

TO:	CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE ON OCTOBER 18, 2016
FROM:	MARTIN HAYWARD MANAGING DIRECTOR, CORPORATE SERVICES AND CITY TREASURER, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
SUBJECT:	2016-2019 TAX CALCULATOR WEB TOOL

RECOMMENDATION

That, on the recommendation of the Managing Director, Corporate Services and City Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer, the following report **BE RECEIVED** for information regarding the launch of the City of London's 2016-2019 online tax calculator tool, it being noted that a link to the website will be included in the May 2017 tax bill mail-out.

PREVIOUS REPORTS

None

LINKAGE TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The tax calculator web tool advances the following areas of focus and objectives of Council's Strategic Plan:

- Leading in Public Service
 1. Open, accountable and responsive government
 - A) Make community engagement a priority. Make the public a partner who has access to our information and helps make decisions with Council.
 - B) Improve the City of London website so people can find what they want, when they want it and how they want it.
 4. Collaborative, engaged leadership
 - B) Maximize openness and transparency in Council decision making.
 5. Excellent service delivery
 - A) Continue to effectively and efficiently deliver nearly 100 services that Londoners rely on every day.

DISCUSSION

Background

Corporate Services Committee, at its session held on November 3, 2015, resolved that the following actions be taken with respect to the creation of a web-based tax calculator that displays how individual tax payments are allocated to City Service Areas throughout the Multi-year Budget period:

That the enquiry by Councillor V. Ridley regarding the content of individual tax bills, as it relates to the identification of where the property owner's tax dollars are directed, BE REFERRED to the Managing Director, Corporate Services and City Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer to develop a City of London webpage whereby a taxpayer can input the property tax paid for their property in order to see how their tax payments are allocated to various City service categories, and that the tax bill include the URL to the City webpage containing this information.

In early 2016, Finance staff researched and examined online tax calculators used by other Ontario municipalities. Following this best practices review, Staff worked with Open North, a vendor specializing in online budget technology, to create the City of London's 2016-2019 Online Tax Calculator.

The online tax calculator was officially uploaded to the website for public use as a "soft launch" on July 21, 2016. The tax calculator is accessible through desktop technology as well as mobile devices. Each year the tax calculator will be updated to better reflect the current year position, future financial forecasts and any applicable Multi-Year Budget Update adjustments.

The tool is located on the Budget/Business Planning page of the City of London Website: <https://www.london.ca/city-hall/budget-business/budget/Pages/Property-Tax-Calculator.aspx>.

Using the Tax Calculator Tool

To begin using the tool, the participant is asked to choose a property type and enter a property assessment value. The tax calculator then displays an estimated breakdown of the individual's municipal property tax bill. The tool utilizes a combination of visual graphs and a detailed table to demonstrate the various service area allocations across the Multi-year Budget period (see **Appendix A for a sample of the webpage**).

The tax calculator uses two charts to demonstrate an estimated breakdown of the user's tax bill. The first is a pie chart that displays the split between the current years' municipal and education portions of the tax bill. The second chart is a bar graph that breaks down the user's municipal tax allocations across each service area for the current year. Following the two charts is a detailed table that outlines the user's individual municipal tax total and the allocations across each service area for the multi-year period.

The tax calculator is an interactive, informative and educational tool which provides an understanding of how the Multi-year Budget uses the annual tax levy to fund the services provided to Londoners. This will provide the user with information on how their individual tax dollars support city services.

In May of 2017, the final tax bill mail out will include a brochure with the link of the tax calculator website.

CONCLUSION

The City of London’s Tax Calculator is designed to inform and educate Londoners on the allocations of the annual tax levy. The calculator displays these allocations by service area throughout the Multi-year Budget period. This is an innovative and interactive tool that demonstrates how the City of London funds an excellent level of service.

This tool links to areas of focus in the Strategic Plan and works to strengthen our public engagement efforts. Engagement and education is an on-going process supported by the creation and implementation of platforms like the tax calculator.

