



# A City Budget for All

## What's in the 2017 Draft Budget?

### What and how to ASK City Council?

The City Budget funds important services we use everyday. Take a look at what residents and community groups in Making Voices Count see in the draft 2017 City Budget and consider what message you would like to send to City Council.

#### Here is how:

You have until December 14<sup>th</sup> when City Council votes on the budget.

1. **Contact the Mayor or your City Councillor**
2. **Email [budget@ottawa.ca](mailto:budget@ottawa.ca)**
3. **Tweet @ottawacity using the hashtag #ottbudget**
4. **Call 3-1-1(TTY: 613-580-2401). Rural residents call 613-580-2400**
5. **Make a five-minute presentation to Standing Committees, Boards and Commissions.** See here the dates of committee meetings covering issues we invite you to consider:

**December 5 – Transit Commission** (Low Income Transit Pass)

**December 6 – Finance and Economic Development** (Long Term Social Infrastructure Investment, Budget process)


**December 8 – Community and Protective Services Committee** (Low-income Transit Pass, Community Funding, Long Term Social Infrastructure Investment, Recreation, Childcare, OW)





To register in advance of the meeting, please consult the meeting schedule in [eAgenda](#) and inquire with the listed contact person or call 3-1-1. Presenters are encouraged to provide a copy of their presentation electronically in advance of the meeting.


For more information on the 2017 City Budget process and other committee meetings, visit [city web-site](#).


**Making Voices Count (MVC) works with city decision makers to create a City for all. MVC is driven by residents, the Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres, City for All Women Initiative (CAWI), and community partners. MVC builds on the momentum of the previous Making Votes Count project. For more information, visit [www.makingvoicescount.ca](http://www.makingvoicescount.ca).**



Making Voices Count ASKS	What's in the Draft 2017 City Budget?	Our Response/ Our Concerns	Sample Statements/ Questions to Council
<p><b>Low-Income Transit Pass - EquiPass</b></p>  <p>Establish a low-income transit pass for residents living below the low-income cut off, at the rate of no more than \$41.75/month.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft budget proposes to allocate \$2.7 million to fund a new <b>EquiPass</b> for people living below the low-income cut off defined as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ individual income of approximately \$20,000 or less</li> <li>○ family income of approximately \$38,000, for a family of four</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The monthly fare would be \$57/month.</li> <li>• We understand that the <b>EquiPass</b> is sharable among members of a household.</li> <li>• The existing discounted transit passes (the seniors pass, the youth pass, the U-Pass, and the Access Pass) will continue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great News! One big step in the right direction for making transit affordable!</li> <li>• The monthly fare for <b>EquiPass</b> would be \$57, which is higher than what the community asked for. The community wants Council to work with them in asking the province to contribute, so as to bring the price down.</li> <li>• For some people on low-income, it is not feasible for them to buy a monthly pass, either because they can't afford it or don't take the bus often enough.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are very pleased that the draft budget proposes the creation of an <b>EquiPass</b> to make it possible for low-income residents to utilize public transit. Will you support this?</li> <li>• Given that some low-income residents would not require or be able to afford a monthly pass, will you make available a single fare option that can be purchased on the PRESTO card, as is the senior discount single fare?</li> <li>• With the City committing to fund the <b>EquiPass</b>, will you work with the community to ask the province to contribute funds so as to bring the <b>EquiPass</b> fare down to \$41.75?</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Social Infrastructure – Immediate</b></p>  <p>Provide a two-year additional funding envelope of \$500,000 per year for city-funded community social service providers unable to keep up with increasing demand for services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$500,000 would be placed in a fund to help agencies to deal with growth, waiting lists for services and other critical, one-time issues.</li> <li>• \$110,000 will be provided to address the annual cost-of-living increases to community agencies. This amount represents 2% increase.</li> <li>• Recent reduction of two positions in community funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great news! One step in the right direction to meet community needs.</li> <li>• How will the \$500,000 be distributed?</li> <li>• It will be important to measure the impact of the funds in order to demonstrate their value in future budgets.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We are pleased with the proposed creation of a \$500,000 fund to assist community social service providers to keep pace with demand, and another \$110,000 to keep pace with inflation?</li> <li>• I know this is critical because... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We are pleased to know that the \$500,000 is being put into the base funding.</li> <li>○ What steps will you take to measure the effectiveness of this important response to a critical situation?</li> <li>○ Will you work with the community to determine the best way to distribute the funds, but also to identify ways of addressing these social infrastructure funding gaps over the long run, including working together to secure more funding from higher levels of government?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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<p><b>Social Infrastructure – Long Term</b></p>  <p>Commit to working with community social service partners in developing a long-term social infrastructure investment plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no plan to develop a long-term social infrastructure strategy.</li> <li>• Community and Protective Services (CPS) lost 32 full time positions (8 in Ontario Works, 17 in Childcare, 1 Long-Term Care, 2 in Community Funding, and 4 in Strategic Community Initiatives).</li> <li>• Shrinking social infrastructure can come in the form of gradual spending reductions. MVC wonder if some reductions in the draft budget could signal reductions in services (i.e. affordable housing, recreation, childcare, affordable housing, OW). See details below.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Community and Social Services budget has not kept pace with other City budgets or with population growth. See <a href="#">CURE report</a>.</li> <li>• Making Voices Count and its partners are concerned that social infrastructure is not keeping pace with other parts of the city budget.</li> <li>• In the past, the draft budget provided more details as to what is proposed in the draft budget. Without this information, it is hard for the public to give meaningful feedback.</li> <li>• Even though the loss of 32 positions will not affect front line services, can we be certain that this will not affect the City's capacity to deliver quality services?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A plan is needed to ensure that funding social services keeps pace with other parts of the City Budget.</li> <li>• Will the City work with the community to ensure that funding for social services addresses the multiple, complex and emerging needs of an increasing Ottawa population?</li> <li>• Can a plan be put into place with measurable outcomes? Will you work with the community to do this?</li> <li>• We recognize that the City depends on funding from higher levels of government. We want to work with you to help make this happen.</li> <li>• Can you provide more detailed information in future draft budgets, so that both community and Council have more complete information to inform their input?</li> </ul>

