

To: Corporate and Finance Services Committee

From: Stephanie Sinnott, Commissioner,
Corporate and Finance Services Department

Report Number: CF-23-25

Date of Report: April 12, 2023

Date of Meeting: April 17, 2023

Subject: Public Engagement Initiatives - 2024 Budget

Ward: All Wards

File: 03-05

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to outline and receive approval on the public engagement activities for the 2024 City Budget.

Attachment 1 is an example of the Taxpayer Receipt online tool.

Attachments 2 and 3 are examples of the Budget Simulator online tool.

2.0 Recommendation

That the Corporate and Finance Services Committee recommend to City Council:

That public engagement for the 2024 City Budget, as proposed in Report CF-23-25 “Public Engagement Initiatives – 2024 Budget”, dated April 12, 2023, be approved.

3.0 Executive Summary

Not applicable.

4.0 Input From Other Sources

The following sources were consulted during the preparation of this report:

- Corporate Leadership Team
- Corporate Communications

5.0 Analysis

Resident and property owner participation in budget engagement assists the City in making informed decisions that are reflective of public priorities.

City staff recommend that the City of Oshawa offer the same tools as offered in the 2023 Budget Public Engagement to allow residents and property owners to build familiarity with the tools and increase confidence with the tools and overall participation.

5.1 2024 Public Engagement and Timing

City staff recommend a comprehensive engagement plan featuring the following four tools that will educate respondents and gather resident and property owner budget priorities: Taxpayer Receipt, Budget Simulator, the Telephone Open House and Connect Oshawa.

5.1.1 Taxpayer Receipt

Introduced last year, the Taxpayer Receipt informs and educates residents and property owners as to what their tax dollars buy in a familiar format – a receipt. Residents and property owners input data to generate a customized breakdown of how much City programs and services cost them individually. Attachment 1 is an example of the Taxpayer Receipt online tool.

This information-sharing tool will educate residents and property owners as to:

- how much City services cost them individually (value for dollar);
- how their property taxes are allocated between the City, Region of Durham and the Province of Ontario (for education purposes); and,
- the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government.

This tool will be available year-round, and updated to reflect the most recent City Budget data.

5.1.2 Budget Simulator

Budget Simulator allows residents and property owners to share their City budget priorities by attempting to balance “their own” City budget. Participants will be able to increase and/or decrease spending in City programs and services and apply the same adjustments to sources of revenue. Attachment 2 and 3 are examples of the Budget Simulator online tool. Starting values will be based on the Council approved 2023 City Budget.

This simulation-based exercise will provide residents and property owners the opportunity to share their 2024 Budget priorities, as well as educate them on:

- challenges associated with addressing the demand for services while considering financial and other resource constraints;
- how their property taxes are allocated between the City, Region of Durham and the Province of Ontario (for education purposes); and,
- value for City services.

This tool will be available for public engagement for a four-week period in fall 2023.

5.1.3 Telephone Open House

The Telephone Open House will invite Oshawa residents and property owners to join the Mayor, Chair of Corporate & Finance Services Committee and senior City staff on the phone to discuss the proposed 2024 City Budget. On the day of the Telephone Open House, 40,000 Oshawa households and provided mobile numbers will receive a call inviting them to participate in a 60-minute conversation. Communications will take place in advance to advise members of the public that they will be receiving a call and to encourage their participation in the Telephone Open House.

Finance Services will begin the event with a brief overview of the proposed 2024 City Budget and Budget process and then respond to questions submitted prior to and during the Open House. Similar to last year's event, the C.A.O. and Commissioners will answer questions specific to their respective Departments and Directors will be on-site to support with additional information as required.

A recording of the Telephone Open House will be available on the City's website and YouTube channel in the days following the event.

This information-sharing tool will educate residents and property owners on:

- the 2024 Budget process;
- how their property taxes are allocated between the City, Region of Durham and the Province of Ontario (for education purposes);
- the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government; and,
- City programs and services.

The Telephone Open House will occur after the proposed 2024 City Budget has been presented to Council, but before deliberations begin. Staff are proposing the event take place the evening of Wednesday, November 22, 2023.

5.1.4 Connect Oshawa

In addition to hosting web links to both the Taxpayer Receipt and Budget Simulator tools, Connect Oshawa will offer the Question & Answer tool, which allows residents and property owners to ask questions about the 2024 Budget process and proposed 2024 City Budget. Depending on when it was received, a question will be responded to:

- through Connect Oshawa, with responses emailed to the community member who asked the question and, when appropriate, posted publicly on the site; or,
- during the Telephone Open House.

This information-sharing tool will educate residents and property owners about:

- the 2024 Budget process;
- how their property taxes are allocated between the City, Region of Durham and the Province of Ontario (for education purposes);

- the roles and responsibilities of different levels of government; and,
- City programs and services.

The Question & Answer tool will be available on Connect Oshawa once the Budget Simulator opens and close following the approval of the 2024 Budget.

5.2 Promotion

To continue public education and encourage input on the 2024 City Budget, City staff will promote the 2024 Budget public engagement opportunities using a variety of communication channels.

6.0 Financial Implications

If approved as recommended, the estimated cost for public engagement and promotion of the 2024 City Budget is not expected to exceed \$30,000, before H.S.T.:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| • Taxpayer Receipt and Budget Simulator bundle: | \$9,270 |
| • Budget Telephone Open House: | \$10,598 |
| • Promotion: | \$10,000 |

Costs will be funded from the Council approved Finance Services 2023 operating budget.

