2026 Proposed Budget

2026 Operating and Capital Budgets

2027–2035 Capital Forecast

Legal and Legislative Services

Legal and Legislative Services

Divisional Budget Summary

	2025	2026 Budget				
Department	**Net Budget**	**Total Expenses**	**Total Revenues**	**Net Budget**	**$ Change**	**% Change**
Legal and Legislative Services Admin	$412	$434	$0	$434	$22	5.3%
Corporate Legal and Halton Court Services	$2,022	$3,133	$972	$2,161	$139	6.9%
Legislative Services	$1,957	$2,873	$806	$2,067	$110	5.6%
Mayor and Council	$2,102	$2,758	$536	$2,222	$120	5.7%
Total Legal and Legislative Services	**$6,493**	**$9,198**	**$2,314**	**$6,884**	**$391**	**6.0%**

Numbers are in $ Thousands and may not add due to rounding

Departmental Overview

Department Legal and Legislative Services Admin

Department Head Blake Hurley

Department Head Title Commissioner of Legal and Legislative Services /City Solicitor

Department Description

The Legal and Legislative Services Division is comprised of three departments- Legal Services, Legislative Services and Halton Court Services. Each of these departments are involved in the provision of legal and legislative service to the Corporation, and its Council and staff, in accordance with municipal and provincial legislation and regulation. The Division is comprised of both internal facing service and external facing service to members of the public.

In addition to acting as the City Solicitor, the Commissioner sets divisional priorities and monitors performance ensuring alignment with organization and Council priorities. The Commissioner also works together with other members of the Executive Leadership Team to set organizational priorities and optimize continuous improvement opportunities.

Department Goals

The Division's priorities are to:

• Minimize legal risk to the corporation through provision of legal advice and guidance to internal and external service departments and Council;
• Provide effective legal representation in all litigation, real estate transactions, contract preparation and negotiation, and the provision of insurance;
• Provide effective clerking of meetings of Council, Committees and Advisory committees, including the management of meeting materials and agendas, in accordance with legislation and policy;
• Provide effective governance and management of the City's records and information in accordance with legislation and policy;
• Provide effective management and operation of Halton Court Services to enable the administration of justice on behalf of the City and its partner municipalities.

OPERATING BUDGET
FINANCIAL RESOURCE SUMMARY

($ rounded to thousands) **Legal and Legislative Services Admin**

	2025 Budget	2026 Base Budget	$ Change Base Budget	2026 Key Investments	2026 Total Budget	$ Change Total Budget	% Change Total Budget
Salaries Wages and Benefits	411	433	22		433	22	5.3 %
Materials and Supplies	1	1			1		0.0 %
Facilities and Administration Costs							0.0 %
TOTAL EXPENSES	412	434	22		434	22	5.3 %
NET OPERATING BUDGET	412	434	22		434	22	5.3 %

Budget Commentary

Human resources reflect standard provisions for the annual employee performance adjustment, range movement, payroll taxes (EI, CPP, EHT), WSIB, OMERS and group benefits.

Departmental Overview

Department Corporate Legal and Halton Court Services

Department Head Blake Hurley

Department Head Title Commissioner of Legal and Legislative Services / City Solicitor

Department Description

To provide Legal, Insurance/risk management and Real Estate services including:

Advice: Provide a range of legal advice and opinions to our customers including advice/education of new or pending legislative changes, risk management.

Advocacy: Represent the City before courts and tribunals (oral and written advocacy and negotiation) including prosecutions under the City's by-laws, Fire Code, Building Code and defence of insurance claims, all using internal and external resources.

Legal Drafting: Preparing and reviewing contracts, agreements, by-laws and reviewing insurance provisions in all contracts.

Transactional Activity: Completing real estate transactions involving the buying/selling/leasing/easements of the City's property, and the administration of the City's insurance program.

Operational Supervision: Provide management and operation of Halton Court Services to enable the administration of the Provincial Offences Act court on behalf of the City and its partner municipalities.

