

TO:	CHAIR AND MEMBERS STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING ON JANUARY 24, 2013
FROM:	LARRY PALARCHIO DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL PLANNING AND POLICY
SUBJECT:	2013 BUDGET – PUBLIC INPUT

RECOMMENDATIONS

That, on the recommendation of the Director, Financial Planning and Policy, this report **BE RECEIVED** for information.

BACKGROUND

This report captures public input regarding the 2013 Budget from December 4, 2012 to January 15, 2013, including feedback received at the 'Build a Budget' Workshops held on January 12, 2013.

'Build a Budget' Workshops (January 12, 2013)

For several years, the primary community engagement activity undertaken by the City of London was a community outreach program where members of Council and Civic Administration attended various shopping malls throughout the city to hear public input and answer questions regarding the Budget. Although this community outreach program was used in the past, community engagement needs and expectations have changed. As a result, Civic Administration replaced the shopping mall consultations with two 2-hour "Build a Budget Workshops".

The idea of the "Build a Budget Workshop" was to invite Londoners to explore the 2013 Budget in an environment where they could not only learn the information they need and want to know about the Budget, but where they could have the opportunity to ask questions and provide thoughtful and meaningful input. The workshop setting also provided a unique environment for bringing community members together for multi-party discussions and mutual education (two-way consultative sessions).

In total, 147 members of the community attended the "Build a Budget Workshops" (75 at the morning session; 72 at the afternoon session), as well as members of Council, the Senior Leadership Team and other City staff.

Feedback regarding the Workshops was extremely positive. Participants were asked to complete a feedback form and of the 47 forms that were returned, 42 (89%) individuals indicated that they found the session useful; 42 (89%) felt they had the opportunity to learn about the Budget and give meaningful feedback; and 47 (100%) stated that the City should do more sessions like this. Examples of comments included:

"Thank you to city officials and council for having the courage and creativity."

"I think this is wonderful for taxpayers to understand that they indeed have a say more often than once every four years."

"Great to see the city proactively engaging the community in such a hands on way. Thank you!"

Public input gathered at the Workshops is attached as **Appendix A** and is grouped by station (Comment Corner; Priority Wall; Ask the City Treasurer, Your Voice, Budget Basics; Visible Tweets). Information collected at the Prosperity Plan station will be brought forward at the

meeting of the Investment and Economic Prosperity Committee on January 28, 2013.

A full post mortem on the Budget Workshops will be conducted in the coming months with members of Council and staff.

Other Feedback (December 4, 2012 – January 15, 2013)

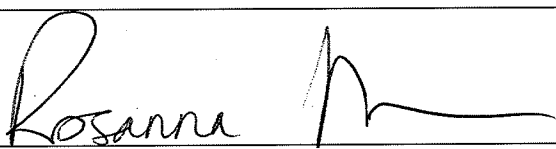
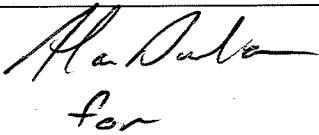
As noted above, Civic Administration has been capturing feedback and comments related to the 2013 Budget through a variety of channels. E-mail inquiries and input were received through Budget@london.ca on the City's website and social media input was collected through Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/LondonCanada> and Twitter at @CityofLdnOnt or #LdnBudget13. Financial Planning & Policy has also been collecting feedback received by phone at (519) 661-4638.

Appendix B (attached) captures feedback received through these channels and categorizes it by the following service areas: Culture, Protective Services, Social & Health Services, Transportation Services, Corporate, Operational & Council Services and Budget 2013/General. In total 69 individual pieces of information were received during this time period. Additionally, one letter was received and is attached as **Appendix C**.

A further report on public input will be provided at the Strategic Priorities and Policies Committee on February 7, 2013.

Acknowledgements

This report was prepared with assistance from Shannon Byron, Cathy Cucksey, Alan Dunbar, Elaine Gamble, Meagan Geudens, Laurie Green, Jennifer Lajoie, Rob Paynter, Annette Ripepi, Jason Senese.

