



City of Hamilton

GENERAL ISSUES COMMITTEE (BUDGET) REVISED

Meeting #: 23-029
Date: November 6, 2023
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Location: Council Chambers
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West

Angela McRae, Legislative Coordinator (905) 546-2424 ext. 5987

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From: Mike Chiarelli

Sent: Monday, October 30, 2023 9:21 PM

To: Office of the Mayor <Officeofthe.Mayor@hamilton.ca>; Danko, John-Paul <John-Paul.Danko@hamilton.ca>; Clark, Brad <Brad.Clark@hamilton.ca>

Subject: Budget Deliberation Input for 2024

Greetings:

Here is my submission for consideration in the next budget deliberations:

Property taxes in Hamilton are significantly higher than many of our surrounding communities and the provincial average (according to Zoocasa and Realtors.com). Out of the 32 communities (1 representing lowest property taxes, 16 the median, and 32 the highest), Hamilton ranked 22 out of 32, well above the provincial median.

Consider that:

Property tax increases during the past decade exceeded inflation most years with the exception of the past year.

Property taxes are regressive in nature, hurting people on fixed incomes, seniors, and retirees who have spent a lifetime paying for their homes and now living on lower incomes. (this is a growing demographic – aging baby boomer/retiring on lower income) - the real effect being a deterioration of quality of life after years of sacrifice and hard work!

Recent annual inflation rate was 3.3.% as of July 2023 and 4% of August 2023 (thank you carbon tax).

Bank of Canada is working toward an annual 2 % inflation target.

Growth in household income (before taxes) at approximately 4 %.

Average Household income in Hamilton is approximately \$108 000 (2020 Stats Canada) before taxes and approximately \$70 000 after taxes. Average income is around \$60 000.

An increasing amount of disposable income is going towards property taxes and municipal fees thus lowering the quality of living and putting additional financial strains on many households.

In other words, property tax increases exceed average income gains, and for many families (like retirees, seniors and those whose income are not keeping pace) this is placing greater financial hardship to make ends meet.

Tax levels across the city of Hamilton are inequitable - with homes in ward 8 for example paying significantly higher annual property taxes than other parts of the city for similar homes & property values.

When compared to friends in Burlington, Oakville, Milton, & Mississauga - I pay between \$1000 and \$2000 more per annum in property taxes for a home 500 to 1000 square feet smaller and for a much lower market value. The same holds true in comparison to friends/relatives in Kitchener/Cambridge/Guelph and parts of Brantford & Haldimand/Norfolk.

Despite the above, this city has essentially ignored ratepayers, the impact of decisions on ratepayers, and continues to spend beyond our means. The road to hell is paved with good intentions, but a modicum of fiscal responsibility and relief to taxpayers is well past due!

Furthermore, the city has done little to curb spending - non essential spending, nor to find efficiencies, to set service levels commensurate with demand (in all areas). When the City of Toronto and cities in Halton, Peel, feel a budget crunch, they are quick to lobby the provincial government & often cut services or lay off staff temporarily -- placing the blame squarely on provincial downloading or cutbacks. These cities are reluctant to impose the burden on their ratepayers, and only do so with great hesitation and as a last resort.

But in Hamilton, it's spend and tax --- then repeat, with virtually no regard to the impact on average families and ratepayers. It's got to stop!! It's all about setting priorities and then budgeting accordingly. Not everything can be done & less essential services have to be paused, cut or eliminated until appropriate funding (not tax revenue) can be found. Also, once a budget is set, no new spending should be permitted unless commensurate savings elsewhere are found. Finally, council and department heads should spend time rigorously reviewing what items to cut, reduce or pause every year to help provide relief to ratepayers. Council needs to ask - do we really need to spend in a certain area or can it wait or be scaled back ? other than specific emergency type services, snow removal, waste collection and major infrastructure repair --the answer is no. And for these areas, reasonable metrics ought to be established.

One example that illustrates my point -- let's take a look at public transit ---(just one area where prudent management would see reduced costs to ratepayers) --

According to a recent report from the Toronto Region Board of Trade the following metrics are interesting to note:

The document reports that only 47 per cent of public transit operating costs in Hamilton are recouped by fares. In comparison, 66 per cent of transit operating costs in Toronto

are covered by fares. In my opinion, both transit services are relatively robust for communities of their size.

And, although service in Hamilton has experienced 17.18 per cent growth between 2010 and 2019, ridership reportedly decreased by 7.87 per cent in that same time frame.

