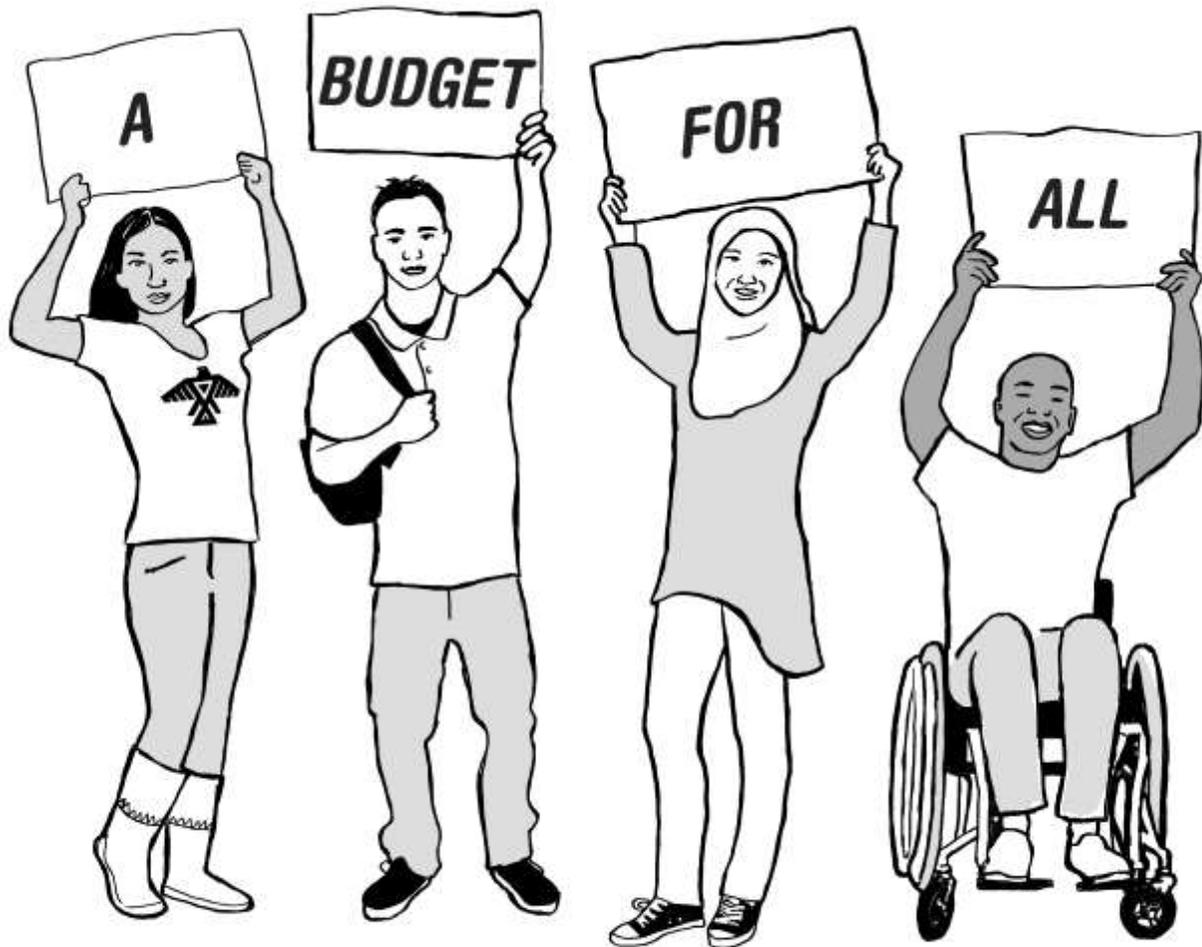


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# ***A CITY BUDGET FOR ALL***

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***WHAT IS IN THE DRAFT CITY BUDGET 2016?***



***QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK***

Services that we depend upon everyday are shaped by the City Budget – how funds will be raised, what services will be provided. The health of everyone depends upon it.

Here you will find concerns and questions arising from the Draft City Budget 2016, including questions about specific services.

Take a look to see what matters to you and make your views known.

You have between now and Dec 7<sup>th</sup> to let City Council know your views.

- Contact the Mayor or your City Councillor by e-mail or phone
- Schedule to present at a Committee, Commission or Board of the City (see list on last page)
- Share your views with others (letter to the editor, social media, in conversation)

## Making Votes Count

[www.makingvotescount.ca](http://www.makingvotescount.ca)



## Democracy of our City

City Council responded to the community's request to provide more time between the release of the draft budget and decisions on the budget. This means the public has more time to know what is being proposed and make our views known.

**Thank you City Council for hearing us. Let's take advantage of this opportunity**

## Transparency in City Decision Making

- **Good News** City Councillors requested that any efficiencies (cost reductions or savings) be clearly spelled out in the draft budget so that the public could make an informed choice as to whether it is better to have reductions or increase taxes by more than 2%.
- **Bad News** - The draft budget does not give details of the efficiencies (cost reductions or savings). Managers in each department have been given a target and are currently trying to find those areas of cost cutting. The public will only know when managers present at each of the committee, board or commission which will be on the same day that public delegations present their views.