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APPENDIX A

FEEDBACK CAPTURED AT 'BUILD A BUDGET' WORKSHOPS (January 12, 2013)

Comment Corner

Designated space where people could write down their thoughts about the budget and post them. Responses have been grouped in the following categories: Culture; Economic Prosperity; Environmental Services; Parks, Recreation & Neighbourhood Services; Planning & Development Services; Social & Health Services; Transportation Services; Corporate, Operational & Council Services; Budget 2013; General

Culture

- Make one of the downtown churches in to a performing arts centre instead of building a new centre (Calgary did this with Calgary Opera House made from United Church that closed) Downtown London churches are already being used by Orchestra London.
- Don't starve projects that attract people to London. Heritage attracts external money to London. London Celebrates Canada is building momentum for Canada's 150 birthday and will attract nearly \$5 for every \$1 that the city spends
- Heritage projects cannot be neglected only to fix at a later date. Eldon House is London's oldest home and nearly 180 years old. It has received tremendous support recently but the work has just begun
- Promote music and cultural events for sake of tourism \$\$\$ to London
- Libraries are essential
- Additional \$ for libraries as essential site of community life
- Too many library branches in London-Thunder Bay pop. 120k has only 2 or 3 branches. Chatham pop. 43,000 closed one branch and now has only one. Windsor has only 2 libraries – I think
- Try to improve the museum; other towns like Chatham, Ontario have excellent museums.
- Libraries are essential – you can raise my tax to keep services.
- Libraries (and improving the efficiency of London Transit) should be a priority

Economic Prosperity

- Make London attractive to investors – generate full time jobs to London to jumpstart the economy.
- More local business; encourage small business in neighbourhoods e.g. Local coffee shop, less Tim Horton's.
- Get back to basic economics i.e. Greater good for all citizens. Performing Arts, Orchestra London must use private funds.
- Corporations that have been attracted to set up here with incentives (lower corporate tax rates/water rates/etc.) than our surrounding competing cities), should be encouraged to give back financially to the community supporting our cultural (Orchestra/Theatre London) social (performing arts centre) Parks & Rec (we've created a beautiful industrial park out off [of] HWY 100/401). Remember London Life, Lawson & Jones, Canada Trust, 3M who used to be predominant supporters? Do we have someone from Economic Development soliciting London corporations for funding?
- Job opportunities for recent grads essential, too many educated and talented people are being forced to move because there is nothing for them here – this has severe long-term implications.
- We love the Normal School.
- Work with province for repurposing of community schools that are closing.
- Instead of presenting projects increasing economic prosperity, I would like to see and hear about project to help the marginalized, poor, people with health problems. Please focus on

people not business.

Environmental Services

- People shouldn't have to save their garbage waiting 13 days around holidays. Offer \$2 bag tags for anything over 3 bags - clean up our city.
- Green bin is the "right" thing and over time will save money
- 3% on environmental services is a shame – it is mostly for garbage not for protection of green space and clean air.

Parks, Recreation & Neighbourhood Services

- Let's revamp some city day camps to include more children with disabilities-need more than just 2 weeks of care for the summer.
- Why is there not more for families to do in London? Let's look at something like "Wonderland".
- Build strong neighbourhoods for a fraction of the cost of adding to the police force. With a strong neighbourhood police become redundant.

Planning & Development Services

- Bike lanes create economic growth
- Let developers pay for development
- No subsidies for developers
- Start a pie-development % compared to new development projects i.e. 10%
- A livable city that focuses on neighbourhoods
- Real bike paths
- No more urban sprawl
- Protect our urban forest i.e. save the emerald ash borer program
- No further urban sprawl
- Stop the sprawl! Get out of stinky 50's and 60's thinking! The Southwest Area Plan is bad. Look around - there are many existing serviced areas which are unused – use them.
- Fully cost urban sprawl. Existing development fees don't cover it
- Less developers gone wild, more development charges
- Less box stores, more small business
- Graded level parking lots pay a pittance in tax; a) charge them the same rate as a lot with a structure and/or b) ...encourage the building of rent-geared-to-income apartments, mixed use buildings, etc. The new slogan must be: "walk, roll, bike, transit." Discourage cars in the core area.
- Build up, not out.
- Focus on additional housing in the core (mixed housing) and associated services.
- Make walking, cycling and transit the priority. Cars last priority.
- Increase # of bike lanes.
- We need more bike lanes. Traffic is much too heavy to allow for bike commuting presently...and more people on bikes means less wear on our roads.
- More pedestrian shopping areas rather than roads near businesses-increase feet on the street-businesses will thrive.
- Walkable Dundas Street, similar to Stephen Avenue in Calgary.
- Something has to be done about the traffic (cars) – expressway? It is very dangerous trying to walk as a pedestrian, especially with the cars coming off the side streets, making right-hand turns, especially at rush hour. (Expressway needed?)
- Less urban sprawl, more focus on revitalizing existing infrastructure and maximizing \$.
- Get the hazard calming items off the roads i.e. speed bumps, areas that jut out into the roads – road rage developing!
- Increase traffic calming.
- Incorporate more roundabouts to allow traffic to flow and eliminate stop and go traffic.

