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FINAL

## Mayor to reopen '26 budget

### Facing \$30M-\$40M deficit, city officials intend to address spending plan's 'serious concerns'

By Hallie Lauer  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Facing what could be a \$30 million to \$40 million deficit, Pittsburgh Mayor Corey O'Connor announced Thursday afternoon he will reopen the city's 2026 budget to "address serious concerns with the accuracy of the budget."

Despite projections that Pittsburgh would end 2025 with a small surplus, the city actually finished the year about \$8.6 million in the hole.

Pittsburgh's teetering financial situation isn't new, but the O'Connor administration said the reality is "worse

than we thought."

"There are a lot of false assumptions," in this budget, the mayor said — adding that there are a variety of critical services under-budgeted, with overspending on nonessentials.

The city spent \$20 million more than it budgeted for overtime; payments into city employees' health care and a retiree health care plan were lower than they should have been; and fuel costs, which were already budgeted on the low end, are expected to rise significantly due to the ongoing war with Iran.

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Alexandra Wimley/Post-Gazette

Mayor Corey O'Connor on reopening the 2026 city budget: "Whatever happened happened. ... It's going to take prudent and responsible leadership to get us back on track."

### WAR IN THE MIDEAST

## IRAN'S LEADER VOWS REVENGE

### Issues first statement since father's death

The Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — Iran's secretive new leader issued his first public statements Thursday, resolving to keep fighting, promising more pain for Gulf Arab states and threatening to open "other fronts" in a war that has already disrupted world energy supplies, the global economy and international travel.

The hard-line stance revealed

by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Mojtaba Khamenei came as Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said his country's attacks were creating conditions for the Iranian population to topple the government.

"It is in your hands," Mr. Netanyahu said at a news conference, addressing the Iranian people. "We are creating the optimal conditions for the fall of the regime."

Since the start of the war, U.S. and Israeli strikes have targeted security checkpoints in Iran to undermine the government's ability to suppress dissent, according to Armed Conflict Location and Event Data, the U.S.-based independent monitoring group known as ACLED.

Mr. Netanyahu denounced Ayatollah Khamenei as a "puppet of the Revolutionary Guards."

Ayatollah Khamenei is close to Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard and is widely seen as even less compromising than his father, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

### INSIDE

FBI: Attack at Michigan synagogue was a "targeted act of violence against the Jewish community." Page A-7

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## FAMILIAR TURF FOR TOMLIN



Justin Guido/Post-Gazette

Former Steelers head coach Mike Tomlin gestures as he and his wife, Kiya, accept the Patricia R. Rooney Community Impact Award from Art Rooney II, right, at The Ireland Funds Pittsburgh Gala, Thursday at Acrisure Stadium. The fundraising event for The Ireland Funds, a charity that supports education and community development in Ireland, included an honor for award-winning actor and Pittsburgh native Michael Keaton.

## SEA calls for donation from Penguins sale

### Says Fenway group failed to fulfill duties

By Adam Babetski  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As Fenway Sports Group completes its sale of the Penguins, members of the Sports and Exhibition Authority board called on the organization to donate some

of its profits from the deal to lower Hill District redevelopment projects — saying the ownership group had failed to deliver on plans it committed to when it bought the hockey team.

FSG is in the final stages of selling the Penguins to the Hoffmann

Family of Companies for \$1.7 billion — an 89% return on investment in just four years — and the SEA on Thursday formally consented to the sale, a needed step in the ongoing process.

But in doing so, board members spoke — in clear language — of their frustrations with the team ownership.

"The board is deeply disap-

pointed in FSG profiteering on this community and its refusal to honor its promises to the people of the lower Hill," said SEA board member Aaron Waller.

County Executive Sara Innamurato weighed in after the meeting, saying "FSG leaves Pittsburgh on a path of broken promises."

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## CMU, Pitt see dip in international students

### U.S. student visas drop 35% nationwide

By Maddie Aiken  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The issuance of new student visas fell more than 35% in summer 2025 compared to the previous summer, a trend reflected to a lesser extent at Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh.

In summer 2024, more than 288,931 student visas, including F-1, J-1 and M-1 visas, were issued between June and August across the United States.

The next summer, that number

stood at 186,160 — a 35.6% drop, according to newly released federal data.

These numbers demonstrate the full impact of the Trump administration's crackdown on international students last spring. Citing concerns with foreign influence over American schools, officials temporarily paused all student visa interviews in the spring and implemented new social media vetting policies for prospective international students.

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## STATE INVESTS IN DOWNTOWN



Giuseppe LoPiccolo/Post-Gazette

Jeremy Waldrup, president and CEO of the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership, speaks on the importance of investment in Downtown during an event Thursday highlighting the Shapiro administration's \$3.32 million Neighborhood Assistance Program funding to boost Downtown ahead of the NFL Draft. Story in Business, A-10

## Housing bill passes in Senate

### Bipartisan legislation aims to help affordability

By Charlotte Kramon, Alex Veiga and Mary Clare Jalonick  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Senate passed a broad bill on Thursday to make U.S. housing more accessible and affordable, a rare bipartisan effort in Congress to address a growing national problem.

The bill, which passed 89-10, would reduce regulations, regulate corporate investors and expand how housing dollars can be used to build affordable homes and rentals. It will now head back to the House, which passed a similar bill earlier this year.

"We have a housing shortage all across America," said Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who worked with Republicans to win overwhelming support from both parties for the legislation. "We need more housing of every kind. More housing for first-time homebuyers, more housing for renters, more housing for seniors, more housing for people with disabilities, more rural housing, more urban housing, more, more, and more."

The legislation, she said, "will help drive down prices."

Senate Banking Committee Chairman Tim Scott, R-S.C., led the effort with Ms. Warren. He said ahead of the vote that the Senate would "do what so many people failed to do in this legislative body for the last few decades, and that is pass consequential legislation that makes it easier to become a homeowner."

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### Weather

Winds becoming strong; mostly cloudy. Daytime high, 55; tonight's low, 30.  
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