Department Goals

The overall vision of the department is to minimize legal risk to the corporation in support of corporate strategic and operating objectives by providing legal advice and guidance to the both the City's internal and external facing departments, and to Council itself, as well as providing effective legal representation in all litigation, real estate transactions, contract preparation and negotiation, and the provision of insurance.

This vision will be supported, in part, through the achievement of the following short term service goals:

- To provide effective legal advice and guidance to other corporate divisions and Council regarding the amendments to provincial legislation and regulation with respect to planning policy and development, and impacts and opportunities regarding municipal structure and responsibilities that have arisen through provincial review of Regional governance and other legislative amendments.

- To provide effective legal advice and guidance to Burlington Digital Services in relation to that service portfolio's transformation of technology that is underway at this time.

- To provide effective legal advice and guidance in the establishment of the Bylaw Compliance Department and that department's review and update of the City's by-laws, and in relation to the by-law prosecutions that result from the operations of that department.

- To provide strategic advice related to land and property , including the management of strategic land acquisitions and dispositions in support of the City's Housing Strategy.

Strategic Alignment with Vision to Focus Plan
Increasing economic prosperity and community responsive growth management
Improving integrated city mobility
Supporting sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture

Programs	
Litigation	Represent the City before courts and tribunals (oral and written advocacy and negotiation) including prosecutions under the City's by-laws, Fire Code, Building Code and defence of insurance claims, all using internal and external resources.
Real Estate (Property and Land)	Acquisition and disposition of land for City needs, negotiation of lease/license agreements, parkland dedication valuations, strategic advice regarding property.
Planning and Development	Provision of legal and strategic advice related to planning applications, development charges, parkland dedication, and appeals of those matters to the Ontario Land Tribunal (oral and written advocacy and negotiation).
Insurance/Risk Management	Delivery of the City's program of insurance, including processing of claims, management of risk, and within City contracts.
Contract	Preparation and review of contracts and agreements.
Halton Court Services	Manage and operate Halton Court Services, including the administration of the Halton Provincial Offences Office and Court.

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Legal Services and Halton Court Services have continuous improvement initiatives underway.

1. Addition of internal legal resources

The department has added four solicitors since Q4 2023 to provide additional internal legal support to by-law compliance and prosecution, information technology, and planning services. The solicitors were added to address the increasing demand for legal services in these service areas that has resulted from the City's investment in those service areas. This additional legal resource has allowed for more of the increased demand for legal resources in these areas to be provided in-house rather than via retained external legal service.

2. Use of technology

The department continues to evaluate its processes and procedures to determine where there are opportunities for implementation of new technology to improve efficiency or reduce cost. Halton Court Services has implemented new video transfer services for the disclosure of police video to defendants, which has resulted in reduced conversion errors and reducing the time it takes to prepare disclosure materials. Legal Services has converted many of its legal print resources to digital versions, resulting in a reduction in the amount of subscription services required, as well as reducing the footprint needed to store print resources, resulting in a maintained or reduced expenditures on the resource.

3. Real Estate leasing and licensing

The Legal department has and continues to put in place systems for monitoring the invoicing and renewal of its various leases, license agreements with external third parties. Initiatives in this regard will provide for better tracking and timely invoicing of these matters.

Addressing Gaps and Challenges

Addition of legal resources over past two years has helped address gap created between legal resources and City investment in digital services, by-law compliance and planning. The increase in solicitors to service these growing areas has placed increased demands on the City's four law clerks. As the By-law Compliance department has completed updates to by-laws and increased enforcement activities resulting in increased prosecutions, an additional law clerk resource is necessary to support those processes.

Additionally, the City's move to a new insurer has resulted in a significant savings of over $1.2M for the 2025-2026 insurance term. However, the move has resulted in significant insurance claim processing work for City staff. An additional resource will be necessary to ensure the City is able to continue to structure its insurer service and coverage with a similar level of savings.

Department Initiatives	Target Completion
To successfully defend or reach resolution of appeals to new City Official Plan at the Ontario Land Tribunal	Apr 2026
Facilitate continued implementation of Administrative Monetary Penalty Automated Speed Enforcement systems for municipal by-laws and vehicle-based offences	Dec 2025
Support the establishment and operation of By-law Compliance Department, and resulting increased charges, prosecutions, and by-law revisions	Jun 2026
Support City Housing Strategy through strategic land acquisitions and dispositions	Apr 2026
Support Burlington Digital Service transformation of City digital resources	Dec 2026
Support the review of the City's Agencies, Boards and Commissions	Apr 2026

OPERATING BUDGET
FINANCIAL RESOURCE SUMMARY

($ rounded to thousands) **Corporate Legal and Halton Court Services**

	2025 Budget	2026 Base Budget	$ Change Base Budget	2026 Key Investments	2026 Total Budget	$ Change Total Budget	% Change Total Budget
Salaries Wages and Benefits	2,816	2,967	151		2,967	151	5.4 %
Materials and Supplies	7	5	(2)		5	(2)	-23.4 %
Facilities and Administration Costs	83	88	6		88	6	7.0 %
Contracted and Professional Services	62	72	10		72	10	16.1 %
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,968	3,133	165		3,133	165	5.6 %
User Fees and Service Charges	49	50	1		50	1	3.0 %
Licenses, Permits, Rents	155	159	5		159	5	3.0 %
Other Miscellaneous Revenue	28	28			28		0.0 %
Internal Recovery	714	734	20		734	20	2.8 %
TOTAL REVENUES	946	972	26		972	26	2.8 %
NET OPERATING BUDGET	2,022	2,161	139		2,161	139	6.9 %

Budget Commentary

Human Resource increase reflects the impact from provisions for the annual performance adjustment, range movement, payroll taxes (EI, CPP, EHT), WSIB, OMERS and group benefits.

Departmental Overview

Department Legislative Services

Department Head **Department Head Title** City Clerk

Department Description

The Legislative Services department provides service to Council, City staff and members of the public in two primary areas- Committee Services and Information Governance. Within those two primary areas, staff are focused on providing the following services:

- Facilitation and coordination of the decision-making process of council and providing procedural advice.
- Preparation of agendas, minutes, reports, web content and correspondence for Council and Committee meetings.
- Administration of Municipal Elections.
- Coordination of public appointments to boards and committees.
- Care and control of advisory committees to Council, including but not limited to meeting management, training and advice to appointed members, and oversight over advisory committee budgets.
- Provide Commissioner of Oaths services, access to Assessment Rolls and oversight of vital statistics (burial permits and marriage licenses).
- Facilitate compliance with Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act by Processing requests for information in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- Facilitation of access to information through routine disclosure of information and through publication of information online.
- Training, consultation and operational support to staff on information management.
- Serve as the Clerk of the Corporation in accordance with applicable legislation.

Department Goals

The Department's broad goals are grouped into two primary areas:

1. Building More Citizen Engagement, Community Health and Culture
To support the organization through council and committee reports and meeting facilitation.
To support the community by providing access to Council and Committee meetings.
To provide interpretation, guidance and support regarding municipal legislative policies, by-laws, processes and procedures.

2. Delivering Customer Centric Services with a Focus on Efficiency and Technology Transformation:
To support the organization by providing training and education on managing information, protecting personal information, and processing access requests.
To provide advice and guidance to the organization on corporate projects involving information to address access, security, retention, and privacy.

Strategic Alignment with Vision to Focus Plan

Building More Citizen Engagement, Community Health and Culture

Delivering Customer Centric Services with a Focus on Efficiency and Technology Transformation

Programs	
Council and Committees	Prepares and provides information related to Council and committee meetings, such as agendas and minutes. Administrative support is provided to meetings of Council as well as to standing and advisory committees.
Advisory Committees	Conduct recruitment for boards and Committees, as well as onboarding, training, and ongoing support. Each advisory committee, task force, and working group provides feedback on matters related to the Strategic Plan and their mandate as set out in each Council-approved term of reference. Administrative support is provided to advisory committees, including oversight over advisory committee budgets.
Elections	Administer the Municipal Election and byelections. Establish policies, manage changes to the voters' list, register candidates and carry out the legislated requirements of the Municipal Elections Act.
Information Management	Provide information, guidance and support to all City staff and Members of Council with respect to the City's information governance programs. Facilitate training for corporate information management. Manage offsite storage of inactive records and archives. Oversee the City's corporate policy and procedure framework.
Access to Information	Providing public access to corporate records and archives in accordance with legislation and corporate policies. Advocate for greater transparency of information through routine disclosure and open data principles.
Privacy Management	Provide privacy guidance to City staff. Complete privacy impact assessments on corporate wide initiatives. Investigate and provide guidance to staff on privacy breach protocol.

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Council and Committee Coordination
Continuous review of process improvement opportunities with an aim to enhance overall committee and council meeting management through amendments to the Procedure By-law and effective clerking of meetings.

Records Program Review
Staff have identified areas for improvement in the records management program. There are opportunities for policy development and opportunities for staff education and awareness. These improvements will foster an improved records management culture in which both digital and physical records will be kept in accordance with retention schedules, and maintained in a coordinated manner.

Addressing Gaps and Challenges

Records Program Review
Staff are actively consulting with departments on inefficiencies and questions surrounding records management practices with an aim to inform policy development and create efficiencies by streamlining processes and rectifying identified gaps.

Department Initiatives	Target Completion
2026 Municipal Election	Nov 2026
Comprehensive review of all Advisory Committees and Public Appointment Policy	Mar 2026
New records retention by-law and routine disclosure policy	Jun 2026

OPERATING BUDGET
FINANCIAL RESOURCE SUMMARY

($ rounded to thousands) **Legislative Services**

	2025 Budget	2026 Base Budget	$ Change Base Budget	2026 Key Investments	2026 Total Budget	$ Change Total Budget	% Change Total Budget
Salaries Wages and Benefits	1,689	2,034	344		2,034	344	20.4 %
Materials and Supplies	35	184	149		184	149	431.3 %
Facilities and Administration Costs	38	255	217		255	217	572.6 %
Contracted and Professional Services	69	166	97		166	97	141.9 %
Funding for Capital and Debt Repayment	170	190	20		190	20	11.8 %
Grants to Other Agencies	45	45			45		0.0 %
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,045	2,873	828		2,873	828	40.5 %
User Fees and Service Charges	2	2			2		0.0 %
Internal Recovery	69	69			69		0.0 %
Transfer from Reserve Funds		717	717		717	717	0.0 %
Senior Government Grants	17	17			17		0.0 %
TOTAL REVENUES	89	806	717		806	717	809.4 %
NET OPERATING BUDGET	1,957	2,067	110		2,067	110	5.6 %

Budget Commentary

Human Resource increase reflects the impact from provisions for the annual performance adjustment, range movement, payroll taxes (EI, CPP, EHT), WSIB, OMERS and group benefits.
The budget also reflects increased costs related to the 2026 Municipal Election. These costs will be offset by a draw from the Election Reserve Fund.

Departmental Overview

Department Mayor and Council

Department Head Marianne Meed Ward **Department Head Title** Mayor

Department Description

The seven member Mayor and Council team constitute the elected democratic governance branch of the City, setting strategy, budgets, policies and bylaws, and bringing the voice of constituents to the council table.

There are six city councillors elected by Ward, who also serve on Halton Regional Council.

The mayor is elected by the whole city, and under the Municipal Act serves as the Head of Council and Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation.

Council deliberates on the business of the city at Standing Committees, which meet monthly with the exception of Audit, with final decision-making at Council, which also meets monthly.

The current Standing Committees are:
• Committee of the Whole
• Pipeline to Permit
• Audit Committee
• Budget Committee
• Council Workshop

Each Councillor serves as a Deputy Mayor with portfolio, aligned with the strategic priorities of the city. The current portfolios are:
• Business and Red Tape Reduction
• Community Engagement and Partnerships
• Environment
• Housing
• Strategy & Budgets
• Recreation and Community Services

Councillors also serve on a range of agencies, boards , as well as advisory committees, at both the City and Regional level.

Each councillor is supported by a dedicated, full-time assistant. The Mayor is supported by a Chief of Staff, media specialist, community liaison and constituent assistant.

Department Goals

Set the strategic direction for the city in collaboration with staff, and the community; represent the interests of Halton Region as Regional Councillors; approve budgets, policies and bylaws; support community initiatives; represent the city’s interests to other levels of government and at municipal organizations and forums.

Strategic Alignment with Vision to Focus Plan

Designing and delivering complete communities

Providing the best services and experiences

Protecting and improving the natural environment and taking action on climate change

Driving organizational performance

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

Council has directed staff to report back on eliminating development charges for two years to help spur housing and economic development in a housing crisis, subject to conditions including: the units meet policy goals (eg. Purpose built rental, affordable); that the municipality is made whole by other levels of government; and that projects reach a defined level of start during the two year period. Timeline: Report back in January 2026.

Council governs with seven generations in mind, rather than election cycle to election cycle. To that end council is updating our strategic plan, renamed Horizon 2050, and seeking public input on the vision of our community now and into the future.

Council will be deliberating on the 2026 budget in November and December, bringing amendments that reflect the input of residents. The budget will be prepared by staff, under council-endorsed direction from the Mayor, following four principles: Affordability, Liveability, Sustainability, Transparency. Once again this year, there will be six budget town halls in each ward, a telephone town hall, and multiple other opportunities to connect with members of council to provide input.

2026 is an Election Year, with residents going to the polls to choose their Mayor, Ward Councillor, Regional Chair and School Board Trustee. Nomination period opens May 1, ends Aug. 21 with election day October 26. Inauguration of the new council is Nov. 16 And the first council meeting is November 17. During the Election period, there are some legislated restrictions on council activities and decision-making. Council did vote earlier this year to retain the current size of council, and to modify the Ward boundaries. The community in north Tyandaga will move from Ward 1 to Ward 3, the Leighland community will move from Ward 2 to Ward 1, the Palmer community will move from Ward 4 to Ward 3 and the Maple Beach community will move from Ward 1 to Ward 2

Council continues to advocate to other levels of government on behalf of residents, including formally by resolution, by delegation meetings with ministers at the annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario, and through correspondence and conversation.

Recent advocacy has included:
Support to retain Automated Speed Enforcement cameras in school zones
Support for a Minister’s Zoning Order to protect greenspace at Millcroft Golf Course from further development
Endorsing the Elect Respect pledge for civil democracy and encouraging others to do so

Council takes opportunities to attend municipal conferences to share our input, meet with government officials and learn from other municipalities in Ontario and across the country. The two main conferences are AMO in August, and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in June.

Department Initiatives	Target Completion
Report on eliminating Development Charges	Jan 2026
Approve 2026 budget	Dec 2025
Approve new strategic plan Horizon 2050	Feb 2026
Opening new Skyway Arena	Sep 2025
Municipal Election	Oct 2026

OPERATING BUDGET
FINANCIAL RESOURCE SUMMARY

($ rounded to thousands) **Mayor and Council**

	2025 Budget	2026 Base Budget	$ Change Base Budget	2026 Key Investments	2026 Total Budget	$ Change Total Budget	% Change Total Budget
Salaries Wages and Benefits	2,489	2,610	120		2,610	120	4.8 %
Internal Charges	1	1			1		0.0 %
Materials and Supplies	50	50			50		0.0 %
Commodities							0.0 %
Facilities and Administration Costs	98	98			98		0.0 %
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,638	2,758	120		2,758	120	4.6 %
External Recovery	503	503			503		0.0 %
Internal Recovery	33	33			33		0.0 %
TOTAL REVENUES	536	536			536		0.0 %
NET OPERATING BUDGET	2,102	2,222	120		2,222	120	5.7 %

Budget Commentary

This budget includes the costs for all members of council as well as their support staffing. Human Resources increase is comprised of provisions for the annual performance adjustment, range movement, payroll taxes (EI, CPP, EHT), WSIB, OMERS and group benefits for support staffing. Budget changes for the Mayor and Council are aligned with the Council Remuneration Review Working Group (Citizen Committee) recommendations.


CITY OF
Burlington