

2025 Questions and Answers (Updated November 21, 2024)

Responses will be left blank until a response is provided. Questions and responses will be updated weekly.

City of Greater Sudbury

1. How much money do we spend on T.V commercials throughout our corporation?

The amount spent on television commercials for the years 2020 to 2023 are reflected in the chart below. As of November 15, 2024 year-to-date costs for television commercials amounted to approximately \$39,000.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	YTD 2024
	\$62,979	\$52,912	\$75,462	\$55,557	\$38,528

2. How much money are we spending on consultants corporate wide, if we decided to reduce that portfolio in each department by two too three percent how much money would we save?

The 2025 operating budget for consultants is \$315,077 (this excludes funded costs). For every 1% reduction, the 2025 operating budget would decrease by \$3,151. The 2025 operating budgets for consultants by department are as follows:

Housing Administration	\$ 6,500
Infrastructure Capital Planning	\$ 17,113
Long-Term Care	\$ 20,604
Office of the Mayor	\$ 24,000
Planning & Development	\$ 59,080
Financial Services	\$ 89,500
Linear Infrastructure Services (Roads)	\$ 98,280
	\$ 315,077

The City retains consultants for a few reasons. One reason is to supplement skills that are not readily available within the skills and competency of the existing staff complement. A second reason is to supplement the volume of staff available to deliver a service that can be offered within the competency of existing staff, but in certain circumstances there are an insufficient number of staff available to deliver the desired service. Another reason the City retains consultants is to deliver services that would otherwise be a conflict for City staff to deliver.

In practical terms, an arbitrary reduction in consulting services budget would result in a reduction in service, either to a given project which planned to use external expertise or because internal resources

would have to be diverted from other planned work. Further direction from Council would be beneficial for staff to provide a more fulsome response as to the service implications of a cut in consulting services, or an alternative adjustment in the Operating Budget.

3. I've noticed that transit expenses have increased over the years, but we haven't introduced any new routes. So, what's the factors that are driving these cost and could we reduce overtime in this department?

From 2018 to 2025, the overall transit service expense budget has been increased on an average of six percent related to general wage increase, fleet maintenance, energy costs, contracted services inflation, and service level adjustments (increased diesel fuel, service hours).

As part of the Transit Action Plan 2019, a network wide route restructure (GOVA) was approved with better routes, better schedules, and better service increasing annual service hours by 15,285 hours for total annual service hours of 190,000. The COVID-19 pandemic occurred six months later in 2020 causing an emergency reduction of service levels. Responding to normal resumption of pre-COVID community activity, service hours were slowly reimplemented as record breaking ridership increases were seen across the system. In response to further ridership increases upwards of 40%, a business case was presented to Council for the 2024-2025 budget approving the implementation of 11,000 additional hours into conventional transit service commencing in 2024 to resume service hours aligning with the GOVA launch in 2019. These hours were also used to implement new Route 106 Valley-Dominion, and address challenges with congestion and over capacity buses due to unprecedented ridership increases.

While costs have increased, transit revenue has also increased due to a trending ridership growth as well as Council's decision to increase fare rates during 2024-2025 budget deliberations. Transit's budgeted net operating levy for 2024 was lower by \$1.6 million compared to 2023, due to increased ridership and fare rate change.

Overtime forms part of a transit agency's normal service level delivery aligning with collective bargaining agreements, statutory holiday service, and service span. Overtime also occurs:

- In response to construction, weather, and accidents.
- Due to employee absence to ensure maintenance of existing service levels, which may otherwise cause cancellation of trips.
- To cover long-term and short-term disability.
- Due to a 21-hour service span, scheduled overtime is required on work assignments to accommodate route running time, as not every run can be broken evenly into 8-hour assignments.

To mitigate overtime:

- Staff have worked to reduce scheduled overtime on work assignments utilizing new and improved transit scheduling software.
- Staff have adjusted route time points to allow increased route recovery time responding to unforeseen delays.
- Staff have completed recruitment of 12 additional part-time bus operators.

4. Is there any contracts or commitments ending for 2024 that we could redirect those funds towards our business cases .

5. Why are we dipping into reserves to fund the Elgin street project of 9 million dollars that should actually be part of the event centre project budget as the water main works is actually supporting this project. If the arena event centre in the south district wasn't moving forward how much longer could we postpone this capital work or what alternative options would we have available to us.

6. With the business case for the Tom Davis court yard , which is actually improvements that come under our accessibility policy, why isn't this part of the 65 million dollars Included in the Hub project.

7. When we go out for bids for various projects why aren't we including the tipping fees in the contracts vs making it another line item that contractors now need to add additional expenses in the contract which in turn cost the city more money over in the bidding process.

8. Could staff please identify all capital expenditures in the 4 year capital budget for the south district.

9. Could staff please identify all capital cost in the 4 year budget for the hub centre.

10. In the past budget years we have always had a year end surplus, moving forward in the 2025 budget how much money is staff anticipated having at the year end of 2025.

11. What was the budget for fire fighter (career) salaries in 2024 and how much money did we budget for in overtime in 2024. What's the budget amount for firefighters (career) salaries for 2025 and how much are we currently budgeting for in overtime in 2025. Now I believe we hired four new firefighters in 2024 and wouldn't see a reduction in overtime for the first six months so how will this change in 2025.

12. Which department or service is going to have the potential of the biggest over expenditure in 2025 and how will staff counter this within the 2025 budget year without running into financial difficulties.

13. Please provide a breakdown of the specific work that was done and the final costs, by location, for the approved capital budget of \$2,315,589 for Library Facilities in 2024. Please provide a breakdown of the specific work, by location, that is planned for the \$5,015,678 in the 2025 capital budget for Library Facilities.

14. Could you please update the information found on page 75 and 76 of the budget document (Staff complement) showing the current year-end forecast of actual full time staff and actual part time hours for 2024. Please also update or re-confirm the budgeted amounts for 2025. Please add to this chart the amount of year-to-date and forecasted year-end actual vs. originally budgeted overtime hours in 2024 and the budgeted amounts for 2025.