Protective Services

- Police and firefighters deserve their pay
- On the current path, protective services will eventually consume 100% of our budget
- Enforce accessible parking violations (also a revenue generator)

Social & Health Services

- Any cut to social housing at the time of a multi-year wait list is a choice not to rehouse people experiencing homelessness.
- We need rents that reflect the reality of living on disability/Ontario Works and we want to live in the core of the city too!

Transportation Services

- How about we get transit working properly.
- Get feedback from the people that work in the industry and put it to use i.e. bus drivers - they are out there every day - some implementations to routes and scheduling should be more closely looked at. They are your voice from the people.
- Look into more transit priority as London is seriously lacking compared to other similar-sized cities in the region.
- More urban transit.
- Transit cannot be cut back without affecting factors such as employment % and cost of social services.
- Less cars, more and better mass transit.
- Cuts to transit service hours mean more vehicular traffic – no commuter in London wants more traffic.
- London housing can start clearing their own sidewalks of snow-they should not get priority over taxpayers
- Better traffic signal optimization, albeit sometimes difficult to achieve. This is a cost-effective way to optimize existing roadway capacity without significant capital cost.
- Major road infrastructure.
- Less cars more mass transit.
- Get into the parking business in downtown to a higher degree. ROI is huge - benefits Londoners by making it more affordable to come downtown.
- Buses: use vans for routes and times of day when there are few or no riders.
- (Libraries and) improving the efficiency of London Transit should be a priority.
- Bike paths: on Fanshawe Park Road and Wonderland Road that are actually on the road are too dangerous.

Corporate, Operational & Council Services

- Enforce all city receivables – take initiative
- Outsource collection of millions of \$s of receivables
- Hold any planned increase in # establishments that serve alcohol (as their #1 Function) to students.

Budget 2013

- Are we over focussed on 0% - basic maintenance and services completed as needed save \$ long term. Are cuts unfairly impacting some groups and neighbourhoods more than others? Is \$100 more in taxes per household not a reasonable cost to maintain services?
- 0% does not work
- Add money to the library budget
- Maintain services
- The proposed cut to AODA will prove to be a costly cut long term with \$550-\$100K daily fines for non-compliance. Accessibility fines will be more costly within 1 year than what will be saved in the cut.
- Flat tax rates don't make sense for cities, why do frozen 0% mayoral platforms? Where's your sense?

- Impact reports for service cuts are detailed-all council members need to read them.
- Cutting the green bin program and library hours makes London less attractive to live in. As a student it makes me less likely to stay after I graduate.
- Variables change and 0% isn't always realistic must continue to help 8% of unemployed who are struggling. Not cut back to keep 0% promise.

General

- Explain basic structure of boards and departments budgets – rather than in a % increase
- Get compensation under control
- Your biggest expense is employees - why are we not contracting more - bring assets down - less overhead?
- Define living wage job
- Ensure user fees provide a significant ROI – delete minimal ROI fees – to analyze include government salaries and overhead
- Housing being such a high expense for the city is criminal. What things can be done about getting these people working? Everyone who knows someone in housing should talk to them about getting a job if the person is able to work.
- If Western wanted to be downtown, they would've approached council - let this deal die - too much money.
- Move forward on brownfields development.
- Land value taxation.
- Find ways to better utilize some of facilities that we already have. Community use of schools for example on weekends vs increased user fees at recreation facilities that are run by city of London (if Central HS can do it why can't neighbourhood schools?) Families can barely afford current fees (eg. Cost for a family to access a pool on a heat advisory day good for one visit only)
- Crack down on wage theft
- Getting the food here sourced from a local business and no Coca-Cola beverages
- We need more freedom, justice, equity and stop on racism and prejudice
- The public interest matters.
- Rethink of debt-funded projects and ROI.
- Prioritize services for those who are struggling: housing, social services, library.
- Work to make #ldont's a world class city; a leader and not last to the game. E.g. library, bike lanes, curbside composting.
- Have photo radar and red light cameras so traffic will flow more smoothly.
- "Over 55": they shouldn't be given funds. The people providing services are only interested in making money and not interested in helping seniors.
- Less Farhi signs.
- Increase non-tax income - Farhi can teach you how.
- Stop monopoly of Farhi and Impark in downtown London.
- Full-time council members.
- Clear rules of conduct for mayor and council members.
- Require municipal candidates to complete a civics course in which their competency is tested in areas such as conduct, taxation and personal responsibilities.
- Mr. Henderson and his cabal of 8 do not represent my views.
- I don't care who is manipulating who between Council and services; it is us who get hurt.

