



growing
with care

Plan and Budget 2025

2025 Budget Committee Review Schedule

Date	Draft agenda
✓ Oct 16	2025 Plan and Budget Overview – Setting the Stage
✓ Oct 30	Detailed budget review (Presentation of the 2025 Preliminary Budget Book)
✓ Oct 31	Detailed review carry over (if required)
✓ Nov 6	Detailed reviews continue: public input meeting #1
✓ Nov 7	Detailed reviews carry over (if required)
✓ Nov 20	Police Services Budget presentation
✓ Nov 27	Operating and Capital Program Review and Follow ups; public input meeting #2
✓ Dec 2	Deadline for submission of Councillor motions – incl. two-year levy impact
Dec 11	Final Budget Day




Today's Purpose

The purpose of today's Plan & Budget meeting is to:

- Adjust and approve the 2025 Region of Waterloo Plan and Budget
- Approve the Library and WRPS budget

Order of business for the day

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1. Introduction of the main budget motion (Report: Final 2025 Plan, 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Capital Program, COR-CFN-24-029)
 2. Recommended budget adjustments (Report: Final 2025 Plan, 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Capital Program, COR-CFN-24-029)
 3. Review of options to reduce the levy (Report: Assessment of Potential 2025 Options to Achieve Guideline, CAO-24-008)
 4. Service expansions
 5. Library budget approval (Report: 2025 Region of Waterloo Budget with Resolution, COR-CFN-24-025)
 6. WRPS budget approval (Report: Police Services Board Report 2024-224)
 7. Councillor Motions - Where Notice Has Been Provided
 8. User fees and charges (Report: 2025 User Fees and Charges Update, COR-CFN-24-028)
 9. Municipal Budget Regulation approval (Report: Municipal Budget Regulation COR-CFN-24-027)
 10. Main budget motion approval (Report: COR-CFN –24-029)



Building the 2025 Plan and Budget

2025 Annual Business Plan (ABP)



- The Growing with Care strategic plan sets out the Region's four-year roadmap (2023-2027), while the ABP process specifies the initiatives and investments needed to maintain services and further the Growing with Care priorities that year
- Decisions on the 2025 plan and budget will significantly impact the pace and scale of Growing with Care implementation
- Adjustments have been made throughout the plan and budget process
- Summary of 2025 initiatives are in the package, subject to adjustments and approval
- Updates on the progress of ABP initiatives are provided to A&F Committee on a quarterly basis

2025 Operating Budget Position

Regional budget position	Expenditure	Revenue	Tax Levy	Change in Property Taxes
2025 preliminary base operating budget (Oct. 30, 2024)	\$1,399,986,897	\$824,098,431	\$575,888,466	9.24%
Council Directed Amendments:				
Library Committee (Nov. 26), Utilize Library Services Reserve Funding to reduce tax impact	-	100,000	(100,000)	
PDL-GDS-24-020 (Nov. 27), Bill 23 operating budget decrease	(131,666)	-	(131,666)	
PDL-LEG-24-026 (Oct. 23), Facilities operating and debt servicing cost increases due to property acquisitions	129,000	-	129,000	
HRD-TOR-24-002 (Nov. 27), Benefit adjustments decrease	(37,750)	-	(37,750)	
2025 amended base operating budget	\$1,399,946,481	\$824,198,431	\$575,748,050	9.22%
Proposed service expansions moved forward by Budget Committee to final budget day	21,639,057	10,255,140	11,383,917	2.16%
2025 operating budget with expansions	\$1,421,043,038	\$833,911,071	\$587,131,967	11.38%
Proposed amendments:				
Housing Services funding increase	-	1,708,636	(1,708,636)	(0.32%)
Children's Services program (no levy impact)	(322,207)	(322,207)	-	-
Transit Services user fee revenue decrease	-	(2,028,550)	2,028,550	0.38%
2025 operating budget with expansions and proposed amendments	\$1,420,720,831	\$833,268,950	\$587,451,881	11.44%
Reduction Options	(5,512,566)	(309,498)	(5,203,068)	(0.99%)
Preliminary 2025 Tax Levy change	\$1,415,208,265	\$832,959,452	\$582,248,813	10.45%

2025 Tax Supported Operating Budget Position

Regional Property Tax Levy			
	Region	Police	Total
2024	\$517,801,596	\$228,428,497	\$746,230,093
2025	\$582,248,813	\$252,468,301	\$834,717,114
\$ change	\$64,447,217	\$24,039,804	\$88,487,021
% change	12.45%	10.52%	11.86%

Average Regional Taxes per \$100,000 Residential CVA			
	Region	Police	Total
2024	\$498	\$220	\$718
2025	\$550	\$239	\$789
\$ change	\$52	\$19	\$71
% change in property taxes*	10.45%	8.56%	9.87%

