

# Summary of the Ward Budget Councillor Engagement

**Overall Theme:** More flexibility for ward office budgets, particularly in the areas of salaries of assistants (Bylaw 36M2021; Section 2(i)).

Theme	Feedback
Current Ward Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Ward Budget has been reduced over time, creating challenges in ability to sustain levels of service to constituents and office operations.</li> <li>• Consensus that the base budget is generally sufficient; however, incremental increases relative to inflation could be a reasonable means to maintain levels of service over the 2023-2026 budget cycle.</li> <li>• Ward office budget needs may vary by ward, with some Councillors accountable for additional stakeholders and varied/complex issues (e.g., additional community associations, constituencies, and stakeholders and additional constituent engagement undertaken as a new ward Councillor).</li> <li>• A consensus prefers that Bylaw 36M2021 be amended to eliminate set limits by expense category, to accommodate varying ward needs.</li> <li>• Post-Covid reality drives additional expenses with in-person engagement.</li> </ul>
Ward office staff and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer employment programs               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Would like to know ahead of time about summer student grants.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Flexibility in hiring and paying staff               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Part-time versus full-time roles to enhance capacity.</li> <li>– Flexibility in hiring additional staff.</li> <li>– Budget does not support staff promotion.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ward office support staff               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Need to consider appropriate ward office support model.</li> <li>– Resource pool to draw on.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Ward size and complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wards vary in their needs, volume of issues, and complexity.</li> <li>• Limited capacity for some Councillors to be represented at meetings of community associations and cultural organizations, particularly in established wards.</li> <li>• Wards 7 and 8 include city-wide interests</li> </ul>

Theme	Feedback
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Technology<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- IT support – executive support (desktop)</li><li>- Room investments – lapel mics to support streaming/broadcast</li><li>- Would like a plotter – one-time shared purchase</li></ul></li><li>• Communications<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- 311 call volumes to be used as a measure of the demand in wards.</li><li>- Public expectation about consistency in communications and engagement across wards</li></ul></li><li>• Ward boundaries and Council Composition<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- In 2023, the Returning Officer will seek Council’s direction on the ward boundary review process and related Council composition considerations.</li></ul></li></ul>