Priority Wall

Participants were provided the opportunity to say what City services they saw as 'essential', 'nice to have' and 'not necessary'.

'Essential' Services

- Libraries (37 mentions)
- Transit (24 mentions)
- Affordable housing (20 mentions)
- Green spaces/trees (3 mentions)
- Heritage
- Bike lanes (8 mentions)
- Green bin (5 mentions)
- Vibrant downtown
- Ontario Works Covent Garden Market
- Heritage projects
- Community engagement projects
- Photo radar and red light cameras
- Police and Fire (7 mentions)
- Removal of wildlife from city
- Buses on Dundas Street
- Public health unit (2 mentions)
- Improved garbage/recycling system (2 mentions)
- Two tiered salary system for police
- Museums
- Living wage campaign (2 mentions)
- Aquatics (2 mentions)
- Make city better not bigger
- Emerald Ash borer program
- Parkland acquisition
- Continuous road repair instead of total reconstruction projects
- Sports
- Arts and entertainment centre
- Non-profit sector (YOU, WOTH ...)
- Downtown green spaces
- Snow control
- Land use planning
- Hold police costs in line
- Neighbourhood hubs
- More pedestrian friendly city
- Homeless support and shelters
- Mental health service (3 mentions)
- London Hydro
- Youth job creation (2 mentions)
- Development industry should pay all development costs

'Nice to Have' Services

- Performing arts centre (3 mentions)
- More ways to keep grads in London
- Sports
- Arts
- Parks
- Recreation
- City-wide green bin program that is financially sustainable (2 mentions)
- Bike paths (7 mentions)
- Support for heritage property owners
- Rail overpasses
- Grand theatre should "pay its own way"
- One purchasing department for City, Police, Fire, Education

'Not Necessary' Services

- LEDC/economic development (2 mentions)
- Over 55
- Subsidizing Budweiser Gardens
- Libraries
- Road widenings
- Golf (4 mentions)
- Veterans Memorial Parkway
- Development charge exemptions
- Make tourism department self-sustaining through memberships
- Western Fair
- Arenas
- Police should use less expensive staff to investigate break-ins
- Outside consultants
- Performing arts centre
- 0% tax increase
- See convention centre
- Culture

Ask the City Treasurer, Your Voice, Budget Basics

Feedback/questions received at these stations have been grouped into the following categories: Budget 2013; Development Charges; Economic Development; Reserves & Reserve Funds, Debt, Capital Levy; Protective Services; General.

