

Highlights of the Approved Adjustments to 2013-2014 Business Plans and Budgets

City Council approved adjustments to the 2013-2014 business plans, operating and capital budgets on 2012 November 28.

Thanks to everyone who provided feedback on the proposed adjustments. Council's budget deliberations provided a valuable opportunity to engage the public in an ongoing dialogue with Council about the kind of City we live in, what kinds of things we want to invest in and how we want to pay for those programs and services.

Council's decisions bring the municipal residential property tax rate increase down to 5.5% from 5.7% in 2013. This amounts to a 2013 increase in the municipal residential property tax rate of approximately \$76.00 per year or \$6.35 per month for the typical household in Calgary.

Key highlights of the approved adjustments:

- Reduce Calgary Police Services budget by \$4 million to align with current operating results.
- Double the number of low income Calgarians who will be eligible for a subsidized Transit pass by 2014.
- Increase the annual rate for a Seniors' transit pass to \$95 per year (effective July 1, 2013) - available to all residents of Calgary who are 65 years and older.
[Seniors can also apply for a reduced rate seniors' pass. That cost is \$15 per year. Eligible seniors must meet minimum income requirements and must provide proof of income when they apply. This rate remains the same for 2013-2014 passes].
- Improve transit service on various routes by adding service hours, enhancing LRT reliability by adding more vehicle service personnel and improving customer service support by adding priority front line staff.
- Increase the city's night time taxi supply and find alternate taxi fleet management solutions through the addition of related resources in Development & Building Approvals business unit.
- Continue the Multi-Agency School Team and Youth-At-Risk Development programs delivered in partnership with the Calgary Police Service.
- \$2.25 million per year for Access Calgary.
- \$2.1 million per year for the new Emergency Operations Centre in Rotary Park to strengthen The City's capacity to provide disaster planning and preparedness.
- \$183 thousand in 2013 increasing to \$1.2 million for 2014 to accommodate daily operations and ongoing maintenance of the Airport Tunnel.

- \$986 thousand to support long-term sustainment, legislated compliance and reporting requirements associated with the Tangible Capital Asset Program.
- \$822 thousand in 2013 and \$822 thousand in 2014 to respond to increased call volumes to the Public Safety Communications call centre.
- \$810 thousand for external consulting fees and internal staff resources to conduct zero-based service reviews on City business units.
- \$450 thousand for the establishment of a new permanent growth management unit within Planning, Development and Assessment.
- \$240 thousand to support work related to the Council-approved Municipal Complex Bylaw for effective and efficient management of the Municipal Complex for all users.
- \$213 thousand to enhance Crisis Communications support in response to the increase in crisis activations in the past year, and to improve communications between Aldermen and their community residents.
- Eliminate \$200 thousand annual contribution from Golf Course Operations to general revenues to support a mandate change from "fully self-sufficient" to "tax-supported."

Council's approved adjustments include a number of capital expenditures:

- \$15.0 million for the new East Macleod Emergency Response Station to serve the communities of Walden, Legacy and Chaparral with funding to be transferred from the Municipal Sustainability Initiative (MSI) and Community & Recreation Levy (CRL) achieved from savings from other station (re)developments.
- \$12.8 million funding from the Real Estate Services Reserve for brownfield development in Lincoln Park.
- \$750 thousand grant funding from the federal government's Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund to support various pool accessibility and arena change room upgrades managed by Recreation.

Council also allocated \$10.2 million of tax space, aligned to the following key priorities:

- \$2 million for sidewalks, curbs, and gutters.
- \$2 million to improve transit reliability.
- \$2 million to pursue strategies to reduce transportation congestion.
- \$2 million for lifecycle maintenance of existing corporate buildings.
- \$2.2 million for enhancing community facilities.

Overall the economy and social outlook for Calgary have remained stable and there have been no major changes since the 2012-2014 Business Plans & Budget was approved by Council. As a result of this stability, Council has approved adjustments to the most critical areas so as not to exceed the previously approved tax rate.

The adjustments process has allowed The City to meet the demands of growth while balancing affordability with resources needed to deliver front-line services, which remains a challenge for The City. The demand for City services continues to rise at the same time as The City experiences increasing costs for materials and equipment, and increased competitiveness in the labour market.

The City will continue to monitor current economic events and their impact on municipal services. The flexibility built in to the three-year approach allows Council to make necessary changes from a position of knowing what is critical and adjusting the business plans and budgets to retain a longer-term perspective.