

 OFFICE OF THE CHIEF  
**ADMINISTRATIVE  
OFFICER (CAO)**

As adopted December 12, 2023

# Office of the CAO

The Office of the CAO is dedicated to providing leadership that supports the policies and programs of Council and drives the organization forward. With values rooted in fiscal responsibility, sound management principles and community engagement, our focus continues to be on ensuring the Town has efficient and effective systems in place to support the responsible growth of Aurora.

The Office of the CAO includes Corporate Communications which is headed by a manager reporting to the CAO.

## Net budget by division

	2023 Budget		2024 Budget	
	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
<b>Budget (\$000's)</b>				
CAO Administration	545.1	545.1	607.7	607.7
Corporate Communications	958.4	958.1	1,118.6	1,014.4
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,503.5</b>	<b>1,503.2</b>	<b>1,726.3</b>	<b>1,622.0</b>
<b>Budget Change</b>			<b>222.7</b>	<b>118.8</b>
<b>Permanent Full-Time Staffing (FTE):</b>				
Opening Staffing				9.0
New				-
<b>Total Staffing</b>				<b>9.0</b>

	2025 Budget		2026 Budget	
	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
<b>Budget (\$000's)</b>				
CAO Administration	620.3	620.3	635.0	635.0
Corporate Communications	1,051.2	1,050.9	1,083.3	1,083.0
<b>Net Budget</b>	<b>1,671.5</b>	<b>1,671.2</b>	<b>1,718.3</b>	<b>1,718.0</b>
<b>Budget Change</b>	<b>(54.7)</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>46.8</b>	<b>46.8</b>
<b>Permanent Full-Time Staffing (FTE):</b>				
Opening Staffing		9.0		9.0
New		-		-
<b>Total Staffing</b>		<b>9.0</b>		<b>9.0</b>

## **The Office of the CAO supports the implementation of the Strategic Plan and all other key plans**

The Office of the CAO supports every objective in the Town's Strategic Plan and all other business plans by providing support and guidance to all departments on how best to implement various objectives. Moreover, the CAO chairs the Town's Executive Leadership Team, which is comprised of all department heads and serves as space for Town leadership to identify and align on key priorities. Corporate Communications also plays a critical role in supporting the Strategic Plan and other business plans by using various communications channels to inform Aurora residents about the programs and services offered by the Town, as well as Town-led cultural events and celebrations. Importantly, Corporate Communications provides residents with meaningful engagement opportunities to share their feedback on programs, services and policies through in-person engagement events as well as the Engage Aurora online platform.

### **2023 Accomplishments**

- Completion of the 2022/2023 Resident Satisfaction Survey, the first statistically valid, broad-based satisfaction survey that the Town has conducted in more than 15 years
- Working closely with Human Resources, oversaw the development and implementation of the progressive Alternative Work Arrangement Policy, the Town's new hybrid work approach that supports the well-being of staff, helps recruit top-calibre talent and brings significant value to the municipality and taxpayers
- Oversaw the development and implementation of the Town's new Street Banner Program, that sets a framework for the use of street pole assets for both the Town and community groups
- Provided leadership on the launch of the Town's new Community Partnership Grant, that saw the merger of the Culture and Recreation Grant with the Sponsorship program
- Continued to facilitate the management of the Aurora Town Square (ATS) project, including monthly updates to Council on project progress
- Launched an Aurora Town Square newsletter and new Aurora Town Square social media channels, as well as facilitated new two-way engagement opportunities for residents to provide feedback on the project
- Provided leadership and strategic support on all other major projects and initiatives, including the implementation of the Town's new financial management system and the Measure What Matters Program
- Created hundreds of communications materials – including press releases, social posts, advertisements, FAQs and new web pages – on Town programs, events and initiatives

# Communications

## SNAPSHOT



360 posts  
79,201 engagements\*  
5.9% engagement rate\*  
9,331 followers\*\*



180 posts  
7,382 engagements  
2.3% engagement rate\*  
11,446 followers\*\*



115 posts  
17,449 engagements  
1.8% engagement rate\*  
8,672 followers\*\*



63 posts  
2,670 engagements  
5.7% engagement rate\*  
5,945 followers\*\*

# 297,165

(+ 50,000 from 2022)

Website users



# 1579

(+ 50% from 2022)

**AURORA  
MATTERS**

e-Newsletter Subscribers

Open Rate 71%  
(Industry average 35%)

# 869,761

(+ 61,000 from 2022)

Unique website  
page views\*



# 11



In-person Community  
Engagement/Outreach

# Top 4

Page Views



e-PLAY, Jobs, Aquatics,  
Community Service Program  
Guide

# 7

Online consultations through  
Engage Aurora - resulting in  
9,771 visits, and 228 public  
contributions.