Budget 2013

- Another 0% tax levy increase will not be sustainable.
- Trying to figure out how the city prioritizes. Nervous about prioritizing. Group of business cases, there is a group of "other", how do we get the impact of the decisions across?
- Services are based in the budget on 0% interest. If it is zero based, you have to evaluate what you are doing. You started at 0, then you stopped. You have already decided which areas get an increase. How do you assess what is needed?
- Not everything can be kept how it was last year, some things change, for example more homeless people. The libraries provide books, movies, for people who can't afford to go out and buy them. The library cuts will hurt these people, what about the social impacts of these cuts?
- Library - no Sunday service. To have a level playing field you need appropriate data. Some libraries aren't open on Sunday anyway.
- Can't do things the same way every year.
- Concerns about selling off money-making assets to make money in the short term. Shouldn't we be looking at ways to increase municipal revenues?
- It seems that it is zero at all costs. This is concerning. It should be something more at pace with inflation, but it has to balance out with cutting some fat. As a homeowner I don't mind if it is a reasonable increase but I want to know that my money is being used wisely. After the mandate of this council is done, once things are cut back so much, what stops them from jacking up the taxes when there is a new council? Seems like short-sited planning
- I am Grad student at Western - recent grads do not have jobs. Concern this budget leads to job cuts. Educated students want to stay here but have so much debt they are forced to leave.
- I don't mind a small increase in taxes. I get good value out of them.
- I am very comfortable with paying the taxes. I just want to make sure the City employees do a good analysis and make good decisions. It is the advice coming from staff that influences Council decisions
- I remember the 1990s when we hit zero. There were huge consequences. What is the cost of this? Have you looked at the future? I want to know what I am going to be paying down the road, and for what?
- You are asking for money because you are asking for new benefits and wages. From our perspective, the City employees already have extraordinary salaries and benefits. We cannot afford this.
- Based on the information we have, we will be good between 1% and 2%.
- I think it should be 0%.
- At least to inflation.
- With the economy, more people are using community services, so shouldn't taxes be higher to pay for this? Shouldn't cut services when we need them most.
- We should stop increases in salary, wages, and benefits. Employees spend all their time in training, on vacation, or leave of absences, public holidays. You don't even work full days, you only work 8 hours. How can you ask for more?
- Concern regarding social and health services and parks and recreation, what is the flow through effect to other areas of the budget when cuts are reductions are made?
- Transit routes - how will the cancellation of routes affect revenues of LTC would transit rates go up?
- Why [are you] looking at all the little parts of the budget? When you start cutting, you should be cutting the biggest portions.
- How does reducing transit align with the strategy with increasing economic prosperity?
- The amount of money associated with impacts not indicated in the details of the service cuts.
- Not in favour of reducing in social services.
- Short term service cuts - what will be the long-term effects on the budget and the community?

- Why would we renegotiate the London Hydro at lower rate why cash out of that note when we are earning 6%?
- Cuts are affecting the average citizen angers the resident because Police and Fire are not being asked to be reduced as much.
- How about selling Budweiser Gardens.
- When we cut services people are losing jobs, where will these people find new jobs?
- Increase of 2 to 3 % in property tax revenues - should be able to cover increased costs
- 0% - put services back that have been reduced or removed?
- Infrastructure issue with 0% - impact lifecycle renewal
- Consider closing down old arenas?
- Eliminate staff would eliminate the property tax revenues sources – legislated, increased fees to compensate for the costs increases
- User fees – covering costs? A lot of little fees with enormous administration fees – Impossible to fully recover
- 0% this and next year [concern that it will be] 8 to 10% in future
- 1% levy for city infrastructure?
- Assets – concern of selling assets that provide City income.
- Is the City going to bring salary level down to the public sector levels - 2% typically higher.
- Employee efficiencies of service delivery – higher wage/lower amount of staff - “more with less.”
- Budget surplus being spent – overspending to reach budget as attitude “use it or lose it” -as it is owned/not to be surplus.
- Form committee from private sector community to minimize costs – quarterly meetings.
- Taxpayers require and will pay value for service – taxpayers understand the need for increase i.e. insurance, utilities.
- Is everyone on board with the ridiculous 0% tax increase?
- Another 0% tax increase is not sustainable. Inflation and other costs are going up and this means that 0% is not sustainable.
- We need to think about the overall costs increases to the tax payer and not just property taxes.
- If we keep going to 0% will the community face significant increases in the future? In the past we had a few years of 0% and then the community faced high tax increases afterward.
- We need to tighten our belts on spending. When times are tough we need to cut back. It is not acceptable to keep taking on debt and increasing expenditures when we can't afford it.
- If we keep going to 0% then we are going to have to pay for it later. If costs keep rising (inflation) then we can't sustain 0% taxes.
- If we go to 0% again then services will be impacted that will discourage industry to locate to London. For example, if transit is cut then it may be hard for employees to get to work.
- If we cut certain services, can we potentially lose senior government funding. Some services are subsidized by senior government and reducing a service standard may not allow us to maximize this funding source.
- What is the point of having job placement if the transit service is cut then how are we supposed to get to those job placements?
- Transit is important because it allows people to get around the city that don't have a car (specifically mentioned students and the elderly). The transit service is underfunded. A city thrives on movement and limiting this movement will negatively impact citizen quality of life. A short sighted decision made today to cut transit will have a snow ball effect on the long term quality of life of citizens.
- Cutting the green bin program will divert more garbage to landfills. This will cause more costs to support landfills. If we are going to pay more for landfills, did we do an analysis to determine if the
- If we are trying to increase employment in London and stimulate the economy, then why would we reduce services that would result in lost employment?