We hope the questions here will help you know what questions to ask to get the information you need.

## A Fair and Caring City

- **Will a 2% tax increase provide the city with enough funds to provide services that create a city for all?** An increase of 1% is \$36 per year on the average property tax bill and gives the City \$14 M in additional funds (revenue).
- **Do Efficiencies mean Service Reductions?** The City of Ottawa is facing a \$51.8 M deficit and has proposed keeping tax increases to 2%. To do this, they have set \$17.4 million in "efficiencies targets" in the 2016 budget. Efficiencies mean reducing costs or finding savings. Will this mean a reduction in services? The promise made by the City is that: "*operational efficiencies will not impact services to the public*".

## A Growing City

The population growth of Ottawa was 9% between 2006 and 2011 to a population of 883,000. Ottawa will continue to be one of the fastest growing cities in Ontario during the current census period. Where is the service need analysis of this increasing population reflected in the growth pressures in the 2016 budget?

# Transit Budget

**Contact the Mayor, your City Councillor or make a presentation  
at the Transit Commission on December 3rd**

- 1. Savings – Changes to Routes?** The budget calls for \$600,000 in savings from “low ridership service adjustments”. We take this to mean reducing services that are used by fewer people.

**Question:** OC Transpo has committed to applying the City’s Equity and Inclusion Lens to ensure the impact on all residents are considered. Will the Equity and Inclusion Lens be applied to service adjustments? When will the Commission receive the detailed proposals for these service adjustments?



- 2. Fare Increases:** The budget calls for an increase in fares of 2.5% overall. This increase would take place at a time when ridership is down and the City wants to encourage use of transit. The draft budget does not indicate the increase by fare classes.

## **ODSP Bus Pass**

In both 2015 and 2014, Ottawa residents receiving Ontario Disability Support (ODSP) faced an increase in their monthly Community Pass to ride OC Transpo. In 2014, the highest increase to bus fares was the 16.4 per cent hike in Community Passes, from \$35 to \$40.75 per month. In 2015, the cost of the Community Pass was increased another \$1 per month, meaning these passengers had to pay 19.3 per cent (or \$6.75) more than they did in 2013

**Question:** Will the Equity and Inclusion lens be applied to fare class increases? When will the Commission receive the fare increase proposals and when will they be put into effect?

- 3. Low-Income Transit Pass**

Ottawa has one of the most expensive transit systems in the country, and lags behind other Canadian cities in ensuring that transit is affordable. The municipalities of Cornwall, Guelph, Halton Region, Hamilton, Kingston, Peterborough, Waterloo and Windsor have enacted low-income transit passes. A Low-Income Transit Pass could benefit 60,000 low-income Ottawa residents.

**Question:** Will you extend the Community Bus Pass to include residents living on low-income?

# Ontario Works

**Contact the Mayor, your City Councillor or make a presentation at the Community and Protective Services (CPS) Committee on November 30th**

- 1. Underspending** – In 2015, there was \$800,000 of allocated funds not spent in employment assistance and LEAP (Learning, Earning and Parenting) benefits due to priority on mandatory benefits (SAMS).

This would have resulted in service reductions. It is our concern that these unspent funds are now being applied pay down the deficit, rather than service delivery.

**Question:** How can OW clients be assured that they will receive all the services projected in the 2016 budget?



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- 2. Efficiencies - Service Reductions?** The draft budget projects \$101,000 in efficiencies (cost reductions) to be taken from “material/services” but gives no details.

**Question:** What are the actual materials or services that will be affected?

- 3. OW case worker/client ratio:** In 2012 the ratio was 1 case worker to 109 clients. Auditor General report of 2012 called for higher ratio (eg 1: 120). Management committed to present a review to determine the optimal ratio at the beginning of 2014. This report has never come forward, so the impact on client service has not been revealed.

**Question:** What is the actual ratio today? In view of the fact that the caseload has increased every year since 2010, why is an increase in OW case workers not considered a Growth issue? When will the OW optimum ratio report be coming back to CPS Committee?

# Child Care

**Contact the Mayor, your City Councillor or make a presentation at the Community and Protective Services (CPS) Committee on November 30th**

- 1. Investment in Child Care:** Overall 2016 net City investment in child care is reduced by \$1.1 M compared to 2015. Meanwhile families wait for years for a subsidized space.

**Question:** Why not maintain the level of City funding to increase the number of subsidized spaces?

- 2. Fee Subsidy:** There is a \$400,000 reduction in Fee Subsidy program over 2015 forecasted costs.

**Question:** Will this result in fewer low income families being able to access child care?



- 3. Subsidized spaces:** In the past 4 years the number of subsidized spaces has been reduced from 6800 to 6300.

**Question:** How many subsidized spaces are included in the 2016 budget?

- 4. Efficiencies:** A total of \$318,000 is in child care budget: \$102,000 from fee subsidy, \$74,000 from program delivery and \$142,000 from Family Support Program

**Question:** How will these reductions be achieved? What will the impact be on public services? Will there be a detailed report back to CPS committee on these reductions?