The average residential property was valued at \$354,500 based on a valuation date of January 1, 2016

* Property tax impacts are net of assessment growth of 1.81%

Proposed Use of Tax Stabilization Reserve in the Preliminary 2025 Budget

Item	2025 (\$ millions)	2026 (\$ millions)
2025 preliminary base budget:		
Employment Services	\$0.07	-
Paramedic Services 2024 expansion	\$1.37	-
Proposed service expansions:		
Employment Services	\$0.22	-
Paramedic Services 2025 expansion	\$0.36	\$0.86
Paramedic Services staffing relief rate	\$0.50	\$0.08
Total	\$2.51	\$0.95

Proposed 2025-2034 Capital Program, as amended (\$6.8B)

Figures in \$ thousands	2025	2026-2034 Forecast	2025-2034 Total
Expenditure:			
Preliminary capital plan (Oct. 30, 2024)	\$657,447	\$6,115,175	\$6,772,622
Proposed capital program amendments (Dec. 11, 2024)	(4,453)	5,333	881
Total Expenditure	\$652,995	\$6,120,508	\$6,773,503
Funding & Financing:			
Grants & Subsidies	\$127,383	\$1,842,401	\$1,969,784
Development Charge Reserve Funds	158,523	823,735	982,258
Development Charge Debentures	3,955	451,195	455,150
Reserves & Reserve Funds	251,470	1,789,794	2,041,265
Contributions from Operating	70	270	340
Property Tax Debentures	111,593	1,213,113	1,324,707
Total Funding & Financing	\$652,995	\$6,120,508	\$6,773,503

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Recommended 2025 Operating Budget Adjustments

As a result of recent funding announcements and transit ridership data, staff are recommending the following changes to the 2025 preliminary tax supported operating budget:

- **Housing Services** – As a result of recent funding announcements, staff are proposing to increase funding relating to homelessness in the 2025 base operating budget by \$1,708,636.
- **Children's Services** – The Region was recently provided with confirmation of 2025 funding for Children's Services which is \$322,207 lower than estimated through the preliminary 2025 operating budget. Staff are recommending to adjust the funding included in the 2025 operating budget to align with the funding announcement and reduce operating expenditures by the same amount, resulting in no levy impact.
- **Transit Services** – Revenue is forecasted to be down due to college enrollment decreasing. Staff have revised their estimates for Transit fare revenue in 2025. As a result, staff are recommending that the 2025 operating budget be amended with a reduction in Transit fare revenue of \$2,028,550.

Recommended 2025-2034 Capital Program Amendments

Since the preliminary budget was provided to the Strategic Planning & Budget Committee on October 30, staff have identified several amendments as a result of changes in legislation, project approvals from upper levels of government and as a result of funding announcements.

Proposed amendments to the 2025 Capital Budget and 2026-2034 Capital Forecast as set out in Appendix B to report COR-CFN-24-029 on today's agenda.

Recommended Budget Amendments (as outlined in COR-CFN-24-029)

That the Region of Waterloo take the following action with respect to the 2025 operating budget and 2025-2034 capital program as set out in COR-CFN-24-029 dated December 11, 2024:

1. Increase 2025 operating budget funding for Housing Services by \$1,707,244;
2. Decrease 2025 operating budget user fee revenues for Transit Services by \$2,028,550;
3. Adjust the 2025 operating budget for Children's Services to reflect reduced expenditures and offsetting funding of \$322,207 (no levy impact); and
4. Amend the 2025 Capital Budget and 2026-2034 Capital Forecast as set out in Appendix B.

Looking Ahead to 2026

Annualization of
2025 service
expansions

Provincial/Federal
policy and funding
changes

Inflation/capital cost
escalation and
interest rates

Asset management
plan (renewal)
investments and
funding

Growth related
infrastructure,
Development Charge
exempting funding

Growth related to
service demand

The 2026 budget will be impacted by decisions made through the 2025 Plan and Budget process including annualizations of approved service expansions and any potential use of one-time funding.

Introduction of Main Plan and Budget Motion

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to the 2025 Plan and Budget:

1. Approve the 2025 Plan as set out Appendix A of report COR-CFN-24-029 dated December 11, 2024;
2. Approve the 2025 Operating Budget as summarized in Appendix D of report COR-CFN-24-029 dated December 11, 2024 with a net expenditure of **\$1,693,675,894** and a property tax levy of **\$834,717,114** in 2025; and
3. Approve the 2025 Capital Budget and 2026-2034 Capital Forecast as summarized in Appendix D of report COR-CFN-24-029 dated December 11, 2024 and subject to final adjustments for 2024 project carry-forwards.

