaigns.

Climate Change Considerations

The recommendations from this report do not directly impact greenhouse gas emissions or impact climate change adaptation. Climate change will be considered in the budget development and documents to be presented to Council in January 2027.

Link to Strategic Plan

Developing the annual budget supports all aspects of the Strategic Plan. Specifically, this report supports the Plan principles of Leadership in Corporate Management, Leveraging Partnerships, and Progressive Corporate Excellence and Continuous Improvement.

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

Council may provide alternative direction.

Conclusions

The 2027 budget represents the first year of the Town's new four-year budget cycle. The presented 2027 budget, to be distributed to Council on January 6, 2027, strives to address multiple material pressures faced by Town which will include potential inflationary pressures, as well as capital asset management pressures, amongst others. It is anticipated that should the proposed staff timelines be approved, the reviewed 2027 operating budget and capital plan will be adopted by February 26, 2027, at the latest.

Attachments

None

Previous Reports

None

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on March 26, 2026

Approvals

Approved by Rachel Wainwright-van Kessel, CPA, CMA, Director, Finance

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer