



October 30, 2025

Toronto Budget Committee

Matthew Green

Toronto City Hall

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RE: OSPE's 2026 City of Toronto Budget Comments

The Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the City of Toronto's 2026 Budget. As the advocacy body representing Ontario's engineering community, OSPE works to advance evidence-based public policy. Our comments outline targeted, practical measures that leverage engineering expertise to deliver safe, equitable, and sustainable infrastructure to Torontonians.

1. Implement Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) for Engineering and Design Services

The Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (OSPE) recommends the City of Toronto adopt Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) as the standard procurement method for professional engineering and design services.

QBS selects firms based on demonstrated competence, relevant experience, and capability, not solely on lowest price.

Studies across North America show QBS delivers better project outcomes, lower life-cycle costs, and fewer change orders. By emphasizing quality and expertise in public infrastructure development, QBS aligns with the City's goals for safety, sustainability, and value for taxpayer dollars.

2. Improve Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) in City Properties

OSPE encourages the City of Toronto to invest in upgrading ventilation and air purification systems, prioritizing older buildings and vulnerable populations. Examples include Toronto Community Housing (TCH), Toronto Early Learning & Child Care Services (TELCCS), and EarlyON Child and Family Centre properties. Significant improvement in indoor air quality

(IAQ) can be achieved by partnering with Ontario's engineering community to develop cost-effective new and retrofit designs.

Poor IAQ contributes to respiratory illness, reduced comfort, and higher health-care costs. Many TCH buildings have outdated HVAC systems and inadequate filtration, disproportionately affecting low-income residents. Improved IAQ enhances resident well-being.

OSPE encourages the 2026 Budget to allocate funding for retrofits and new design using energy-efficient filtration and ventilation technologies, while applying Health Canada's IAQ recommendations.

3. Continue Supporting District Energy as a Low-Carbon Option for Building Heating

OSPE recommends the City of Toronto continue to invest in district energy infrastructure, particularly in growth centres and new development zones. By partnering with engineering experts, the City of Toronto can assess opportunities for integrating district energy into energy retrofit programs and new developments.

District energy systems enable efficient, low-carbon heating and cooling by integrating renewable and waste energy sources. Expansion can reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve grid resilience, and create skilled engineering jobs.

OSPE encourages the City of Toronto to prioritize district energy expansion in planning and zoning approvals for new developments and provide capital support for existing networks. District energy decreases emissions for building heating, advancing municipal sustainability goals.

4. Support Safe and Sustainable Transportation Infrastructure, Including Bike Lanes

OSPE supports continued investment in cycling infrastructure as part of a balanced, multimodal transportation network. Expanding and maintaining protected bike lanes improves safety, reduces traffic congestion, and advances Toronto's climate and public health goals.



Engineers play a critical role in designing cycling infrastructure that is safe, efficient, and resilient to climate impacts. By applying data-driven design standards in street and public transit planning, the city can enhance connectivity and decrease congestion from cars.

OSPE recommends that the 2026 Budget include dedicated funding for the planning, design, and maintenance of protected bike lanes, intersection safety improvements, and secure bike parking. These investments not only reduce emissions but also promote equitable access to safe, low-cost mobility options for all Torontonians.

Conclusion

OSPE encourages the City of Toronto to view engineering excellence as foundational to effective, sustainable, and equitable urban infrastructure.

The adoption of QBS, investing in IAQ improvements for vulnerable residents, advancing district energy systems, and enhancing bike lane infrastructure in the 2026 budget are four areas where the City of Toronto can deliver long-term economic, environmental, and social benefits to Torontonians in partnership with engineers.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these recommendations with you and your officials. Please contact Paola Cetares, Director of Public Affairs, at advocacy@ospe.on.ca or 416-223-9961 ext. 225 to coordinate next steps.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued leadership in making Toronto a global leader.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Carnegie", enclosed within a light gray rectangular box.

David Carnegie, P.Eng., MBA
President and Chair
Ontario Society of Professional Engineers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sandro Perruzza", enclosed within a light gray rectangular box.

Sandro Perruzza
Chief Executive Officer
Ontario Society of Professional Engineers