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Service Reduction Options

- Staff continue to work through options for reductions that come with varying risks to the community and the essential services they rely upon.
- In total, the financial impact associated with the reduction options would amount to a 2025 net levy reduction of \$5.2 million which translates into a property tax impact of 1%. The annualized savings associated with these reduction options total \$7.8 million.
- Options include reducing and/or eliminating service levels.
- Risks are currently being assessed in line with the Plan and Budget Committee direction.



Council Discussion

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Service Expansions

We have a strategy to proactively manage costs, champion efficiency, while safeguarding the quality of service, growth and achievement of broader impacts towards the goals set out in the Region's Strategic Plan: Growing with Care.

Adjustments to expansion options have been made throughout the process – decisions have been made to defer some expansions and move forward some to final budget day deliberations and decisions on December 11.

Currently, proposed expansions amount to a 2025 net levy impact of \$11.38 million, which translates into a property tax impact of 2.16%.

Equitable Services and Opportunities

No Levy Impact:

1. Automated Speed Enforcement (keeping residents safe on the roads)
2. CWELCC Staffing resources (meeting accountability requirements for increased childcare program)
3. Immigration Partnership Support Staff (building a thriving community)

Levy Impact:

4. Accessibility/REDI Advisor (meet growing accessibility needs of residents)
5. Additional PT Library Hours (increasing access)
6. Homemaking and Nursing Services Program (supporting vulnerable residents independence)
7. High Intensity Needs Personal Support Workers (supporting high need seniors and reducing OT costs)
8. Health Inspectors and Information Assistants (meeting regulatory requirements)
9. 2025 PSV Master Plan Expansion (to meet increasing 911 call demands)
10. Paramedic Services Relief Levels (reduce OT costs and better meet service targets)

Resilient and Future Ready

No Levy Impact:

1. Sunnyside Facility Maintenance Worker (reducing vacancy losses and reducing contractor costs)
2. Fleet Outfitter (PSV) (counter cost escalation and reduce delays in de-commissioning)

User Rate Supported:

3. Cyber Security Analyst 1 FTE (safety of our water and wastewater system (Resilient and Future Ready Priority Area))

Levy Impact:

4. Sunnyside Employee Wellness and Peer Support Program (mitigate long term mental health issues and associated high costs)
5. Licensing and Enforcement Services Bylaw Officers (extend temporary support for encampments)
6. Solicitor (reduce legal counsel costs)
7. Increased Program Support and Recruitment Strategy 3 student FTEs (improve recruitment pipeline and increase capacity for digital/IT growth)
8. Business Continuity Plan - specialist and cloud-based software (increased capacity for natural disasters and cybercrime)
9. Legal Assistant (increase in demand)

Homes for All

No Levy Impact:

1. Senior Engineer (coordination of Regional Infrastructure and achieve faster approvals)

Levy Impact:

2. Affordable Housing Resources two FTEs (supports for households at risk of losing their tenancies) for housing [as amended]
3. Two staff resources to Improve WRH insurability (reduce risks and longer-term costs)
4. Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (prioritized and measured implementation investments)
5. Employment Program Pilot Temporary Transition Funding (transition to non-tax-levy supported program)

Climate Aligned Growth

No Levy Impact:

1. One energy student and one facilities management student (workorders, grant applications for new revenue and data analysis)
2. Invest in 18 temporary positions to implement the approved automated cart collection program (modernized waste collection service)
3. Deliver Water, Wastewater, and Waste Management Capital programs through 2 FTEs

User Rate Supported:

4. One Scada Specialist (support over \$30M in capital upgrades over ten years)
5. Multi-Year Expansion and Renovation 1 FTE (meet changes in regulatory requirements, keep pace with expansions of water supply, water distribution and storm and sanitary sewer systems)
6. Water and Wastewater Student Resource (increase in sampling activities, increase recruitment pipeline)
7. Project Hydrolgeologist (Maximize the sustainable use of local water resources)
8. Project Hydrolgeologist (Improve critical support to the Operations team for community growth)
9. Student Resource (Maintain compliance with the Clean Water Act)

Climate Aligned Growth - continued

User Rate Supported:

10. Water Program Coordinator (Maximize water conservation and efficiency)
11. Infrastructure Program Analyst (Minimizing risk of unplanned service disruptions and costly emergency work)
12. Infrastructure Management Project Coordinator (Supporting critical infrastructure inspections and renewal work)
13. Three Specialists: Process Operations, Systems, Maintenance (Operate and maintain growing water supply infrastructure)
14. Water Operations Summer Students 1.65 FTEs (assist with water quality sampling and minor operational tasks)
15. Senior Engineer (Water and Wastewater resiliency addressing emerging issues and assessing infrastructure)
16. Senior Engineer (Advance the Region's Water Supply Strategy Update)
17. Student Resource 1 FTE (review applications and reports, increase capacity)
18. Student Resource 1 FTE (to assist with water loss measurements and studies, support of leak detection)

