



Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: 2022 Budget amendment recommendations

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Councillor Kelvin Galbraith, Ward 1

Date to Committee: November 30, 2021

Date to Council: December 14, 2021

Motion for Council to Consider:

I would like to explore the deferral of purchasing 2 of the 4 buses as our transit usage has been much less than expected during COVID19. The costs of adding the drivers, staff and maintenance follows the adding of buses to our fleets which is driving our budget increase.

With regards to the bylaw officers located within Aldershot arena, I am comfortable with them staying there for the foreseeable future. It was suggested that the room was needed for community use but I do not anticipate demand for this room for a few years.

Reason:

See above

Outcome Sought:

7 votes in favour

Vision to Focus Alignment:

(check those that apply)

- ☒ Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- ☒ Improve integrated city mobility
- ☒ Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
- ☐ Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
- ☐ Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

Motion Seconded by: as required
Share with Senior Staff ☐

Approved as per form by the City Clerk,

Reviewed by the City Manager - In accordance with the Code of Good Governance, Council-Staff Relations Policy and an assessment of the internal capacity within the City to complete the work based on a specific target date (quarter/year).

Comments:

City Clerk: none

City Manager: none



Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: 2022 Budget Amendments

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Councillor Rory Nisan, Ward 3

Date to Committee: November 30, 2021

Date to Council: December 14, 2021

Motion for Council to Consider:

To direct staff to reduce the budget by removing the following items:

- Dedicated operations space for building/bylaw (\$110k)
- Remove BI position (\$114k)
- Remove bus cleaning/maintain status quo with external contractors (\$223k)
- Remove committee services, deputy clerk position (\$157k)
- Manager, total rewards and analytics (\$157k)

Reason:

Overall rationale:

With COVID-19's economic impacts, council needs to be more careful than ever in balancing costs for our taxpayers and mitigating organizational risk. The following projects very narrowly weigh towards delays and temporary de-prioritization to provide tax relief for 2022.

- Dedicated operations space for building/bylaw (\$110k)

I would like this request to be brought forward again for 2023.

- Remove BI position (\$114k)

I would like this position to be brought forward again for 2023 budget.

- Remove bus cleaning/maintain status quo with external contractors (\$223k)

I would like this request to be brought forward again for 2023. With lower use of busses at present, we can manage the risk of an inferior outcome in terms of cleanliness for 2022.

- Remove clerk position (\$157k)

I would like the city manager to seek short term internal support, internal re-assignment, one-time contracting and/or external contracts for projects to mitigate risk. I would like the position to be brought forward again in 2023.

- Manager, total rewards and analytics (\$157k)

I would like to see this position brought forward in 2023 and if needed that there be internal reorganization and prioritization.

Outcome Sought:

Budget approval.

Vision to Focus Alignment:

(check those that apply)

- ☒ Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- ☒ Improve integrated city mobility
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- ☒ Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

Motion Seconded by:

Share with Senior Staff ☐

Approved as per form by the City Clerk,

Reviewed by the City Manager - In accordance with the Code of Good Governance, Council-Staff Relations Policy and an assessment of the internal capacity within the City to complete the work based on a specific target date (quarter/year).

Comments:

City Clerk: none

City Manager: none



Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: 2022 Budget Amendments

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Councillor Shawna Stolte, Ward 4

Date to Committee: November 30, 2021

Date to Council: December 14, 2021

Motion for Council to Consider:

1) Pride (Rainbow) Crosswalks (pg. 238) RD-SW-2036

Remove \$45,000 in funding for 3 additional Rainbow Crosswalks that are addition to the 4 that have already been committed and encourage community groups to engage and fundraise for future installations.

OR for further consideration:

Rename and repurpose the \$45,000 to fund public art installations that support additional marginalized groups in the community (ie. a "Seven Feathers Crosswalk" in support of our First Nations/Indigenous community)

And

Direct the Director of Roads, Parks and Forestry to generate "City of Burlington Decorative Crosswalk Guidelines" to ensure consistency for future funding requests of this nature.

2) Dedicated operations space for Building Inspection and By-law Staff (pg. 43) 2022-059

Remove \$110,000 from proposed Risk Mitigation Measures budget increase.

3) Sherwood Forest Community Centre Facility (pg.311) Item # FB-CC-1135

Recommit previously approved funding, 2022-2024 capital funding totaling \$6.2 million as well as 2022-2023 capital reserve funding totaling \$600,000 to the Capital Infrastructure Reserve Fund until such time as the plan for cost sharing is approved by Council and the applicable Joint Venture Groups can provide documentation confirming feasibility of financial commitment.