Development Charges

- The costs related to putting something new in, i.e. development charges, what about the ongoing costs? Why is transit included in development charges? Someone who takes the bus would like to see more buses out there so we can build up a bus culture.
- Developers get to do a lot of things, but aren't really paying for any of it. What about

developers? How do we get out of development exemption charges? Bottom line is tax payer will pay for it. If we increase development costs, then house costs will be increased

- Concerned that industrial development is only covered slightly by DC charges and remainder by tax payer.

Economic Development

- When you talk about economic development it seems to be about projects. But what has been done to get businesses and jobs downtown? How can people get full time, permanent jobs to jump start the economy?
- The US is spending a fortune to attract business from Canada. We are spending only 2% on economic prosperity. Is that really enough? We live in a different economic situation than 10 years ago.
- There is a big focus on attracting business. But corporate tax rates are being decreased. The city should go after corporations to give back to the community and support culture, environment, etc.
- Where is the money coming from for IEPC projects when we are cutting services? Why would people come to London if services are cut?

Reserves & Reserve Funds, Debt, Capital Levy

- Why are our reserve funds so high? The economy has been poor so we should be using our reserve funds to help reduce our taxes.
- We are competing against municipalities in Michigan that don't have significant reserve fund balances. Why can't we draw down our reserve funds?
- Concern that reserve funds utilization to cover Boards & Commissions shortfalls.
- Why would you maintain non-mandatory reserve funds that earn interest that is less than the rate we pay for debt?
- The unfunded liability on the balance sheet is very large. How are we going to manage this large liability?
- We are paying a debenture issuance of 2.8% in 2012. What additional charges were built into that rate?
- How much did the City borrow last year? Is borrowing not contradictory to maintaining a balanced budget?
- Are we paying too high of a rate on debt? If we have a Aaa credit rating and we are selling our bonds quickly, can we lower the interest rate?
- Why have we been issuing so much debt recently? I would rather pay more taxes now to avoid having to issue debt and ultimately pay more taxes in the future.

Protective Services

- Is the City still paying retention bonuses to firemen and policemen? I would suggest they are completely unnecessary and when their contract is up, this should be removed. Does the City have no room to act on this issue?
- Does the Fire department have a chief for every station? It may be important to look at the structure of management. It seems like the Fire department has a lot of overhead. Maybe this can change?
- Every year we increase Fire and Police - this is a fear tactic on their part. We should hold the line on that.
- Most of the budget goes to Police and Fire. How many police are in the city? How much in salary? How much does a constable make?
- Protective services are a huge part of the budget. "Retention pay" within our Police and Fire services is an issue. Is this still occurring?
- Given that our Police budget is the largest operating cost, but our crime rate is going down, why is the budget going up? It seems unjustifiable.
- The increase on the retention pay also reflects on that person's pension pay out. It is a double up.
- How much study is given to having some services to further the argument against protective services. You can prevent a lot of crime by investing in culture and social services. Does it affect setting the budget?
- It seems like at the end, the police services always win. As citizens, do we have some say?
- Much like we are here today, maybe the real answer is, if people get active in other levels of

government. Provincial governments, Police Service boards, etc. If we just sit back, as we have been, and we haven't had input, there is no change.

- Police - what can be done? As people grow up and move through the ranks, of course their pay increases. How will the City deal with this when they want a zero percent increase? Need to raise revenues.
- The Province should give us the tools to look at Police/Fire budgets. Need to get on the phone with the Province.
- The biggest consumer of our budget is protective services, but they are asking for more, and want the biggest increase.
- I don't like seeing general operations of the city being less than protective services. Corporate and operational services should always be the biggest.
- Fire/Police costs are uncontrollable, but why are we paying for this? At the end of the day, if the province appeases them, it comes from municipal budget. With inflation, zero is regressive.
- The people who have the money should make the rules. It has to be based on what we get back in return. Do you have info on efficiency of those services? Protective services may ask for a 5% increase, but do they have a 5% increase in efficiency? Example, when Police send 7 officers and cruisers to arrest one person.
- Is it true that I am paying \$2.5 a day for protective services, and \$1.69 for all other services combined? Are people aware of this? You should put that on twitter, make it more widely known because it is very informative
- Police and Fire eating up majority of budget, unfunded liability is basically pension costs - are we being asked to "suck up" the costs because we can't do much about the costs?
- Staff costs increases - require efficiencies within services, i.e. London Police Service – i.e. too many officers at incident, etc.
- Police and Fire arbitration unnecessary as would not relocate to i.e. Toronto. Unrealistic expectations.
- Concern that the mandate of the Police Service is to keep the community safe, but they buy things like tazers.
- The benefits and salaries in Police Service have grown significantly over the past 5 years. We need some balance and it does not seem sustainable. It is not acceptable for the Police salaries to keep rising over and above is being experienced by the rest of the community. The Police services model needs to change to make it sustainable.
- Approximately \$26,000 for the police force to monitor a union protest for Electro Diesel. Are the police not accountable for its spending and the cost of the services they deliver? Could this not have been done for significantly less?