# 15



Promoted and helped execute  
events in 2023 so far, attended  
by more than 75,300 people.

\*Communications will support 25  
events in the 2023 calendar year

\*INDUSTRY AVERAGE: 1.8%

\*\* NET AUDIENCE GROWTH ACROSS PLATFORMS: 1,785

STATS FROM JANUARY 1, 2023 TO AUGUST 16, 2023

# Operating Budget

## Overview

The majority of the operating budget for the Office of CAO is made up of staffing costs. Other significant portions include advertising (which includes public notices), subscription to online communications tools, and website maintenance.

The operating budget for the Office of the CAO includes an increase of \$118,800 in 2024. The main driver of this increase relates to salaries and benefits increases for existing staff, which is partially offset with a cost recovery. The 2024 Budget also includes a temporary position to support projects in Communications resulting from increased demand on online channels – this is fully-funded from the Safe Recovery grant and has no impact on the tax levy.

The increases in the following two years are also driven primarily by salaries and benefits increases for existing staff, resulting in a total increase of \$49,200 in 2025 and \$46,800 in 2026.

## Operating financial summary

\$000's	Net Actual Results		2023	2023	2024	2025	2026
	2021	2022	Net Fcst*	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
Expenditures	1,416.2	1,519.8	1,498.9	1,503.5	1,726.3	1,671.5	1,718.3
Non-Tax Revenues	(0.0)	(97.0)	2.1	(0.3)	(104.3)	(0.3)	(0.3)
<b>Net Tax Levy</b>	<b>1,416.2</b>	<b>1,422.8</b>	<b>1,501.1</b>	<b>1,503.2</b>	<b>1,622.0</b>	<b>1,671.2</b>	<b>1,718.0</b>
% Tax Funded	100%	94%	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%
Net Budget Change	\$	6.6	78.3	2.2	118.8	49.2	46.8
	%	0.5%	5.5%	0.1%	7.9%	3.0%	2.8%

\*Net forecast as of August 31, 2023

## Multi-year operating budget priorities

The 2024 through 2026 operating budget for the Office of the CAO continues to include initiatives that will support the growing community – most notably, strengthening the way in which the Town informs residents about programs and services, as well as enhancing public-engagement opportunities.

## Implementation of Multi-Year Strategic Plan

A key activity for Corporate Communications in 2024 will be implementing the Multi-Year Strategic Communications Plan, 2023-2026 – a comprehensive plan that helps strengthen the way the Town communicates key information to Aurorans, while also increasing two-way engagement opportunities for residents to provide feedback on Town programs and services. The Plan outlines the key objectives for Corporate Communications from 2023-2026, and the key strategies and tactics the division will employ to achieve these objectives. While some key tactics already underway, the majority will be developed and implemented in 2024 and 2025. Some of the key projects in the plan include: the development of a Website Improvement Plan;

a Multi-Channel Content Strategy; a Town Council Information Plan; an enhanced Community Engagement Calendar; a new Issues Management Protocol; and much more. The Plan also includes specific key performance indicators that Corporate Communications will track to evaluate the success of the Plan. In 2024, Corporate Communications plans on absorbing any new costs associated with the plan into its current, operating budget. As the Strategic Plan evolves in the coming years, however, Corporate Communications may require additional funds, on top its existing operating budget, to execute new actions. In those cases, Corporate Communications will include the cost of these items as budget requests in upcoming budgets cycles or bring a mid-year report to Council requesting additional funds.

## Large Project Support

The Office of the CAO will continue to provide leadership on all large projects across the organization. This includes the successful completion of the Aurora Town Square project as well as the expansion to the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. Moreover, the Office of the CAO will continue to monitor and react to any COVID-19 developments, including the implementation of the Town’s new Alternative Work Arrangement Policy.