4) School Playground Improvement Strategy (pg. 346) PO-PR-133

Transfer \$550,000 from the capital budget for School Playground Improvement Strategy to the Park Dedication Reserve Fund to assist with future strategic Halton District School Board land acquisitions and;

Direct the Office of the City Manager to re-negotiate the Agreement with the Halton District School Board regarding the use of City tax dollars to replace playgrounds on private HDSB property.

Reason:

- 1) The competitive bid process for the 3 additional Rainbow Crosswalks approved in 2021 resulted in a cost of \$27,324 for crosswalk markings at the 3 locations. An additional cost of \$32,000 was realized as a result of repaving required at 2 of 3 locations in order to maintain integrity of the markings

for a total of \$59,324 or \$19,775 per crosswalk.

The LGBTQ2S+ community in Burlington feels very welcomed and supported with the four new Rainbow Crosswalks around the City of Burlington and greatly appreciates that with the addition of these four Rainbow Crosswalks Burlington now, proudly, has more Rainbow Crosswalks per capita than any other community in the country.

The City of Burlington strives to be a place of diversity and inclusion and to that end the residents of the city are widely supportive of this funding being repurposed to include additional valued community groups and initiatives.

- 2) While the rationale for dedicated space for the Bylaw and Building Department needs are sound, it is premature to commit \$110,000 to new leased space when the required space within existing City owned facilities has not been determined based on remote work arrangements. Efforts to confirm and consolidate existing City owned space allocations needs to be completed before committing to newly leased space.
- 3) Funding for projects that require Council approved cost sharing arrangements should not be committed until such cost sharing arrangements are confirmed. Additionally, applicable Joint Venture Groups should be required to provide confirmation of feasibility of financial commitment before commitment of capital assets.
- 4) Upkeep, maintenance and improvements on properties owned privately by the Halton District School Board should be funded through Provincial Ministry of Education funding.

Vision to Focus Alignment:

(check those that apply)

- ☐ Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- ☐ Improve integrated city mobility
- ☐ Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
- ☐ Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
- ☐ Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

Motion Seconded by:
Share with Senior Staff ☐

Approved as per form by the City Clerk,

Reviewed by the City Manager - In accordance with the Code of Good Governance, Council-Staff Relations Policy and an assessment of the internal capacity within the City to complete the work based on a specific target date (quarter/year).

Comments:

City Clerk: none

City Manager: none



Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: 2022 Budget amendment recommendations

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Councillor Paul Sharman, Ward 5

Date to Committee: November 30, 2021

Date to Council: December 14, 2021

Motion for Council to Consider:

- 1) Defer by one year the proposed 2022 conventional transit vehicle replacement in the amount of \$3,382,000 and retain gas tax funds to partially offset \$30m shortfall in annual capital funding.
- 2) Add funds to tree planting to achieve desired urban forest renewal \$100,000
- 3) Add funds to pave gravel path in Mohawk Park \$60,000
- 4) Remove all 2022 operating budget gapping from new staff positions such as was the case in 2021 along with any other expected un-utilized expenses \$190,000 for personnel plus any other expense items.

Reason:

- 1) recent review of infrastructure identified that infrastructure renewal funding gap is much larger than the \$126m determined in 2016 and is in fact \$512m. It is estimated that annual shortfall since 2016 has been about \$30m, or about \$150m in the 5 years leading up to 2022. Meanwhile, transit ridership is well below planned/hoped for levels due to Covid and perhaps over optimistic projections to meet long term modal split goals. Keeping buses an additional year over assumed 12-year life span is a viable modest extension given the relatively light ridership utilization generally made more so during Covid years in Burlington.
- 2) To better support objectives of private tree by-law in increasing urban tree canopy by providing \$100,000 to be funded by reducing overhead in item 2 above.

3) The path is used by many parents of young children attending both Mohawk Gardens Public School and St Patrick Catholic Elementary School. During inclement weather the path becomes impassible due to flooding and ice, please see picture:



4) Partially offset 2022 prior and pending impacts of council decisions \$885,666

Outcome Sought:

2022 Budget adjustment

Vision to Focus Alignment:

(check those that apply)

- ☒ Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- ☐ Improve integrated city mobility
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Motion Seconded by:
Share with Senior Staff ☒

Approved as per form by the City Clerk,

Reviewed by the City Manager - In accordance with the Code of Good Governance, Council-Staff Relations Policy and an assessment of the internal capacity within the City to complete the work based on a specific target date (quarter/year).