General

- Figure skating, is this cost benefit? Cultural capital? How much are we spending and why?
- Part of what we heard at ReThink sessions is that Cities need to condense, and new subdivisions are not the way we want to go. It seems there is a conflict of interest here. My view is that new subdivisions, those taxpayers must pay more. More than those who live in existing housing adjacent to the downtown core.
- To address urban sprawl, have we considered redeveloping Adelaide, etc., places where there is a lot of empty space. It is cheaper.
- There are so many people who live in apartments want to know how property tax increases impact them.
- If you are going to make it more attractive to live in a subdivision, then your taxes have to be higher than living on riverside drive. Financial incentives have to align with long term plan
- It would be helpful to show total dollar amount spent on each service, Then functional programs below that. How do we drill into the productivity chain to ensure things are more efficient? Example of police sitting at court waiting for a case to be called.
- I have an issue with some of the things that don't pay for themselves, i.e. golf courses. What about things we have been subsidizing for a number of years? For example: London Orchestra. They should start paying for themselves. I am not against arts, but if we can't afford them we shouldn't have them. Someone else needs to step up to the plate. Orchestra should be paying for itself by now. It should be allocated to other areas that we think are more important to us. Storybook Gardens used to be a good place and paid for itself. Now nobody goes there. We put a lot of money into it and it should be supported, but it needs to pay for itself.
- Last year the public was made aware of the situation of the health unit budget increase.

What is happening now to get that cost down? Are they opening the books so we can look at where the money is being spent and if we can have input. Example, they developed a game for STD prevention, which is great, but there are other priorities.

- Charge parking lots more property taxes in comparison to lots with structures.
- City employees are not over paid - clerical and otherwise.

Visible Tweets

Using www.visibletweets.com (free web-based service), tweets with the hashtag "#LdnBudget13" were projected onto a screen during the budget workshops.

All tweets tagged with #LdnBudget13 were collected and are noted below:

Concern selling off assets instead of investing in them and making them more profitable

Grad student likes thought behind 0% but concerned that many fellow students want to stay but no jobs.

Q: why not develop the East? A: Companies go where they want to go. we try to attract by saying we are by NAFTA hwy.

Wishing I hadn't just read several comments on the LFP site from ppl who still think 0% is a good idea. Seriously?

Big problem in Ldn where sectors work in silos to attract business and don't collaborate. Unique to Ldn.

Glad to see many prioritizing @londonlibrary as essential on the priority wall at #ldnbudget13 . #ldnont

0% would have entire east end of city w/o reliable ind. bus service. Will hurt unemp %.

At #ldnbudget13 - interesting and informative sessions - big concerns = 0% tax increase at what cost? (Jobs, services, long term?) #LdnOnt

#ldnbudget13 put some more money/effort into our london transit and sprucing up the downtown core to make it more attracting to tourists

My biggest question to @CityofLdnOnt staff at #ldnbudget13 .What will 0 cost us in human costs +tax matters in future? Not just about 2013.

Highest tax levy was in 2004 w/ a 8.1% increase (bc of OMERS). Bw 2005-2009 the increases were bw 1 and 3%. #ldnbudget13

Actually because of bad council decision to take OMERS out of the budget to get to 0% in 1999 and 2000.

We need to drop the fear about tax increases people.

Comment: there's a fear to mention tax increases but must educate citizens that the reality is costs go up like home budget.

Comment: ppl won't oppose tax increases if ppl feel they are getting value for their \$. Education around that is also important

People not opposed to a small tax increase if the \$ is spent responsibly - transparency is key.