Levy Impact:

19. Transit - Core Network Improvements 8 FTEs (Respond to growth and reduce system overloads) [as amended]
20. Transit – Customer-Driven Operational Adjustments and 5 FTEs (Effective customer service and transit reliability) [as amended]
21. Transit - MobilityPLUS Capacity and 2FTEs (Respond to growing demand including late night service)
22. Transit Service support staff 13 FTEs (Safety/compliance of vehicles/licenses and customer service) [as amended]
23. Traffic Systems Management Analysts 1 FTE (Traffic efficiency, mobility and connectivity) [as amended]
24. Road Maintainer Summer Students 1.3 FTEs (Escalating maintenance responsibilities)

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Recommended 2025 Library Budget

	2024 Approved Budget	Recommended 2025 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Expenditure	\$3,528,378	\$3,695,551	\$167,173	4.7%
Revenue	\$531,882	\$513,498	\$18,384	(3.5%)
Property Tax Requirement	\$2,996,496	\$3,182,053	\$185,557	6.2%

Library Committee Recommendations

That the Library Committee take the following action with respect to the 2025 Region of Waterloo Library Budget (RWL) as set out in Report COR-CFN-24-025 dated November 26, 2024:

1. Approve the 2025 RWL Operating Budget with a net expenditure of \$3,599,351 and a net property tax levy of \$3,182,053: and
2. Approve the 2025 RWL Library Capital Budget and 2025-2033 Capital Forecast as appended,
3. Refer the 2025 RWL Budget to the Region of Waterloo's Strategic Planning and Budget Committee for consideration, and
4. That the Region of Waterloo Library Services Reserve be reduced by \$100,000


Draft Resolution:

2025 Region of Waterloo Libraries Budget

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to the 2025 Region of Waterloo Libraries (RWL) Budget:

1. Approve the 2025 RWL Operating Budget with a net expenditure of \$3,599,351 and a net property tax levy of \$3,182,053;
2. Approve the 2025 RWL Library Capital Budget and 2026-2034 Capital Forecast as summarized in Appendix B of Report COR-CFN-24-025, dated November 26, 2024, subject to final adjustments for 2024 carry-forwards.

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Waterloo Regional Police Service 2025 Operating Estimate

	Final 2024 WRPS Operating Budget	Proposed 2025 WRPS Operating Estimate *
Expenditure	\$252,409,148	\$278,467,629
Revenue	\$23,980,651	\$25,999,328
Property Tax Requirement	\$228,428,497	\$252,468,301
Year over year levy increase	\$14,368,231	\$24,039,804
Year over year % levy increase	6.71%	10.52%
Change in property taxes	4.43%	8.56%

*As approved by the Police Services Board through report 2024-224, dated November 13, 2024 and forwarded to Budget Committee for consideration

Waterloo Regional Police Service Proposed 2025-2034 Capital Plan (\$ thousands)*

Figures in \$ thousands	2025	2026-2034 Forecast	2025-2034 Total
Total Expenditure	\$29,113	\$397,077	\$426,190
Funding & Financing:			
Grants & Subsidies	2,033	9,539	11,572
Development Charge Reserve Funds	1,939	8,714	10,653
Development Charge Debentures	2,546	136,831	139,377
Property Tax Reserves & Reserve Funds	17,280	105,874	123,154
Contributions from Operating	-	322	322
Property Tax Debentures	5,315	135,797	141,112
Total Funding & Financing	\$29,113	\$397,077	\$426,190

*As approved by the Police Services Board through report 2024-224, dated November 13, 2024 and forwarded to Budget Committee for consideration

Resolution from Waterloo Regional Police Services Board report 2024-224, dated November 13, 2024

1. That the Waterloo Regional Police Services Board approve the Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS) 2025 Operating Budget Estimate net levy of \$252,468,301; and
2. That the Waterloo Regional Police Service Board approve the 2025 Capital Budget Estimate and the 2026-2034 Capital Forecast as summarized in Appendix C subject to final adjustments for 2024 carry-forwards.


Draft Resolution:

2025 Waterloo Regional Police Service Budget

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to the 2025 Waterloo Region Police Service Budget:

1. Approve the Waterloo Regional Police Service 2025 Operating Budget with a net expenditure of \$278,467,629 and a property tax levy of \$252,468,301; and
2. Approve the Waterloo Regional Police Service 2025 Capital Budget and 2026-2034 Capital Forecast as summarized in Appendix C of Police Services Board report 2024-224, dated November 13, 2024, subject to final adjustments for 2024 carry-forwards.