Comments:

City Clerk: none

City Manager: none



Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: Budget Action Request Motions

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Councillor Angelo Bentivegna, Ward 6

Date to Committee: November 30, 2021

Date to Council: December 14, 2021

Motion for Council to Consider:

Consideration to remove proposed items from the 2022 Budget for the following:

- 2022-039 Maintaining Assets in Recreation Services to meet lifecycle requirements and reduce risk -\$100,000
- 2022- 040 Stabilizing Management Structures and Managing Risk - \$585,000 (4 full time staff).
2022-047 Operationalization of the Bus Cleaning Pilot -\$223,000 (7.6 FTE).
- 2022-059 Dedicated space for Building Inspection and By-law -\$110,000
- 2022-065 Gypsy Moth Control Program -\$110,000 (one-time)

Consideration to reduce Non-union HR increases in the 2022 Budget from 3% to 2% - \$640,000

Consideration to reduce Overtime costs estimated at \$1,745,517 by 30% from the 2022 Budget resulting in a savings of \$523,655.

Consideration to remove tax funding from the 2022 Budget and move to Covid budget:

- 2022-066 Additional By-law Enforcement Officers - \$232,000 (one-time)
- 2022-055 Free Transit for Seniors -\$95,000

Reason:

Rational for reducing impacts of the 2022 budget.

This global pandemic over the last 21 months has had many residents experience financial hardship. The economic impact has caused many families see declines to their household incomes. We have heard repeatedly through our committee Covid updates the result of unfavorable cash flows in our city and residents and businesses needing some type of financially assistance. Many businesses have reported losses of upwards to 70% and some have shut down.

My experience in discussions with residents and having read the budget survey comments provided to Committee emphasizes the need to take a hard look at reducing this proposed budget increase of 5.45%.

Outcome Sought:

Reduction of \$2,276,655 of on-going costs and \$342,000 of city one-time costs.

Vision to Focus Alignment:

(check those that apply)

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Motion Seconded by:
Share with Senior Staff ☐

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Reviewed by the City Manager - In accordance with the Code of Good Governance, Council-Staff Relations Policy and an assessment of the internal capacity within the City to complete the work based on a specific target date (quarter/year).

Comments:

City Clerk: none

City Manager: none



Motion Memorandum

SUBJECT: 2022 Budget amendment recommendations

TO: Corporate Services, Strategy, Risk & Accountability Cttee.

FROM: Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

Date to Committee: Nov. 30, 2021

Date to Council: Dec. 14, 2021

Motion for Council to Consider:

Approve the recommended changes summarized in Appendix A Budget Action Request Form of this memo to the proposed 2022 Operating Budget report F-36-21, subject to any modifications by Committee and Council.

Reason:

Each year at budget, city staff present their best professional recommendations to committee and council regarding the annual budget. We respect and appreciate the work that goes into this, and the detailed line by line review staff conduct to find savings prior to presenting their budget to council. This year, that work has resulted in \$1.35 million in savings. (Pg. 8, 2022 Proposed Capital and Operating Budget Book, referred to hereafter as "2022 Budget Book").

That said, in the 11 years I have served on City Council, the proposed budget has always undergone changes by committee and council, before being finalized. It has never simply been accepted by council as presented. This demonstrates the collaborative nature of the budget process. Staff make their best professional recommendations, and council conducts our own review and recommends changes based on a range of considerations including priorities for investment, public input, affordability and more.

We are now at the stage where council goes to work in our deliberations and discussions. It is assumed that proposed changes brought forward by council members for consideration and a vote are ours alone, made for the reasons detailed in motion memorandum, as staff have already provided their best recommendations to us.

The review of the budget and suggested modifications flow from several strategic principles, as described below. Modifications have been grouped under the relevant strategic principle.

Pandemic impacts and reserves

We are still in a pandemic, and can expect both revenue and cost implications that should be treated as one time expenses. Some proposed adjustments below relate to increasing the COVID-impact on the budget.