The above points to questionable planning and decisions over the past decade, much to the detriment of ratepayers.

I share this with you as just one example of taxpayers bearing a higher burden than necessary & an area of spending that should be closely investigated to balance demand with the interests of taxpayers.

Tip of the iceberg!

Conclusion and facts:

- property taxes in Hamilton are much higher than most cities in Ontario
- property tax increases have exceeded inflation most years in the past decade
- property tax increases have outstripped average gains in income
- property tax hikes are regressive, make home ownership less affordable & more costly & unfair to a growing segment of the population
- cost of living and affordability is the quintessential issue facing most families - hear the people please!! not the squeaky wheel!
- greater effort must be made to limit tax hikes to below the lesser of the rate of inflation or average gains in income in this city
- impact on ratepayers need priority consideration in all budget deliberations & a true effort to curb spending must be part of the process.

thank you

Michael Chiarelli

Ward 8

From: sebastian valero
Sent: Thursday, November 2, 2023 12:53 PM
To: McRae, Angela <Angela.McRae@hamilton.ca>
Subject: Question Budget Meeting 2024

Good afternoon Angela,

This is the question I would like to ask please.

In what percentage is the tax increase proposed for 2024 being affected by the increase in refugees and homeless people coming into Hamilton. In other words, what percentage of the tax increase is being used to support non-taxpaying people.

Thank you

Sebastián Valero

From: Peter Meyer

Sent: Thursday, November 2, 2023 7:39 PM

To: McRae, Angela <Angela.McRae@hamilton.ca>; Jackson, Tom <Tom.Jackson@hamilton.ca>; Horwath, Andrea <Andrea.Horwath@hamilton.ca>

Subject: Written Submission - General Issues Committee - Budget Process

Dear Angela,

I would like to make the following submission to the General Issues Committee as the budget process begins on Monday Nov 6. I would hope and expect that this submission would carry the same weight as an in-person submission and for this reason I'm also copying my councilor who I hope will consider it when discussions begin, and our mayor.

There has been a number floated by city staff of a 2024 tax increase of 14%. While I suspect that this is pure nonsense and is only being presented to make a lesser, still excessive increase seem palatable. If not, then there needs to be some serious discussion with the staff who came up with this number -ie - tell them to be realistic in the proposals as this number is not close to that. Better yet, start the process by telling them the increase will not be above a certain value and go from there.

I've always been of the opinion that increases should not be more than the current rate of inflation. This number is reflective of what the taxpayer can afford and so is a justifiable number. Although retirees, who are on a fixed income would disagree,

But my main point is that it's about time council move to a budgeting process similar to that found in the private sector. That is, you don't tell your customers how much you're going to increase the cost of your product. You decide how much they can afford to pay and figure out how to run your business with that amount of an increase over last year's revenue. In the case of the city, pick a reasonable number that should not be more that 5%, hopefully less. Decide how to allocate that increase to the respective departments based on priority and it's their job to manage their budgets based on that amount. YOU NEVER ASK THEM WHAT THEY NEED, it's always an excessive amount. And if they have to cut staff, expenses, services, that's reality.

It's also about time to reduce funds to some of our [REDACTED], such as the police force. I'm not a " defund the police" person, but year after year they get whatever they ask for. Out of fear for consequences. I believe a 1 year freeze of the police budget is in order this year. Again it's up to the police administration to prioritize and allocate funds where they're most needed and I believe they can do that without affecting public safety.

But stop the nonsense that council needs to make all their departments happy. If they're all happy with their budget increase, you're doing something wrong. For once make affordability for the taxpayer the top priority.

Thanks You
Peter Meyer

HAMILTON HOME

November 3, 2023

SENT VIA EMAIL: clerk@hamilton.ca

General Issues Committee
City Hall
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5

Subject: \$31M for HSIR's Housing Initiatives in the 2024 Budget

Dear Members of Council,

We are writing to encourage Council to allocate dedicated affordable housing investments to a municipal contribution fund through the 2024 Budget Process. As per the Housing Sustainability and Investment Roadmap (HSIR) recommendations, the \$31M commitment to the HSIR will become the catalyst for significant investments by our community housing sector, leveraging investments by senior levels of government.