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Councillor Motion

1. Councillor C. James, Re: Food Bank

Whereas the Region of Waterloo currently provides the Food Bank of Waterloo Region with an annual funding grant of \$744,000.00;
And whereas the CEO of the Food Bank of Waterloo Region has advised Regional Council that they are seeing the highest numbers in the 40-year history of The Food Bank;
Whereas rising cost of living in Waterloo Region has significantly increased financial pressure on families and individuals, contributing to food instability;
And whereas food insecurity, defined as not having access to sufficient food, or food of an adequate quality, to meet basic household needs is often exacerbated by high housing costs due to limited household budgets;
And whereas one in eight households is now accessing emergency food support—compared to just one in 20 three years ago—this underscores the growing challenges faced by community members, including rising living costs, job insecurity, and other mounting economic pressures;
And whereas visits to The Food Bank totalled 558,545 in 2023/2024, which is a 24 per cent increase from the number of visits in 2022/2023;
And whereas 73,615 people accessed a Food Bank program in 2023/2024, up 25 per cent from 58,688 people in 2022/2023.

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

the Region of Waterloo increase its annual grant to the Food Bank of Waterloo Region in 2025 to \$1.5 million, which is an additional \$756,000

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that funding allocated to the Food Bank of Waterloo Region be increased annually in alignment with the cost of living index to ensure its ability to meet rising demands for food assistance and to reflect the growing economic pressures faced by residents of Waterloo Region.

Councillor Motion

2. Councillor C. James, Re: GRT Child Fares from 4 & Under to 6 & Under

WHEREAS GRT currently provides “no-fare paid” transit to Children 4 years of age and under;
AND WHEREAS Transit is a critical service for families that are required to group multiple trip purposes, such as daycare and school drop off, groceries, and work commitments;
AND WHEREAS GRT is currently examining a new fare strategy as part of the 2025-2030 GRT Business Plan;

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Region or Waterloo Council direct GRT staff to update the Region of Waterloo Fees & Charges bylaw to make the definition of a child fare for children “6 & under”, with an unknown but minimal revenue impact (due to the lack of collection of age based data for children).

GRT staff will identify an appropriate age for a child fare through the 2025-2030 Business Plan, and report back on the revenue/budget impacts associated.

GRT implement the fare changes in July 2025.

Councillor Motion

3. Councillor C. Huinink, Re: EasyGO-2 Fare

WHEREAS access to affordable public transit is essential for supporting the mobility, independence, and well-being of all residents in the Waterloo Region;

AND WHEREAS not-for-profit agencies in the Waterloo Region play a critical role in addressing barriers to transportation for individuals and families experiencing financial hardship;

AND WHEREAS the Grand River Transit (GRT) EasyGO 2-fare card is an exclusive card available for purchase by qualifying not-for-profit agencies, and each card holds 2 fares (+ transfers) for a cost of \$5.

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Waterloo Regional Council allocate \$25,000 in deferred revenue from GRT fare collection, as part of a pilot program to support not-for-profit agencies, to subsidizing the purchase of EasyGO 2-Fare cards.

On an annual basis, eligible not-for-profit agencies will be able to purchase up to 500 EasyGO 2-Fare cards for \$3 (\$2 reduction from \$5 to \$3). This would place the discounted 2-Fare cards in line with the ATP rate for electronic fare (\$3 to \$1.50 per trip)

GRT staff will work with eligible not-for-profit agencies, already involved in the EasyGO 2-Fare program, to confirm the distribution process and to implement this program efficiently and equitably.

GRT staff will monitor and evaluate the program's effectiveness, additional administrative costs, agency feedback, and overall effectiveness and report back to Council prior to or as part of the 2026 Plan & Budget cycle, with recommendations for future initiatives, if applicable.

Councillor Motion

4. Councillor S. Foxtan, Re: Construction Payment FTE

That the Strategic Planning and Budget Committee amends the 2025 budget to add 1 FTE at levy impact of \$86,000 for an Accounts Assistant -Facilities in order to meet service level targets for invoice processing.