As we come out of the pandemic, we know we won't be returning to the way things used to be. There have been positive changes and improvements that are expected to be permanent. The following proposed adjustments acknowledge these potentially permanent changes

Covid-19 Mitigation Measures - Travel	Embed a portion of COVID savings into ongoing savings, given the permanent nature of hybrid work force	\$ (75,000)
Covid-19 Mitigation Measures - Parking	Embed a portion of COVID savings into ongoing savings, given the permanent nature of hybrid work force	\$ (100,000)
Covid-19 Mitigation Measures - Materials/supplies	Embed a portion of COVID savings into ongoing savings, given the permanent nature of hybrid work force	\$ (25,000)

Additionally, throughout the pandemic we have studiously used a combination of cost cutting and selective draws on reserves to manage costs and lessen the impact on residents. We have been very grateful for the Safe Restart Funding we have received, and also acknowledge that it has not fully covered the impacts of COVID 19 on our budget. We invest in reserves in part to provide during emergencies or unexpected swings in income or costs. These are our "rainy day funds" – specifically our "stabilization reserve funds".

The pandemic has proven to be our generation's rainiest of days. Of any time to use reserves, this is the time. As revenue and cost conditions begin to return to anticipated and more predictable levels post-pandemic, we can once again begin to invest in reserves. To that end, some of the proposed adjustments hold our reserve contributions to 2021 levels, till we begin to see a return to more regular revenues and costs, and can reasonably and affordably continue to build these up.

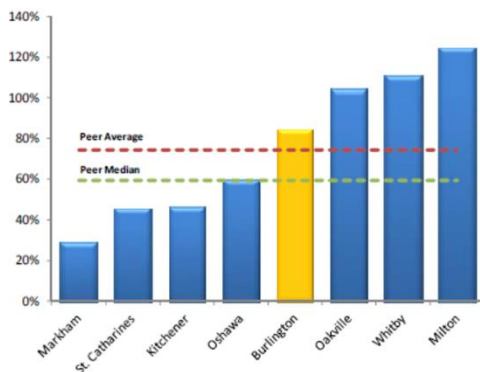
For reference, even in spite of the pandemic, our current stabilization reserves are within the proposed range of 10-15% of net revenues – we are currently at 10.4%. (See

slide 16 of Staff Presentation on Nov. 3 CSSRA). Overall reserves are higher than they have ever been. Additionally, compared to other municipalities we have healthy reserves, and can look to rely on them during the pandemic which will continue into 2022. We are above the comparable peer average for reserve balances, and above the comparable median. (See Q&A memo from staff, excerpt below):

“In July 2019, Council received report [F-29-19 BMA Financial Condition Assessment](#). The analysis in this report included a comparison of Burlington’s results against recognized industry standards, provided historical trend information, as well as a comparison to seven peer municipalities, being Oakville, Milton, Markham, Whitby, Oshawa, Kitchener and St. Catharines. The data is representative of the 2017 BMA study.

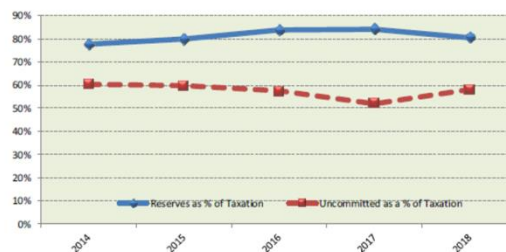
As shown in figure 30/31 from the report, the City of Burlington’s discretionary reserves as a percentage of taxation are above the peer survey average but growth in the reserves has been less than inflation and trending downward in relation to taxation.”

Figure 31—2017 Reserves/RF as a % of Taxation



Source: FIRs

Figure 30—Reserves as a % of Taxation



Source: Reserve Statements, year end balances and uncommitted balances

Where we will need to invest is in our capital reserve funds as a result of the revaluation of our asset portfolio, per the recent asset management and proposed financing plan received as part of the Nov. 15 Environment, Infrastructure and Community Services Committee. Staff have recommended phasing-in these increases beginning with the 2023 budget.

As we emerge from the pandemic, and as expected future revenues materialize, we can also turn our mind to increasing corporate reserves and reserve funds.

The following motions flow from this principle:

Corporate Expenditures and Revenues	Hold Tax Supported Debt Charges at 2021 levels	\$ (100,000)
Corporate Expenditures and Revenues	Hold Contingency Reserve contribution to 2021 levels	\$ (50,000)
Corporate Expenditures and Revenues	Hold Insurance Reserve contribution to 2021 levels	\$ (50,000)
Corporate Expenditures and Revenues	Hold Vehicle Depreciation Reserve Fund contribution to 2021 levels (excluding funding increase for new vehicle acquisitions)	\$ (200,000)

Towards long-term strategic budgeting and organizational design

For the first time this term of council, and on any council I have served, we asked staff to provide detailed service information workshops, to outline current state of services, known financial gaps and service needs, begin to outline and track key performing indicators, and identify risks. Those workshops took place in September and have helped to inform the items in this budget.