Hamilton is Home members remain committed to providing housing stability for Hamiltonians. Our goal is to functionally eliminate the Access to Housing waitlist, building on our capacity to develop housing across the affordability spectrum from supportive housing to affordable home ownership. We are committed to sharing resources, innovative knowledge, and experiences. **We are poised to build 1,000 supportive and affordable units immediately, with thousands more in the coming years.**

Hamilton's 47,000-unit housing pledge requires us to launch construction on 90 homes/week. To do this, we need to align all local resources in a co-operative effort. This \$31M fund will help the City to meet its affordable and supportive housing goals by:

- Creating year-over-year predictability in opportunities to access capital funding;
- Encouraging alignment with HSIR's goals and the housing needs of the City's population;
- Maximizing CMHC Co-investment Fund contributions by having a municipal pre-commitment;
- Enabling community housing developers to pursue shovel-ready status on more projects, with the confidence of being able to attract CMHC funding; and,
- Leveraging significant donations and private investments.

Without this municipal commitment, our sector is locked in neutral; in 2023 there were no CMHC Co-Investment commitments made to Hamilton projects, in part, because there was no pre-committed City funding. This means, housing starts have stalled, with projects further impacted by economic forces such as inflation and availability of trades. We cannot move forward as a sector without the City as a partner.

HAMILTON HOME

A formalized, funded commitment to the HSIR demonstrates Hamilton's strategic intent to build affordable homes. It is a strategic way to communicate to other levels of government that the City of Hamilton has solutions-based leadership. Bold, upstream investments like this one will move all of us closer to our goals and enable shovel-ready projects at a faster pace.

We reiterate that Hamilton is Home is poised to move quickly - with the City's support - to meet Hamilton's affordable and supportive housing goals for the near future and coming years.

Sincerely,



Graham Cubitt
Chair, Hamilton is Home Coalition
graham@indwell.ca
905-546-7348 (cell)
[905-529-0454](tel:905-529-0454) (office)

1430 Main Street East
Hamilton, ON L8K 1C3

Encl: Hamilton is Home Supportive Housing Project Card
Hamilton is Home Affordable Housing Project Card

Achieving HSIR Targets for Supportive Housing

Hamilton's new Housing Sustainability and Investment Roadmap (HSIR) Pillar 4 sets an immediate 200-unit target for creating new supportive housing specifically targeting people leaving shelters and encampments. Hamilton is Home partners have identified sites we are able to develop towards meeting this goal, with 400+ units in total. Construction can begin within 30 days, with occupancies starting within 15 months.

We need collaborative support from Hamilton to secure Capital and Operating funding requirements for each project. This alignment can achieve the best possible and most sustained systemic impacts towards addressing the homelessness crisis.

Immediate impacts and budgets:

- 418 new supportive units available
- integrated health supports
- \$193M capital funding total
- \$23.4M annual operating funding*



*includes all projects on reverse plus \$3.1M for 35 Arkeldun



2023 opportunities to achieve 400+ supportive homes in Hamilton

<p>1067 Barton St E YWCA 90 units, ATH women, post-shelter</p>	<p>204 Gage Ave N Sacajawea 40 units, BNL Indigenous-focus</p>	<p>Acorn Flats Indwell 23 units, ATH families</p>	<p>Location Pending Indwell 18 units, BNL post-encampment</p>
<p>\$40.1M Capital \$4M Operating</p>	<p>\$15.1M Capital \$1.7M Operating</p>	<p>\$11M Capital \$420k Operating</p>	<p>\$6.5M Capital \$1.1M Operating</p>
<p>120 Wentworth St N Indwell 45 units, BNL aging, health</p>	<p>King Street East YWCA + Partner 10 units, ATH women fleeing violence</p>	<p>174 Ottawa St N Indwell 32 units, ATH Indigenous-focus</p>	<p>Mary Street Good Shepherd 155 units, BNL post-shelter</p>
<p>\$21M Capital \$1.2M Operating</p>	<p>\$5.2M Capital \$120k Operating</p>	<p>\$10M Capital \$260k Operating</p>	<p>\$77.5M Capital \$4.6M Operating</p>
<p>2024-2025 construction starts</p>	<p>Clarence Ave Good Shepherd 75 units, women \$41M c./ \$3M o.</p>	<p>Fennell Ave Indwell 41 units, BNL \$18M c./ \$1.7M o.</p>	<p>Park Street Good Shepherd 50 units, youth \$27M c./ \$2M o.</p>
	<p>Ottawa Street Good Shepherd 75 units, families \$41M c./ \$3M o.</p>		



HAMILTON IS HOME

Immediate, permanent affordable housing for Hamilton

The first pillar of Hamilton's Housing and Sustainability Investment Roadmap identifies a target of 350 new affordable rental homes to be built every year. Council's support will empower the Hamilton is Home coalition to unlock federal and provincial capital investments, and start construction on 612 new apartments within 18 months.