- 5. Child Care Development Charge :** Following an appeal with the OMB (Ontario Municipal Board), the City no longer applies Development Charges to assist in funding child care capital expenses.

**Question:** This has meant a loss of \$600,000 annually for child care capital funding, which was to be reconsidered. Will the CPS committee join with the child care community to request that the development community agree to reinstate child care as an eligible development charge as soon as possible?

# Community Funding

**Contact the Mayor, your City Councillor or make a presentation at the Community and Protective Services (CPS) Committee on November 30th**

**Cost of living increase:** This budget reflects a status quo approach with a 1.5% cost of living increase to all community agencies receiving grants from the City, which was the increase of recent years. At the same time, agencies face increased pressures with population growth.

**Question:** Given the increase in the low income population over the past 5 years, and the fact that most of the City funded agencies must respond to this growth, why is this population growth not addressed in this budget?

# Housing

**Contact the Mayor, your City Councillor or make a presentation at the Community and Protective Services (CPS) Committee on November 30th**

- 1. Covering the Costs:** The overall net City cost for the housing budget has increased by \$4 M in 2016 to maintain current service levels.

**Question:** Given the growth in the low income population over the last 5 years why isn't the 2106 budget reflective of this growth?

- 2. Finding funds for Housing:**  
In 2015, the Housing budget was balanced by using \$5.5 M of capital money (\$4M from CHPI, \$1.5M from Housing Reserve) to maintain services until "base solutions can be found".

**Question:** In addition to the \$4M mentioned above what other solutions were found? Is this budget sustainable?



# Parks, Recreation and Culture

Contact the Mayor, your City Councillor or make a presentation at the Community and Protective Services (CPS) Committee on November 30th

1. **Efficiencies – Reduce Recreation?** : There is \$654,000 of efficiencies in this budget. \$494,000 in the General Managers office, \$110,000 in Culture and \$50,000 from programs.

**Question:** What are the details on how these efficiencies will be achieved without impacting public services?

2. **Fee increases:** This budget proposes fee increase of between 5% and 21% for public skating and swimming when most other fees increase by 2 to 2.5%.

**Question:** How much additional revenue will be achieved by these increases in skating and swimming fees? Given that access to recreation services is so key to healthy lives, how is it justified to raise these fees?



3. **Fee assistance program:** The Hand in Hand fee assistance program has made it possible for low-income residents to access recreation.

**Question:** What is the current budget allocation for this program? Is this budget totally used each year and at what point in the year is it consumed? What is the 2016 increase to this budget?

# Ottawa Board of Health

Contact your City Councillor or make a presentation  
at the Ottawa Board of Health on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

1. **Efficiencies** : This budget calls for \$336,000 of efficiencies. It plans to use \$200,000 from a reserve contribution to reduce the target to \$136,000.

**Question:** Presumably this reserve contribution is one time only. What happens in 2017? The entire \$336,000 is being removed from a cost shared program called Foundational Standards. What are the impacts on services to the public of this reduction?

2. **Provincial Cost-Sharing:** This budget is based on a 4% increase from the Province for cost shared programs.

**Question:** Do you have this commitment in writing? How secure is this estimate?



3. **Maintain Services:** This budget indicates that with the exception of Healthy Smiles all other Provincially Funded programs will be frozen at their 2015 budget levels.

**Question:** If this comes about, does this not constitute a reduction of services? What is the political strategy to pressure the Province to at least maintain services?

4. **Ottawa compared to other cities:** For the past few years, it has been clear that on a per capita basis Ottawa Public Health has been very near the bottom of all Health Units in Ontario

**Question:** What practical actions can the community take to pressure the Province to treat Ottawa more fairly?

**Creating a City for All  
starts with Creating a Budget for All**

**Working with City Council we create a healthy  
city for everyone.**

**Let the Mayor and your City Councillor know  
your views**

**For more information on the City Budget, visit  
Ottawa.ca**



**To access this document, visit:  
[makingvotescount.ca](http://makingvotescount.ca)**

**Members of the public can make a five-minute presentation to Standing Committees, Boards and Commissions at meetings taking place from November 17 to December 7.**

Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee	Nov 23 Mon
Planning Committee	Nov 24 Tues
Audit Committee	Nov 26 Thurs
Environment Committee – Tax / Rate-supported	Nov 27 Fri
<b>Community &amp; Protective Services Committee</b>	<b>Nov 30 Mon</b>
Police Services Board	Nov 30 Mon
Finance and Economic Development Committee	Dec 1 Tues
Ottawa Public Library Board	Dec 1 Tues
Transportation Committee	Dec 2 Wed
<b>Transit Commission</b>	<b>Dec 3 Thurs</b>
IT Sub-committee	Dec 4 Fri
<b>Ottawa Board of Health</b>	<b>Dec 7 Mon</b>
<b>Review / Adoption by Council</b>	<b>Dec 9 Wed</b>

**To register in advance of the meeting, contact the relevant Committee Coordinator using [eAgenda](http://eAgenda) at [Ottawa.ca](http://Ottawa.ca) or by calling 3-1-1.**