We are also in the midst of a five year Designing and Evolving the Organization plan which will ensure appropriate staffing and structure to deliver services. This process was started prior to the pandemic and will continue to evolve as the long-term permanent impacts of the pandemic begin to emerge.

We are in the early stages of both this new budget process and designing the organization, while also managing the continued impacts of the pandemic. There will undoubtedly be legitimate differences of perspective on how quickly we can phase in these changes, especially as we continue to face the impacts of the pandemic. This budget will need to address the now needs while looking to begin phasing in our new strategic directions as they begin to take shape through continued work on the service business plans, recognizing it will take a number of years to reach our destination.

As noted in the staff presentation that formed part of the Nov. 3 CSSRA budget presentation (Slide 4) the 2023 budget and beyond will incorporate the following budget process changes:

- Regular Service Operations updates
- Strategic Direction Business Plans
- 5-year Corporate Business Plan

We are not at this stage yet in our budget planning, but we are on our way.

Some of the proposed adjustments provide a longer phase in period to get us where we need to go, while still providing sufficient resources in the current term while we are still in the pandemic. Additionally, some costs are not known, as the work is still to come or underway, and can be phased in more slowly, or deferred until costs are known.

The following amendments are in the spirit of phasing in increases related to staffing and staff support:

Stabilizing Management Structures and Managing Risk	Defer the BI position to 2023 and extend contract for another year	\$ (114,392)
Operationalization of Bus Cleaning pilot	Phase in the bus cleaning funding over two years through combination of base and one-time funding this year, moving to full base in 2023	\$ (110,000)
Dedicated operations space for Building inspection and By-law staff	Find space within city facilities, or with partners. If incurred bring a final estimate (if any) to 2023 budget	\$ (110,000)
Overtime Costs	Remove Overtime Base Budget Cost Increases	\$ (180,626)
Human Resource gapping	Increase budgeted gapping from current \$625k to \$1 million	\$ (375,000)

One additional item will be dealt with under confidential session, per Appendix B to this memo, as it deals with identifiable individuals.

Future revenue and current costs

In all our budget planning, we need to have both an eye on the present, in terms of priorities, sustainability and affordability, and an eye on the future, in terms of expected changes in both costs and revenue projections.

This budget, like last year's, we continue to face lower than expected revenues and higher than expected costs, and this is expected to continue for at least the near term. Some of the contributing factors to lower revenues include lower than expected assessment growth from new taxpayers as a result of new units being built, partly due to the complexity and time needed to process new development applications, and partly due to more people choosing to live in existing household units, which don't deliver any new assessment growth. For reference please see the Hemson materials provided as part of the Region's Integrated Growth Management Strategy which show Burlington's population higher than predicted, and housing units lower than predicted, out to 2031.

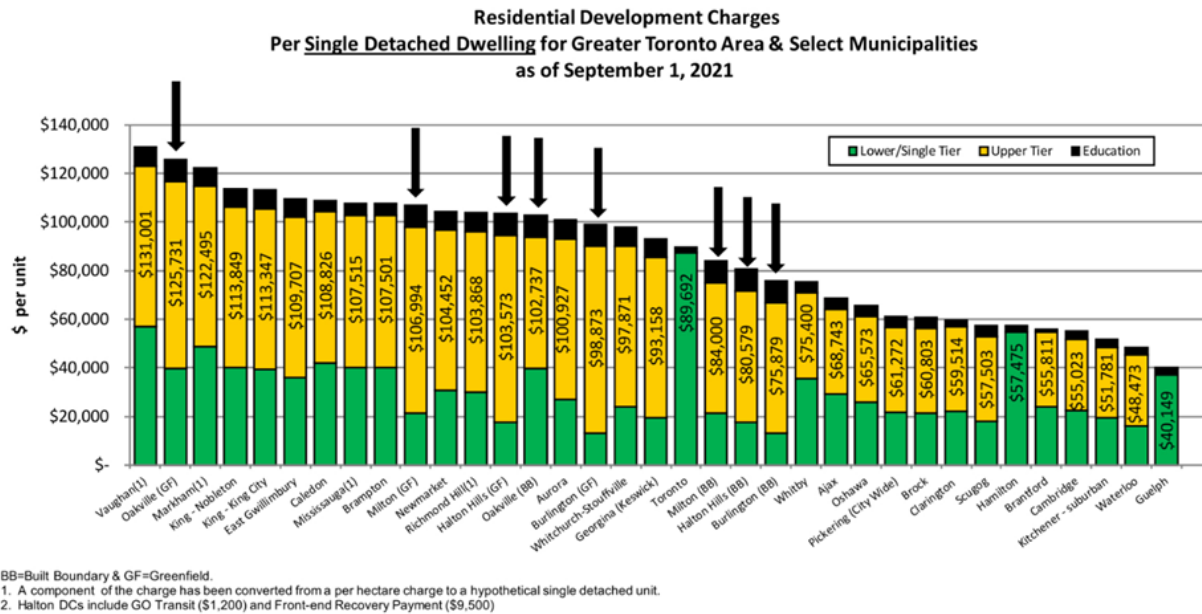
At last week's workshop, the Region provided a forecast of Burlington's population being 218,000 by 2031. Our previous assigned growth through the Best Planning Estimates was 185,000 by 2031, which we surpassed in the most recent census and we now sit close to 200,000. We have higher costs to serve this new population, greater demand on services, parks, community and cultural amenities and more, but without additional assessment tax revenue to cover this. This impacts our current budget and likely will continue for the foreseeable future until assessment growth catches up.