## Incremental budget changes

	2024		2025		2026	
	FTE	\$000's	FTE	\$000's	FTE	\$000's
<b>Starting Budget</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,503.2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,622.0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,671.2</b>
<b>Base</b>						
Salaries & Benefits including COLA, step increases, gapping and other approved staffing actions	-	253.6	-	(50.4)	-	46.6
Safe restart funding for communications project management supporting inter/intranet and other online channels	-	(104.0)	-	104.0	-	-
Cost recovery adjustment for Aurora Town Square funded position starting midway through 2023	-	(26.8)	-	(7.9)	-	(3.6)
Advertising services including savings on print advertising in 2024	-	(5.0)	-	2.5	-	2.6
Other minor adjustments	-	0.9	-	1.0	-	1.1
	-	<b>118.8</b>	-	<b>49.2</b>	-	<b>46.8</b>
<b>Budget Change</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>118.8</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>49.2</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>46.8</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,622.0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,671.2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,718.0</b>

# Capital Budget

## Overview

The Office of the CAO plans to spend \$63,100 in 2024 the organizational structural review project which has previously approved Capital Budget Authority \$125,000. No new Capital Budget Authority was requested for the Office of the CAO.

## 2024 capital budget authority

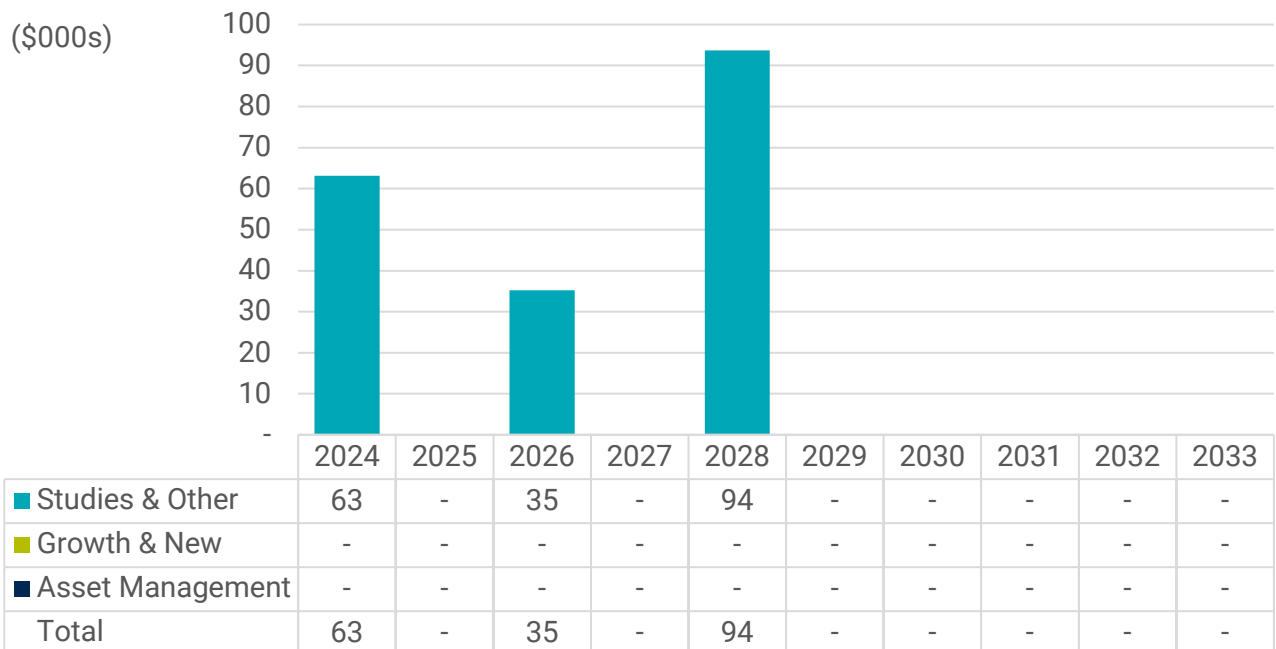
(\$000s)	Previously Approved Budget	2024 Budget		Capital Budget Authority Cash Flow			
		Capital Budget Authority*	Budget Change	Actuals to Dec/22	2023 Forecast	2024	2025+
Asset Management	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Growth & New Studies & Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	125.0	125.0	-	61.9	-	63.1	-
<b>Approved Budget</b>	<b>125.0</b>	<b>125.0</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>61.9</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>63.1</b>	<b>-</b>

\* Includes all active project budgets, adjustments to project budgets and new budget commitments

## 10-year capital plan

The 10-year capital plan includes \$192,000 in capital projects. The projects in the Office of the CAO are all included in Studies and Other and are to support organizational initiatives including a resident survey in 2026 and an update to the Strategic Plan in 2028.

## 10-year capital plan



## Key capital initiatives

The capital plan for the Office of the CAO includes studies which support the CAO in leading the organization.

