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As part of Mayor Rob Ford's mission to reduce the size and cost of government, a lucrative buyout package is in the works for senior city managers and staff.

The announcement could come as early as Monday morning, when Ford has scheduled a 10 a.m. news conference. The official reason is to announce the conclusion of the core service review, but there was widespread speculation at city hall last week that the mayor would also announce the early retirement deal.

On Sunday, five well-placed officials confirmed the Ford administration is banking on the buyout in order to meet attrition targets, as well as to set the tone for looming cuts to city services.

City manager Joe Pennachetti said he won't be able to offer details about the buyout until later in the week. One source said plans are still being "finalized."

The buyout strategy would mirror one being employed by the Toronto Police board. The board is hoping 18 senior officers and civilian managers accept early retirement packages.

It will mean \$2.8 million in savings for the cash-strapped force. The City of Toronto is currently facing an estimated budget shortfall as high as \$775 million.

Former budget chief, Councillor Shelley Carroll, said buyouts have been looked at "a number of times the last few years" but she has concerns about the timing.

"I'm going to find it troubling if, before council even begins to look at the compiled feedback from the community, we're doing the exit package. It won't be as strategic," said Carroll.

It would be more productive to match the offers with priorities identified during the community consultation process, she said.

Earlier this year, the city hired KPMG consultants to conduct a thorough review of more than 100 city services. The firm is not expected to make specific recommendations on what will be cut, rather, it will examine the extent to which each program is a "core" or "non-core." The document will largely be based on what occurs in other municipalities.

The information will be organized by related committee, said one individual who has seen it. First up Monday will be programs that fall under Public Works and Infrastructure, which includes utilities, roads, and garbage.

Also being released is a document prepared by the city manager regarding the public consultation process.

The entire review will be revealed in phases.

Councillor Paul Ainslie, chair of the government management committee, said he "couldn't even begin to guess" what the consultants identified as non-core.

"But I've been talking to people across the political spectrum. They might not agree with what gets cut, but everybody seems to agree that the city needs this core service review," said Ainslie.

On the buyout front, Ainslie said he will support any initiative that can reduce the workforce, but maintain front line workers.

Councillor Adam Vaughan, a Ford opponent, said this is just another example of the mayor spending money needlessly.

"He spent hundreds of millions cancelling Transit City, the Jarvis bike lanes, the Fort York bridge ... Now we're spending millions of dollars paying people not to work for us," said Vaughan. "How much are these people going to spend on nothing?"