However, according to recent information provided by our planning staff, there are close to 50 applications in various stages of development review, representing over 19,000 housing units. If we take an average tax assessment per unit of \$4000 (recognizing some will be higher in value, some lower) that would deliver an order of magnitude of roughly \$76 million dollars in new funding in the next five to 10 years to address our strategic priorities and designing and evolving the organization.

Further, the parkland dedication for these units, if taken in cash-in-lieu versus land, at the current rate of \$5,500 per unit, represents \$104 million. Further, we have the opportunity to review and increase the parkland dedication rate, as needed. Even if only some of it is taken as cash, some as land, or if the total number of units aren't built, there are still tens of millions of dollars coming to the city to help us face future budget pressures and strategic community building priorities.

We also have the opportunity to collect development charges for community services, infrastructure and other allowable costs related to these new units. We will be reviewing our current bylaw to ensure all known, predictable and allowable costs are captured in the revised bylaw.

Per the report we received at Regional Council (FN-36-21, Attachment 3) on Nov. 24, Burlington's residential DCs are lower than all other Halton municipalities. (See chart below).



Growth never completely pays for growth, and we have experienced the cost impact to our taxpayers of reaching our population targets ahead of schedule, especially without the corresponding new unit assessment growth. Nevertheless, as a member of the Development Charges review committee for the second time this term, I know we will all do our best to capture every penny legally allowed.

The situation described above means we will for the short term continue to experience increased costs due to increase population, without the increased revenue, but that situation (on both the cost and revenue side) will level out in several years. We are in a crunch that we need to carefully manage over the next few years on the cost side, until the revenues catch up.

Some of the proposed motions aim to phase in our strategic priorities and organizational design priorities over a longer period of time to maintain more affordable budgets and tax increases until revenue can catch up to current costs.

Additionally, some motions aim to increase current revenues where feasible, per below.

Private Tree Bylaw	Fee structure and costs remain unknown; remove revenue reduction	\$ (100,000)
Rates & Fees	Increase recreation rates and fees Report F-35-21, Appendix A, pp 18-27 (minus Community Garden and Tyandaga) and pp 29-32 for 2022 by inflation (2%) and remove cap on fee funding assistance; report variance at year end	\$(85,000)

Public Input

One of the key factors in our deliberations is considering public input. We have all received direct feedback from our constituents, as well as through the budget survey, and the virtual town hall held Nov. 22. A key theme that has come through is that the public expect us as council to look for savings and efficiencies, while also investing in front line services and infrastructure.

Some key findings of the City of Burlington Get Involved 2022 Budget Survey Results (see Appendix B of Report F-36-21)

On infrastructure, 70% said infrastructure funding was important.

On priorities for taxes increases, 52% said increase property taxes to maintain or enhance services and 36% said cut services to maintain or reduce taxes

Key themes raised by residents for priority investment included climate change, traffic mitigation, active transportation and transit, tree planting, infrastructure, parks and green space and community amenities to name a few. In each area there are additional investments on both the capital and operating sides, and no suggested amendments or cuts.