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<p data-bbox="107 207 457 329"><b>Social Infrastructure – Affordable Housing</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="506 212 961 277">• In 2016, the City overspent its shelter budget by \$1.5 million.</li> <li data-bbox="506 321 961 500">• Federal funding of \$2.8 million from the Homelessness Partnering Strategy and \$16 million for Social Housing Repairs.</li> <li data-bbox="506 544 974 755">• Provincial funding of \$12.2 million through the Social Housing Apartment Retrofit Program and \$3.8 million for a Survivors of Domestic Violence Pilot.</li> <li data-bbox="506 799 974 945">• Federal and provincial funding of \$16.4 million capital program for IAH (Investing in Affordable Housing).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1003 212 1436 610">• In 2010, the City committed to spend \$14 million per year on housing and poverty reduction: \$10 million was in the Community and - Protective Services (CPS) operating budget for a package of initiatives and \$4 million was in the Planning Committee capital budget for new affordable housing.</li> <li data-bbox="1003 654 1436 792">• The City of Ottawa removed \$4 million in the 2015 and 2016 budget for new housing development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1470 212 1999 532">• We welcome both our federal and provincial governments' support for and commitment to affordable housing. We recognize that the City depends on funding from higher levels of government. At the same time, it's also important that our municipal efforts remain as strong now as ever.</li> <li data-bbox="1470 576 1999 977">• Will you support the call put forth by housing providers in the city to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="1514 686 1984 977">○ “restore some of the City’s own discretionary spending for new affordable housing development. Council has an opportunity to renew its strong support by restoring the \$4 million per year in capital funding”.</li> </ul> </li> <li data-bbox="1470 1021 1999 1200">• Can you provide more detailed information in future draft budgets, so that both community and Council have more complete information to inform their input?</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Social Infrastructure – Childcare</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The City has budgeted \$500,000 less for fee subsidy in the 2017 draft budget, despite overspending their budgeted amount by \$1.75 in 2016 in order to address demand.</li> <li>• The City received a \$1 million reduction in provincial operating funding for child care because they didn't contribute the required 100% municipally-funded contributions. They also expected a \$1.2 million increase in provincial funding that never came through, leading to a \$2.2 million shortfall.</li> <li>• The City eliminated 17 full time positions in childcare.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many families, needing a subsidized space, will be waitlisted given that the budgeted amount for fee subsidy is \$500,000 lower than the budgeted amount for 2016 and \$2.25 million under forecasted spending for 2016.</li> <li>• In 2016, the City removed \$3.9 million from the capital development charge reserve for projects.</li> <li>• In 2015, the Planning Committee took childcare services out of the development charges bylaw until 2019 when the bylaw is to be refreshed. This will result in approximately \$2 million (\$400,000 per year) in lost revenue for the childcare sector.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will Council find additional funding for subsidized childcare spaces to ensure that waitlists for subsidized spaces do not continue to grow?</li> <li>• In 2016, the City removed \$3.9 million from the capital development charge reserve for projects. It is our understanding that in the Child Care 2016/2017 Service Plan, these funds would be used to support increased spaces in high priority and/or underserved areas. Can you confirm this is true?</li> <li>• Removing childcare from the development charges bylaw is resulting in a loss of \$2 million to childcare sector over four years. Will City Council commit to reinstating the childcare development charges in the 2019 bylaw review?</li> <li>• Can you provide more detailed information in future draft budgets, so that both community and Council have more complete information to inform their input?</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Social Infrastructure – Ontario Works</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In 2016, the City under spent employment assistance benefit by almost \$690,000. We understand this drop is related to the implementation of SAMS computer system.</li> <li>• In 2017, City has reduced the budget for employment benefits by \$600,000.</li> <li>• The City eliminated 8 full time positions from Ontario Works.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the actual budget for employment assistance benefits?</li> <li>• How is the City meeting its Ontario Works Service Plan employment targets while an employment assistance benefit is under-spent?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the reason for the reduction of the employment assistance benefits while the caseload is going up 2.5% each year?</li> <li>• How will the City ensure the most marginalized people get the employment supports they need?</li> <li>• Can you provide more detailed information in future draft budgets, so that both community and Council have more complete information to inform their input?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Infrastructure – Recreation</b></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$250,000 additional funds for the parks and recreation renewal fund.</li> <li>• \$320,000 in additional parks maintenance and an additional \$500,000 contribution to capital for parks and recreation renewal funding which, together with planned 2018 funding, will result in a total of \$16.5 million in spending in this area from 2015-2018, compared with \$6 million that was spent in total from 2010-2014.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The draft budget does not provide the community with details for understanding what is happening with the Hand-In-Hand Program</li> <li>• The budget for the Hand in Hand program is over-spent in most years. In 2015, the actual total was \$1,319,126.</li> <li>• The 2016 budget for the Hand in Hand program is \$1,019,186.</li> <li>• There is no increase in this program in the draft 2017 budget.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was the 2016 budget for Hand in Hand over-spent or under-spent?</li> <li>• Can you provide more detailed information in future draft budgets so the community can provide informed feedback?</li> <li>• Will you increase the budget in Hand in Hand program so as to meet the need?</li> </ul>