### Organizational Structural Review

As the Town matures and grows, management continues to require new leadership skills to work as part of a "larger town" leadership group. With the assistance of an organizational development expert, managers will learn new skills and consider new perspectives. The goal of this effort is to strengthen the entire management team and promote more cross-departmental collaboration, ultimately improving the delivery of programs. In 2024, providing new skills and leader development is particularly important with two new directors joining the Executive Leadership Team, and our Manager of Communications returning from maternity leave.

### Resident Satisfaction Survey

With support from Council, Corporate Communications will conduct a Resident Satisfaction Survey in late 2026 (after the municipal election) to garner residents' opinions on municipal programs and services. Importantly, the results of this survey will be compared with the results from the 2022/2023 survey.



## Progress on departmental objectives

These objectives were established through the annual budget process. The following provides a status update on the progress of completing the objectives and identifies new initiatives.

### Completed objectives

#### Resident Satisfaction Survey

Led by Corporate Communications, the Town conducted a broad-based, statistically relevant Resident Satisfaction Survey for the first time in more than 15 years, with results presented to Council and shared with community members in early 2023. The purpose of the survey was to give residents an opportunity to provide feedback on the issues that are most important to them and garner their opinions on municipal programs and services. The survey results will serve as a tool to inform future priorities for Council and all Town departments and divisions, including Corporate Communications. With Council's support, the Town will undertake a survey every four years, with the next one slated for late 2026.

#### Refinement of hybrid work model to attract and retain top talent

The Office of the CAO – in close collaboration with the Human Resources division, the Executive Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team – oversaw the development and implementation of the Town's Alternative Work Arrangement (AWA) policy. While the need for such a policy was accelerated by COVID-19, a solid AWA policy is ultimately helping the Town attract top talent, while also fostering a flexible and productive work environment that is responsive to the professional and personal needs of today's workforce.

#### Lead action plans in response to the 2020 Employee Engagement Survey to address issues, recognize successes, and enhance organizational culture and performance

Departmental action task forces have been put in place and a reporting framework has been established to ensure ongoing updates to the Executive Leadership Team on actions taken. Working closely with HR, the Office of the CAO will oversee another employee engagement survey in 2024.

### New objectives

#### Multi-Year Strategic Communications Plan, 2023-2026

The implementation of the Multi-Year Strategic Communications Plan, 2023-2026, is a key new objective for the Communications Division. Importantly, the Multi-Year Strategic Plan sets a framework for many other new objectives over the next three years. These include, but are not limited to, the development of a Website Improvement Plan, a Multi-Channel Content Strategy, a Town Council Information Plan, an enhanced Community Engagement Calendar, and a new Issues Management Protocol. The overarching goal of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, and these

associated objectives, are to strengthen the way the Town communicates key information to Aurorans, while also increasing two-way engagement opportunities for residents to provide feedback on Town programs and services.

## **Objectives in progress**

### **Identify organizational needs associated with new ward system and provide necessary supports**

With the Town having moved to a ward system in the 2022 Municipal Election, the Office of the CAO continues to monitor any new institutional needs and possible realignments that may arise from this, most notably increased communications support for individual ward councillors.

### **Utilize communications channels to support plans to revitalize downtown core**

Corporate Communications continues to work closely with Economic Development to market the Town of Aurora and support increased investment and development in the downtown core.

### **Develop Communications and Community Engagement Strategy, including Media Relations Plan, Website Improvement Plan, Crisis Communications Plan, Social Media Strategy, Internal Communications Plan and Marketing and Advertising Plan**

The development of these various strategies and plans emanates from the larger Multi-Year Strategic Communications Plan that will guide Corporate Communications over the next three years.

### **Continue leadership development with Executive Leadership Team and Management**

There has been ongoing investment in the growth and development of the Corporate Management Team and the Executive Leadership Team to enhance business acumen, strategic planning, proactive collaboration, and to support data-driven decision making and recommendations to Council. A leadership development framework, and key performance indicator framework development, are well underway.

### **Accelerate the rollout of the IT Strategic Plan and key technological systems that will support enhanced employee collaboration and performance**

Underway across various channels and being led by IT, with regular reporting through the Executive Leadership Team and to Council. An IT Governance Committee has been established to support strategic and data-driven technological investment aligned with the IT Strategic Plan.

## Grow community engagement opportunities and ensure more regular activities and touchpoints are accessible to our diverse populations

In alignment with the Multi-Year Strategic Communications Plan, improvements are being made to the Town's two-way engagement platform, [engageaurora.ca](https://engageaurora.ca). Corporate Communications is also working to develop new in-person engagement opportunities to better reach our diverse and growing community.

Intentional Blank