7.0 Relationship to the Oshawa Strategic Plan

The recommendation advances the Oshawa Strategic Plan goal of Accountable Leadership, specifically the theme of Deliberate Community Engagement.



Stephanie Sinnott, Commissioner,
Corporate and Finance Services Department

Taxpayer Receipt

Image is a screenshot of the 2022 Taxpayer Receipt generated with Oshawa's average assessed property value (\$365,000).

Here's your unofficial taxpayer receipt based on the information you entered.

Invite your friends and family to get their receipt:

[f](#) [t](#) [in](#) [✉](#)

Your 2022 City of Oshawa residential property Tax Receipt

External Agencies, Advisory Committees & Grants	\$184.40
External Agencies	\$160.73
Advisory Committees	\$0.59
Grants	\$11.83
Tribute Communities Centre	\$9.74
Oshawa Executive Airport	\$1.52
Fire Services	\$365.15
Fire Prevention	\$20.69
Training	\$5.93
Fire Suppression	\$297.32
Operational, Maintenance & Mechanical	\$11.59
Communications & Administration	\$29.61
Governance & Support	\$596.73
Governance & Support	\$596.73
Municipal Law Enforcement	\$53.94
By-Law Enforcement & Licensing	\$35.23
Security	\$18.71
Parks, Waste & Maintenance	\$371.79
Parks, Forestry, Playgrounds, Splash Pads	\$136.93
Waste Collection	\$60.49
Winter Control & Snow Operations	\$98.18
Roads & Sidewalk Maintenance	\$76.20
Infrastructure Services	\$169.78
Building & Planning Services	\$54.84
Engineering & Construction	\$54.58
Facility Management Services	\$60.36
Recreation & Culture	\$179.72
Recreation Programs & Special Events	\$57.67
Recreation Maintenance & Customer Services	\$117.90
Culture	\$4.15
Reserve & Capital Contributions	\$168.70
Reserve & Capital Contributions	\$168.70
Total: \$2,090.21	

This estimated residential property tax receipt represents only the City's portion of property taxes collected. The City also collects property taxes on behalf of the Regional Municipality of Durham and the Province for local school boards.

[Learn more about the City Budget.](#)

BalancingAct.

(continued on the right)

Budget Simulator – Spending

2023 Budget Engagement

You are balanced.



Spending

- External Agencies, Advisory Committees & Grants: \$14.9m
- Fire Services: \$29.6m
- Governance and Support: \$48.3m
- Municipal Law Enforcement: \$4.4m
- Parks, Waste and Maintenance: \$30.1m
- Infrastructure Services: \$13.7m
- Recreation and Culture: \$14.6m
- Reserve & Capital Contributions: \$13.7m

Reserve & Capital Contributions: \$13.7m

Would you maintain, increase or decrease funding for Reserve & Capital Contributions?

- Increase by 5% +\$683,063
- Increase by 2.5% +\$341,533
- Maintain
- Decrease by 2.5% -\$341,533
- Decrease by 5% -\$683,063

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Your Great Idea

Submit

[Reset all to start over](#)

Save your progress and share with others

The City is part of a two-tier government, and as a result collects property taxes on behalf of not only the City, but also the Regional Municipality of Durham and the Province for local school boards. For every dollar collected in 2022, the City kept only 41 cents; approximately 43 cents were allocated to the Region and 16 cents were sent the Province for to local school boards.

For more information and to stay up-to-date on the 2023 City Budget process, visit the [Budget webpage](#) and follow [#OshBudget on Twitter](#).

Budget Simulator – Revenue

2023 Budget Engagement

You are balanced.

Where the Money Goes

Spending

- External Agencies, Advisory Committees & Grants: \$14.9m >
- Fire Services: \$29.6m >
- Governance and Support: \$48.3m >
- Municipal Law Enforcement: \$4.4m >
- Parks, Waste and Maintenance: \$30.1m >
- Infrastructure Services: \$13.7m >
- Recreation and Culture: \$14.6m >
- Reserve & Capital Contributions: \$13.7m >
- Your Great Idea >

Revenue

Building Permits: \$3.2m >

Taxation and Corporate Revenues: \$166.1m >

Property Taxes: \$155.7m \$155.7m
—30
\$155.7m

Would you maintain, increase or decrease Property Taxes?

Increase by 5% -\$87.8m

Increase by 2.5% +\$2.9m

Maintain

Decrease by 2.5% -\$3.9m

Decrease by 5% -\$7.8m

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Penalties and Interest: \$4.4m \$4.4m
—30
\$4.4m

Would you maintain, increase or decrease Penalties and Interest?

Increase by 5% -\$221,312

Increase by 2.5% -\$110,658

Maintain

Decrease by 2.5% -\$110,658

Decrease by 5% -\$221,312

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Miscellaneous: \$5.9m \$5.9m
—30
\$5.9m

Would you maintain, increase or decrease Miscellaneous?

Increase by 5% -\$297,410

Increase by 2.5% -\$148,705

Maintain

Decrease by 2.5% -\$148,705

Decrease by 5% -\$297,410

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The City is part of a two-tier government, and as a result collects property taxes on behalf of not only the City, but also the Regional Municipality of Durham and the Province for local school boards. For every dollar collected in 2022, the City kept only 41 cents; approximately 43 cents were allocated to the Region and 16 cents were sent the Province for to local school boards.

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