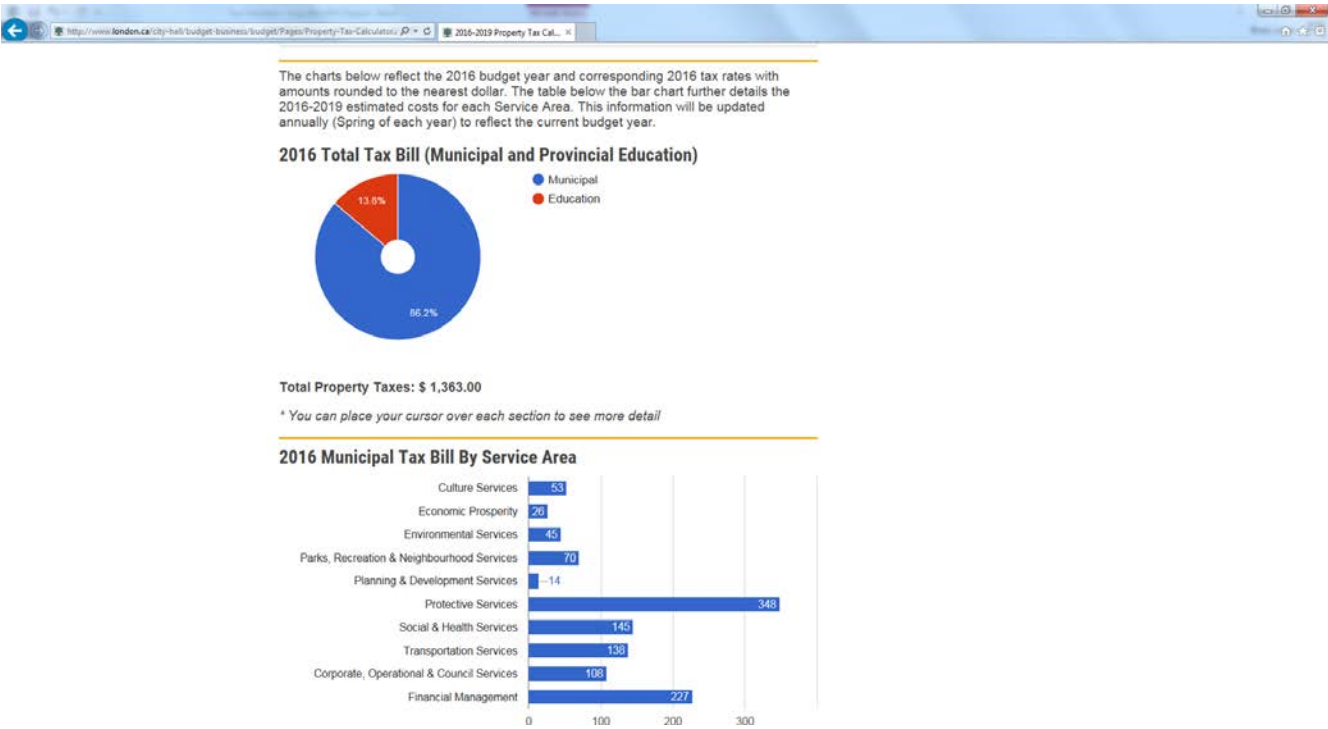
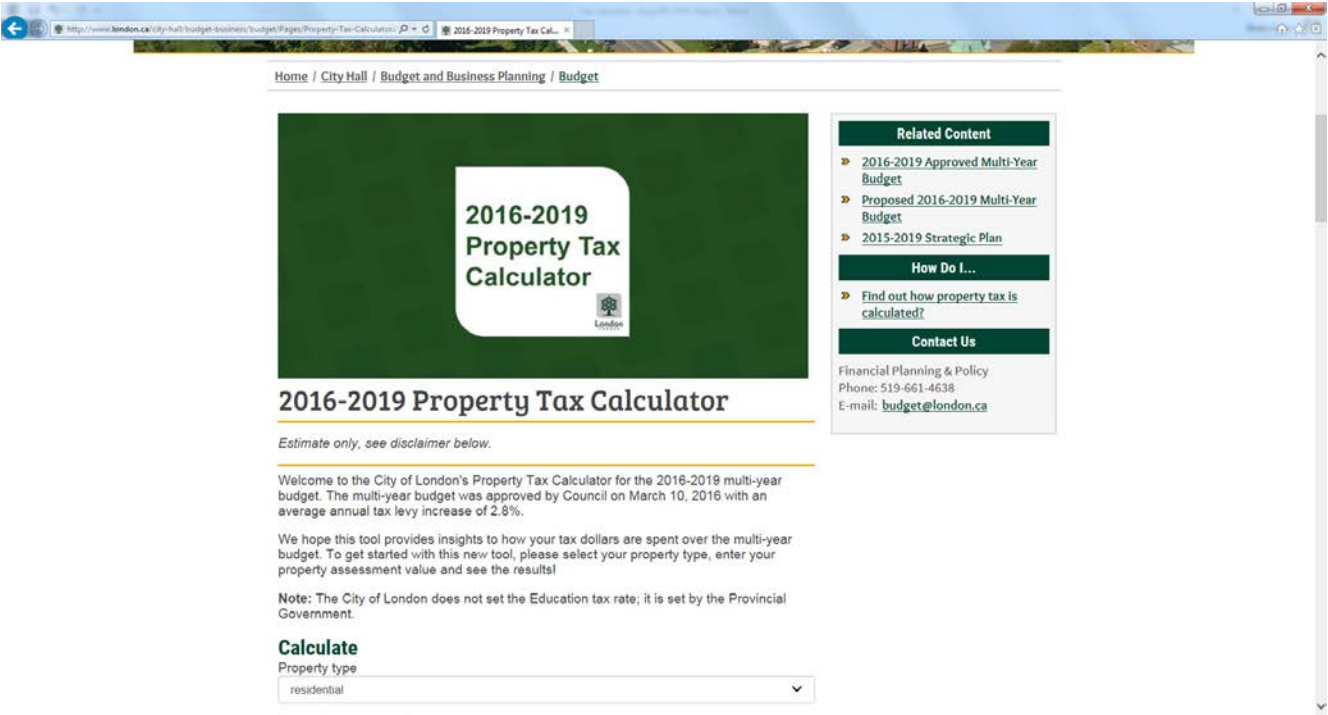
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SUBMITTED BY:	RECOMMENDED BY:
Larry Palarchio, Director of Financial Planning & Policy	Martin Hayward, Managing Director, Corporate Services and City Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer

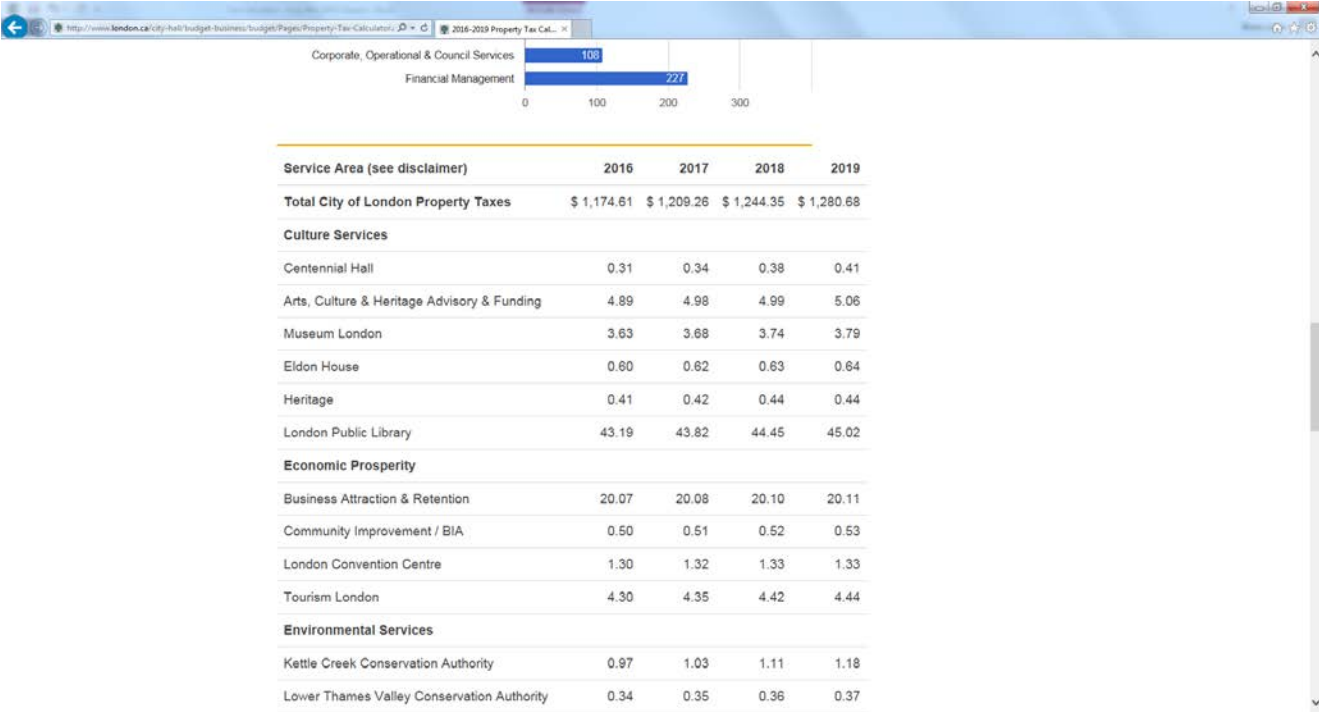
20 September 2016

- Cc: Anna Lisa Barbon, Director, Financial Services
Jim Logan, Division Manager, Taxation and Revenue
Jon-Paul McGonigle, Manager, Technology Services
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APPENDIX A

Screen shots of the City of London Property Tax Calculator





Corporate Security & Emergency management	0.00	0.00	4.00	4.00
Fire Services	124.10	125.18	126.27	126.91
London Police Services	213.30	215.88	219.67	221.89
Social & Health Services				
Social Housing	27.40	27.11	26.26	26.11
London & Middlesex Housing Corporation	19.92	20.87	21.71	22.64
Long Term Care	11.11	11.27	11.42	11.60
Land Ambulance	29.28	31.93	32.63	33.12
Middlesex-London Health Unit	13.50	13.50	13.50	13.50
Social & Community Support Services	43.75	39.53	35.03	35.92
Transportation Services				
Parking	-7.37	-7.21	-7.04	-6.91
Public Transit (LTC)	61.66	62.48	64.16	65.23
Roadways	83.64	85.09	86.43	88.15
Corporate, Operational & Council Services				
Corporate Services	95.76	99.15	101.22	102.48
Corporate Planning & Administration	3.66	1.54	-1.61	-3.82
Council Services	7.41	7.44	7.46	7.48
Public Support Services	0.70	2.17	2.41	2.44
Financial Management				
Corporate Financing	227.40	249.74	277.39	303.75