Councillor Motion

5. Councillor D. McCabe, Re: ClimateActionWR

WHEREAS Reep Green Solutions and Sustainable Waterloo Region currently hold a Partnership Agreement with the Region of Waterloo to operate the ClimateActionWR program,
AND WHEREAS The Region of Waterloo holds a secondary agreement with the City of Cambridge, City of Kitchener, and City of Waterloo to equally fund the program,
AND WHEREAS Each of the municipal townships (Township of North Dumfries; Township of Wellesley; Township of Wilmot; and Woolwich Township) have continued their participation in the work of the collaborative that originated under the FCM Funded T2050 Partnership grant to produce TransformWR in 2019,
AND WHEREAS ClimateActionWR was directed by Regional Council in 2023 to create a business plan outlining what is required to enable them to improve and accelerate the work they are doing on behalf of the region and local municipalities to meet our collectively agreed upon targets (see attachment),
AND WHEREAS We are not on target to meet our shared 50by30 emissions reduction targets as outlined in ClimateActionWR's most recent greenhouse gas re-inventory community report which underscores the necessity of transformational climate action and an accelerated response to meet our 50by30 target,
AND WHEREAS Unlike other Partnership Agreements, Reep Green Solutions and Sustainable Waterloo Region have not received an increase beyond a cost-of-living increase despite the fact that the complexity and the urgency of the work has increased significantly,
AND WHEREAS Without an increase to the program budget ClimateActionWR will continue to be more limited in its ability to maintain current community engagement levels while simultaneously meeting the increased responsibilities of a more significant role in managing the implementation of GHG reductions,
AND WHEREAS The increased proactive, upstream approach of reducing our emissions which ClimateActionWR will be able to do with an improved mandate will help the region, local municipalities, businesses and community organizations avoid significant and costly damage caused by climate change,
AND WHEREAS Similar to other Partnership Agreements, working in partnership with ClimateActionWR is a more cost-effective and more flexible approach to ensuring the work needed to achieve our shared targets is done,

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The regional contribution for ClimateActionWR be increased from \$63,037.50 to \$126,075.00 with an annualized cost of living increase of 2.5% as per the budget proposed in the attachment.

Councillor Motion

6. Councillor D. McCabe, Re: Improved Transit Service for the Vista Hills Neighbourhood

WHEREAS The Vista Hills neighbourhood in Northwest Waterloo is a growing centre for residents, economic development and job creation including clean tech, med tech, and similar sectors as well as retail;

AND WHEREAS GRT service, active transportation and multi-use trails to this area are very limited with Route 31 Columbia being the closest Route with the closest stop at Columbia and Sundew which is 2km from the northern most point in Vista Hills;

AND WHEREAS The City of Waterloo is developing Generation Park, the first light industrial net zero employment park in Canada, that is being developed with high sustainability standards in the building and operation of the site. Businesses interesting in purchasing sites and conducting their business from Generation Park are requesting transit and active transportation access;

AND WHEREAS There is longstanding community interest in improving transit service to the area both from residents, those seeking to shop in the various retail outlets in the area and from business owners, entrepreneurs and employees who will work at Generation Park;

AND WHEREAS The region is currently operating a shuttle bus to provide transit service to the residents of the managed encampment and if Route 31 Columbia was initiated, the shuttle bus could potentially be discontinued and those savings could be directed to the cost of running Route 31 Columbia;

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Region of Waterloo Council direct GRT staff to introduce a new Vista Hills Route that starts at the Boardwalk Terminal, and travels to Vista Hills by way of Platinum Dr. at an annual cost of \$700,000, along with 4 additional FTE's (3 Bus Operators, 1 Bus Technician/Mechanic);
GRT staff will also connect Route 31 and with Route 29 to improve overall connectivity in Northwest Waterloo with no additional budget impact and
GRT implement the service changes in September 2025.

Councillor Motion

7. Councillor D. McCabe, Re: Investment Income Allocation and Calculation

WHEREAS The 2025 preliminary operating budget includes \$20 million to \$21 million in investment income which is directed to the Capital Reserve Fund,
AND WHEREAS Annually, there are numerous capital budgets which for a variety of practical and legitimate reasons are not moved forward,
AND WHEREAS Council and staff identified a number of capital projects to delay or defer for 2025 and potentially 2026,
AND WHEREAS Construction costs for municipalities' capital projects remain stubbornly high despite the lowered inflation rate,
AND WHEREAS Removing funding from the Capital Reserve Fund impacts the 10 year capital forecast,

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The amount of investment income directed to the Capital Reserve Fund be modified to \$15 million and the remaining approximately \$5 million be directed to the operating budget for the next 10 years.

AND FURTHER THAT

In 2025, staff be directed to review the interest allocation methodology for Corporate Finance and to report to Council on potential updates and changes recommended.

Councillor Motion

8. Councillor N. Salonen, Re: Waiving of Development Charges for Nith View Homes Long-Term Care Facility

WHEREAS the Region of Waterloo recognizes the critical need for increased long-term care capacity to serve the aging population in our community;

AND WHEREAS Nith View Homes, a non-profit organization, is planning the construction of a 160-bed long-term care facility in Wilmot Township, which will address the urgent demand for senior housing and care in the region;

AND WHEREAS this new facility aligns with the Region's Strategic Plan 2023-2027, specifically:

- Thriving Communities, by enhancing well-being and access to housing and care for vulnerable populations;
- A Prosperous Economy, through the creation of over 100 jobs and supporting local economic growth;
- Growing Equitably, ensuring community growth is inclusive and sustainable;

AND WHEREAS waiving development charges for non-profit long-term care facilities reflects the Region of Waterloo's commitment to equitable access and community development;

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Regional Council waive the applicable development charges for the construction of the new Nith View Homes long-term care facility in Wilmot Township.