At the same time, there is significant concern about tax increases, evident both through the survey and additional resident feedback via email, social media, and resident conversations.

On two open ended questions where residents were asked about the most important issue council should consider in budget preparations, tax increase was mentioned over 75 times. There were varying proposals, from zero to keeping costs to inflation. Many mentioned the challenges seniors and residents on low or fixed incomes have in facing tax increases. Those comments are captured below.

On Question #8: what issue should receive the greatest attention and should be a priority in the preparation of the 2022 budget:

#39: Lowering property taxes.

#45: tax hikes greater than inflation

#51: city council need to keep any increase below the cost of inflation

#56: fiscal responsibility.

#67: decrease taxes

#68: maintain a balance budget. Anything beyond an annual cost of living adjustment is living beyond our means

#69: property taxes

#73: maintain taxes at a rate no higher than inflation

#75: cutting taxes

#91: live within our means with tax increase not beyond inflation

#100: ensure taxes are not increased. With the pandemic and economic hardship this is important

#117: property taxes

#123: maintain tax rates, not increasing them. Many seniors are finding it increasingly difficult to remain financially stable with the increased cost of day to day living.

#151: property taxes are getting too high

#164: keep the budget balanced. Do not over/underspend.

#173: make the attempt to not raise property taxes, after almost two years of this pandemic some of us do not have tons of money to give away to constant increases in taxes.

#178: reducing taxes

#168: controlling spending which leads to major tax increases

#195: raising taxes on a limited income

#199: reducing my taxes. I am on a fixed income.

#209: ensuring development pays for development, it is unfathomable with the growing tax base in intensification we are seeing increases above inflation.

#221: survey choices on tax increases vs service levels were incomplete. There should be an option to find efficiencies.

#240: cut taxes use tax dollar more efficiently

- #255: continuing rising property taxes and spending on non essential issues
- #260: reduce taxes and services
- #288: please learn to do more with less. Reduce costs instead of increasing taxes.
- #294: more efficient spending and/or finding efficiencies.
- #298: if property taxes rise too much more we will have to see about selling our house. We are on a fixed income.
- #322: restraint: people cannot afford another year of higher taxes.
- #330: Balance budget
- #332: not increasing property taxes
- #336: reducing taxes
- #339: our increases have exceed inflation for too many years.
- #344: wise spending and ensuring that budget decisions are made with cost in mind
- #348: being property taxed out of my home
- #350: no increase in taxes
- #351: no increased taxes
- #370: tax increases
- #382: property taxes are way too high
- #397: property tax increases
- #403: minimize the tax increase. Keep the same if possible
- #414: zero based budget

Question #10: Additional comments in preparation of the budget?

- #11: decrease property taxes
- #25: keep to the rate of inflation; stop 4% tax hikes
- #26: budget increase should be frozen at 0%
- #29: be fiscally responsible
- #33: keep spending under control
- #34: cut the waste
- #36: reduce taxes
- #37: please stop spending so much

#41: be fiscally conservative and socially liberal

#42: balance the budget

#45: do not spend or budget any amount above inflation

#46: stop raising my taxes. I am retired and can barely afford them as it is.

#56 Budget to be within inflation

#64: it is imperative that we don't raise taxes

#84: city should bear in mind that many senior residents enjoy only a modest increase in incomes that is tied to the CPI each year, then city should control the increase in its expenditures to the same modest CPI rise.

#90: lower property taxes

#107: coming out of a pandemic is not the time to increase taxes. Too many people out of work.

#108: reduce taxes

#129: figure out a way to cap the increase no greater than 2%

#142: we are coming out of a year and a half pandemic. The city needs to keep the tax increases as low as possible

#147: keeping a balance between reasonable taxes and maintaining services/increases services is key. Small increases are fine but many middle-income families cannot afford large hikes

#180: just try to cut costs

#185: continue to find efficiencies in the budget

#187: maintain or reduce to manage the budget

#218: any increase in taxes must be below CPI

#228: I understand taxes must go up to keep inline with important issues, however a small percentage is preferable to allow low income families to be able to still provide for themselves without going into debt.

#249: better efficiencies to minimize tax increases

#253: increasing the budget every year because you can't cover the budget is not the answer. Strive to reduce waste/redundancy, look for efficiencies savings.