Top: 60 Caledon; Middle: 257 King William; Bottom: 1540 Upper Wentworth

Project / Property	Affordable Homes	1500m to A- Line or	Ownership	Construction Start	Project Cost
Construction-ready within 18 months					
3 North Park Ave.	2		Habitat for Humanity	Q3 2023	\$480,000
1540 Upper Wentworth St.	126		Hamilton East Kiwanis Homes	Q1 2024	\$58,000,000
60 Caledon Ave.	260	Yes	Hamilton East Kiwanis Homes, Victoria Park Community Homes	Q3 2024	\$150,000,000
1362-1374 Barton St. E	60		Hamilton East Kiwanis Homes	Q3 2024	\$28,000,000
450 James St. N	164	Yes	CityHousing Hamilton, Indwell	Q1 2025	\$80,700,000
SUBTOTAL	612	424 units			\$317,180,000
Beyond 18 months. All costs tentative. More projects subject to be added to this list					
Biindigen Well Being	100	Yes	OAHS	Q2 2027	\$45,000,000
58 Macassa Phase 1	44		CityHousing Hamilton	TBD	\$26,400,000
58 Macassa Phase 2	50		CityHousing Hamilton	TBD	\$30,000,000
Gage	90	Yes	HRIFC, OAHS	TBD	\$40,500,000
Kenilworth	85	Yes	OAHS	TBD	\$38,250,000
TOTAL	981	709 units			\$497,330,000


HAMILTON HOME

Submitted on Wed, 11/01/2023 - 08:13

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Brenda Duke

Reason(s) for delegation request
To speak about maintenance for community gardens on public lands to be considered in the 2024 budget.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
Yes

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Wed, 11/01/2023 - 11:50

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Ted Hildebrandt
Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton
350 King Street East
Suite 104
Hamilton, ON. L8N 3Y3
thildebrandt@sprchamilton.ca
905-522-1148

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
November 6 - pre-budget hearings to discuss Hamilton's new Living Wage calculation, together with Tom Cooper, Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

Submitted on Wed, 11/01/2023 - 14:51

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Erin Davis

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
budget concerns and public consultation

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Thu, 11/02/2023 - 08:01

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Christine Neale
ACORN

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
Wish to speak regarding budget

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

Submitted on Thu, 11/02/2023 - 08:52

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
Virtually

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
Yes

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Brandi Lowry

Reason(s) for delegation request

I will be submitting considerations and requests via public delegation for the upcoming budget. There is a question in this form about whether this is a formal presentation. It is a recorded presentation (I'm not sure if that makes it formal or not).

Thank you,
Brandi Lowry

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
Yes

Submitted on Thu, 11/02/2023 - 10:10

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Karl Andrus
Hamilton Community Benefits Network

karlandrus@hcbn.ca

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
To speak about the 2024 budget

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Thu, 11/02/2023 - 10:38

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
Virtually

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
Yes

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Marnie Schurter
ACORN (Hamilton Mountain Chapter)

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
Pre recorded delegation for November 6th public delegation day.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Wed, 11/01/2023 - 21:41

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Nikita Mahood

Reason(s) for delegation request
2024 Budget and Sustainable development

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Fri, 11/03/2023 - 09:59

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Beverley Wagar
Crown Point Garden Club

Preferred Pronoun
she/her

Reason(s) for delegation request
budget support for maintenance of existing pollinator gardens in Hamilton

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
Yes

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No

Submitted on Fri, 11/03/2023 - 11:08

Submitted by: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Committee Requested

Committee
General Issues Committee

Will you be delegating in-person or virtually?
In-person

Will you be delegating via a pre-recorded video?
No

Requestor Information

Requestor Information
Ian Borsuk
Environment Hamilton
51 Stuart Street
Hamilton, Ontario. L8L1B5
iborsuk@environmenthamilton.org
9055490900

Preferred Pronoun
he/him

Reason(s) for delegation request
I am seeking to comment on the 2024 budget, priorities, and make suggestions as to how the City can consult with the public more fulsomely.

Will you be requesting funds from the City?
No

Will you be submitting a formal presentation?
No