Staff be directed to prepare any necessary agreements or amendments to facilitate the waiving of these charges, ensuring alignment with regional policies and regulations.

Staff report back to Council on the financial impact of this motion over a two year period to pay the amount into the development charges reserve

Councillor Motion

9. Councillor P. Wolf, Re: Heritage Foundation

Whereas the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation has, as part of their strategic review, carefully reviewed its grant application process to align with the recently updated definition of heritage to ensure a more inclusive approach to the grant awarding process through the equity, diversity, and inclusion funding stream;

Whereas during the time from 2022 to now the WRHT was not funded by the Region while members of the WRHF worked with a consultant and staff to come up with new criteria for grants that included projects, buildings or publications within the Region of Waterloo, that promote or foster equity, diversity, inclusion, reconciliation, and accessibility;

Whereas as of January 1, 2025, the WRHF will once again be accepting applications for heritage grants which meet the new criteria;

And Whereas, The Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation is asking for \$75,000 to be added to the 2025 budget to be used for grants for heritage projects that meet the new criteria. In the past the WRHF received annual funding from the Region based on per/capita funding. The committee realizes that in this tight budget year the Region cannot afford the per/capita funding so has reduced their ask to \$75,000.

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo reinstate \$75,000 to the Regional Waterloo Heritage Foundation.

Councillor Motion

10. Councillor K. Williams, Re: Cultural Programs

WHEREAS; The review of our cultural programs and funding models is ongoing, and there is no plan currently in place to distribute the funds,
And WHEREAS; There is not an active or established Arts Fund group or operating body currently in place,
And WHEREAS; The one year funding contract with the WRCF is ending
And WHEREAS; The current funding levels are inadequate to fund the many varying artists and projects in our community
And WHEREAS; There is work to be done regarding the equitable distribution of funds and reducing barriers to accessing the funds

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

the \$353,538 Arts Fund amount be paused for 2025 to allow for a reassessment of the fund and to evaluate and review an increase to a more appropriate amount and distribution model for 2026 going forward.

Councillor Motion

11. Councillor K. Williams, Re: Anti-Hate Campaign

WHEREAS; the Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan is an important part of our Regional Goals and is a key strategy for making our Region a great place to live that is safe, inviting, and inclusive.

And WHEREAS; There is a changing complexity to crime in the region and one of the top categories of Complex Criminal Incidents is Hate Crimes.

And WHEREAS; The Waterloo Regional Police reported a 57% increase in hate crimes in the region from 2022-2023 with a further increase in 2024.

Councillor Motion

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

we allocate \$300,000 in 2025 to launch an Anti-Hate Campaign through the Community Safety and Well-being Plan to actively combat hate in our community.

Councillor Motion

12. Councillor R. Deutschmann, Re: Capital Program

Be it resolved that the Region of Waterloo delay all projects to the Capital Program as provided in report COR-CFN-24-024 dated November 27, 2024, including the projects that are listed under “Recommended Change” and the projects listed under “Options for Deferral”.

Order of business for the day

1. Introduction of the main budget motion (Report: Final 2025 Plan, 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Capital Program, COR-CFN-24-029)
2. Recommended budget adjustments (Report: Final 2025 Plan, 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Capital Program, COR-CFN-24-029)
3. Review of options to reduce the levy (Report: Assessment of Potential 2025 Options to Achieve Guideline, CAO-24-008)
4. Service expansions
5. Library budget approval (Report: 2025 Region of Waterloo Budget with Resolution, COR-CFN-24-025)
6. WRPS budget approval (Report: Police Services Board Report 2024-224)
7. Councillor Motions - Where Notice Has Been Provided
- ➔ **8. User fees and charges (Report: 2025 User Fees and Charges Update, COR-CFN-24-028)**
9. Municipal Budget Regulation approval (Report: Municipal Budget Regulation COR-CFN-24-027)
10. Main budget motion approval (Report: COR-CFN –24-029)

2025 User Fees and Charges – Proposed Changes

Children's Services

To support the transition to \$10 per day average fees by the end of 2025-2026, families with children aged 0-5 in the licensed Home Child Care program would see childcare base fees capped at \$22 per day.

The reduced fees are legislatively required and fully supported through provincial Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care funding with no required municipal cost-share.

Minor changes to fees and charges proposed for:

- Senior's Services
- Supportive Housing
- Regional Growth Development and Sustainability

Airport

Proposed fee changes include increases to; automobile parking, landing fees, apron parking, snow removal.

New fees include lost/stolen parking pass, urea applications, heavy equipment service fees.