#254: taxes are going through the roof

#256: over the past 6 years municipal taxes have increase yearly, the city must do more to cut inefficiencies

#266: keep spending increases below rate of inflation

#268: keep tax increase consistent with rate of inflation (CPI)

#272: reduce taxes

#274: keep tax rate below 2%

The message is clear that significant tax increases are an issue for many residents, even as they recognize the value of the services the city provides and support investments in maintaining or increasing community amenities and services, addressing climate change, transportation and transit and more.

This is the balancing act before council.

It is not fiscally sustainable to get to zero or cut taxes, given all of the challenges the city is facing, and given the services people value and want us to invest in, including community amenities, parks, transit, climate change and more.

At the same time, the community has told us loud and clear that 5.45% is too high a tax increase and residents clearly expect us to take steps to bring it down. We do have seniors (and others) on fixed incomes or working below a living wage that don't get an increase in their income to cover increases in taxes. The relative tax rate of Burlington compared to other municipalities does not change this reality for these residents. With other costs like food and housing soaring, and inflation sitting at 4.7%, we must do what we can not to add to the cost burden for our residents on fixed or limited incomes who are already struggling to make ends meet.

An appropriately phased plan will help to achieve our current needs, plan for future needs, and address affordability of increases.

Through the budget process each year our goal is to maintain an appropriate balance between affordability, service levels and financial sustainability.

Additionally, we want to increase investment in valued public programs. The Beachway free parking program is one of these and is proposed to be maintained for 2022:

Burlington Beachway Parking Program	Maintain free passes for Halton Residents for 2022, fund through COVID one-time revenues (\$58,900)	\$ 0
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Protecting what matters

In reviewing the budget for changes, it's also important to note where no changes are proposed. We need to protect what matters to the community, and protect our ability to continue delivery of services to our residents.

As such, no changes are being proposed to our capital program or infrastructure investments, so that we can keep our roads, parks and community amenities in a state of good repair. These investments are increasing with this budget. This is also in line with community priorities and feedback.

No changes are being proposed to recommended staffing or compensation increases. While almost half of our staff are unionized, with legal agreements related to compensation, half of our staff are not unionized. We rely on our staff to deliver the services our community relies on and must remain fair and competitive in an increasingly competitive and scarce labour market, where the long term impacts of COVID mean that people can work remotely for municipalities much further away from where they live. We are competing for talent across a much broader range. We are already behind in compensation relative to municipalities around us, and this has meant a costly brain and talent drain of staff, and extra costs of recruitment and training.

No reductions are proposed to existing base budget reserve investments; we will have an opportunity to begin increasing the base budget contribution to reserves as we move out of the pandemic and more revenue begins to come into the city.

No reductions are proposed to staffing levels, and there is support for increased staff for identified priorities, while options are provided for appropriate phase in of the funding for these additional positions.

We also know we need to increase staffing levels across a range of services to match service delivery to increased demand, in part based on population growth. 31 new positions are proposed in the 2022 budget, 15 of which are fee funded with no impact on the tax base (see Nov. 3 CSSRA budget presentation Slide #22). We need to protect these investments, and also have an opportunity to phase these in via a combination of funding models (one time, base, gapping) to retain our targets while smoothing out the financial costs over a longer period of time.

Additionally, the five year Designing and Evolving the Organization plan is currently being updated to include resource rationalization and process improvement, that will provide a better idea of staffing resources needed going forward. The projected additional staff of 9 for 2023 will be reviewed in this context. As such, we can reasonably phase in the known costs as we wait for this work to be completed.

No changes are proposed to enhanced services, including the Free Transit for Seniors program, new Community Hub at the Orchard, investment in maintenance for recreation assets, and more.

Outcome Sought:

In conclusion this year's proposed budget, and the suggested amendments, aim to maintain an appropriate balance between affordability, service levels and financial sustainability taking into consideration public feedback, addressing the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, and taking steps towards our long-term strategic goals for service delivery and organizational design that can be accommodated this year.

Vision to Focus Alignment:

(check those that apply)

- ☐ Increase economic prosperity and community responsive city growth
- ☐ Improve integrated city mobility
- ☒ Support sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment
- ☒ Building more citizen engagement, community health and culture
- ☒ Deliver customer centric services with a focus on efficiency and technology transformation

Motion Seconded by: as required
Share with Senior Staff ☐

Approved as per form by the City Clerk,

Reviewed by the City Manager - In accordance with the Code of Good Governance, Council-Staff Relations Policy and an assessment of the internal capacity within the City to complete the work based on a specific target date (quarter/year).

Comments:

City Clerk: none

City Manager: none