Balancing Affordability and Growth

User Fees and Charges- Transit Services

Transit Services

2.7%

avg. fare increase

\$4.00

Adult monthly pass increase

\$2.00

ATP monthly pass increase

\$13.00

College pass increase

\$1.00

EasyGo fare card decrease

\$3.40

TravelWise
monthly pass increase

\$0.25

cash fare increase

\$6.80

Summer pass increase

5%

U-pass increase

Monthly Passes, College Pass, Summer Pass

- To better align with the value provided;
 - \$100 Unlimited Monthly pass is equivalent to 33 trips
- GRT Monthly Pass is lowest cost compared to "like agencies";
 - Hamilton \$124, London \$112, Brampton \$141

Cash Fare + EasyGO Fare Card

- EasyGO is a better price for GRT customers than cash
- The card will now be cheaper, minimum load is \$0.05, and there are more vending machines across the Region

U-Pass Increase

- Contractual increase as per U-Pass Contracts

Balancing Affordability and Growth

User Fees and Charges- Waste Management

Waste Management

\$1.00

Recycling tipping
fee increase

\$2.00

General/refuse
Garbage fee increase

\$4.00

Special handling load
rate increase

\$385

Asbestos fee rising
from \$350/tonne to
\$385/tonne

Approach

Fee structure revised annually based on jurisdictional scans, market conditions and inflationary factors

Revenues help offset waste disposal and diversion capital and operating costs

Proposed Water and Wastewater Volumetric Rate Change

	2024 approved user rate increase	2024 Rate Model - projected 2025 user rate increase	2025 Rate Model – current 2025 user rate increase (change)
Water supply	3.9%	4.9%	4.9% (0.0%)
Wastewater treatment	4.9%	5.9%	5.9% (0.0%)
Water distribution	2.9%	3.9%	3.9% (0.0%)
Wastewater collection	2.9%	4.9%	3.9% (-1.0%)

The water distribution and wastewater collection monthly fixed rates are proposed to increase by \$1.00 as of January 1, 2025.

Budget Decision – User Fees & Charges By-law

A full list of proposed changes to user fees and charges in 2025 is included in report COR-CFN-24-028 on today's agenda.

Motion:

- That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo repeal By-Law 24-028, (A By-Law to amend By-Law Number 23-062, A By-law to Establish Fees and Charges for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo and repeal By-law 23-009, as Amended) and pass a new Fees and Charges By-law including the new and adjusted fees and charges in the 2025 Budget as set out in report COR-CFN-24-028 dated December 11, 2024.

Order of business for the day

1. Introduction of the main budget motion (Report: Final 2025 Plan, 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Capital Program, COR-CFN-24-029)
2. Recommended budget adjustments (Report: Final 2025 Plan, 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Capital Program, COR-CFN-24-029)
3. Review of options to reduce the levy (Report: Assessment of Potential 2025 Options to Achieve Guideline, CAO-24-008)
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10. Main budget motion approval (Report: COR-CFN –24-029)

Municipal Budget Regulation

The Municipal Act requires municipalities to prepare and adopt an annual budget. Accompanying regulations allow for amortization expenses, post-employment benefits expenses and solid waste landfill closure and post-closure expenses to be excluded from the annual budget.

Before adopting a budget that excludes any of the expenses noted above, a municipality must prepare a report regarding the excluded expenses and adopt the report by resolution.

This report fulfills the reporting requirement.

Staff recommendation for Strategic Planning and Budget Committee consideration:

- That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo adopt report COR-CFN-24-027 dated December 11, 2024 titled “Municipal Budget Regulation” as required by Ontario Regulation 284/09.

Order of business for the day

1. Introduction of the main budget motion (Report: Final 2025 Plan, 2025 Operating Budget and 2025-2034 Capital Program, COR-CFN-24-029)
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- ➔ 10. **Main budget motion approval (Report: COR-CFN –24-029)**

Approval of Main Plan and Budget Motion, as amended

That the Regional Municipality of Waterloo take the following action with respect to the 2025 Plan and Budget:

1. Approve the 2025 Plan as set out Appendix A of report COR-CFN-24-029 dated December 11, 2024;
2. Approve the 2025 Operating Budget as summarized in Appendix D of report COR-CFN-24-029 dated December 11, 2024 [if amended, add "and as amended by Budget Committee on December 11, 2024"], with a net expenditure of \$_____ and a property tax levy of \$_____ in 2025;
3. Approve the 2025 Capital Budget and 2026-2034 Capital Forecast as summarized in Appendix D of report COR-CFN-24-029 dated December 11, 2024, [if amended, add "and as amended by Budget Committee on December 11, 2024"] and subject to final adjustments for 2024 project carry-forwards.

Next Meeting

**December 11 at 7 p.m.
Approval of the 2025 Plan and Budget**