At Fire Services 8% of calls are for Fire\Explosion and 50% are medical calls. Is there overlap with EMS?

Are any #LDNOnt cyclists speaking up about the proposed 10 YR moratorium on bicycle lanes in #ldnbudget13?"

I saw several comments about it at the #ldnbudget13 workshop. I'm not a cyclist, but I like safety. We need bike lanes.

Even on a heavy bike (& carrying lots of library books), I'm causing less wear on the roads than any car.

The mayor needs to realise that a 4yr tax freeze is impossible and they're cutting services that the city deaperately needs

Cuts to transit, reduced hours and routes. How are Londoners going to get around if they don't have a car or bike?

Business case 10 is increasing returned cheque fee by \$5. Really?!?! Are these good options to get to 0%?

Possible elimination/reduction in ash borer, green bins, public transit-this budget isn't looking very good for the environment

Discussion on if Fire Services can be scaled back. How would incidents like McCormicks fire be dealt with if we underfund?

Do we want to focus on maintaining OR improving services? Can we do either without an increased cost?

LTC cutbacks become exponential: every ride lost because of reduced service = provincial funding lost. It spirals downward.

The pressures around affordable housing reduction are unsustainable

I want more for my city than 0%. Cutting services will lead to more costs long term.

Feel like a giant game of Jenga, how much can we pull before it collapses. Except only thinking for this turn, not next.

1% increase = \$23.51 per household. Most cuts alleviated at 2.5% or \$59 a house roughly. Is all this worth it?

I want a city where I can both work and play! Only focusing on job development is a mistake we need a livable city.

I would think more highly of Joe Fontana if he broke his 0% tax freeze platform promise, not less :) #ldnbudget13 you can make the change

A 0% now likely means a 8 or 9% later. People are concerned about that.

Emerald Ash Borer budget will be decimated to get tax hike to 0.7%. The Forest City is about to turn its back on the forest.

Hearing a lot of concern about 0%, maintaining/improving service, also a lot of concern about efficient use of public \$

Treasurer states have to ensure police and fire resp. times are acceptable. If my house is burning, want more than "acceptable"

Comment by participant : culture is a big driver of Economic Development

Comment by Participant: If you want a job but its not on a transit route how can we be thinking about transit cuts?

@CityofLdnOnt has done 0% before, and saw 4.6, 8.1 and 6.6% tax increases later. 0% for now, very irresponsible budgeting #ldnbudget13

Let's be fair, we all want a 0% tax increase, but not at ANY cost & we want to see where the \$ is going

Is 0% just a distraction so we don't notice the cuts that will get us to 2.5% #ldnbudget13

A lot of concern on transit cuts at session #2 at #ldnbudget13

LTC budget cuts worries me. Took me 1 hr, 12 min. to get to my practicum placement Friday

@CityofLdnOnt has done 0% before, saw 4.6, 8.1 + 6.6% tax increases after. 0% for now=very irresponsible

It's faster for me to bike most places in London than take LTC. Cut transit services, my cardiovascular health says thanks!

0% exact opposite effect in stimulating the economy since it cuts jobs and hours, decreasing the \$ in local economies

Proposal for \$40 million for 401 corridor expansion doesn't include a single dollar for transit expansion to service the area.

Think about this before supporting cuts to housing, library, social services, parks and rec in #ldnbudget13. 3/3

Biggest concern is how a council believes that 0% is attainable. That's the ultimate solution to the problem.

Cuts to AODA will prove costly with \$50,000-100,000 daily fines for non compliance

APPENDIX B

OTHER FEEDBACK (December 4, 2012 – January 15, 2013, excluding January 12, 2013)

The following captures feedback received via email at Budget@london.ca, telephone at (519) 661-4638, Facebook at [facebook.com/LondonCanada](https://www.facebook.com/LondonCanada), and Twitter @CityofLdnOnt or #LdnBudget13.

Feedback has been categorized as follows: Culture, Economic Prosperity, Protective Services, Social & Health Services, Transportation Services, Corporate, Operational & Council Services, Budget 2013/General.

Culture

I am writing to express my concern with how the 0% tax increase will affect the London public libraries. I am disgusted at the utter lack of tact and foresight in which this budget was conceived and how it will take valuable necessities such as a warm place to be for people of all ages on a Sunday through our long winters. My family and I use the libraries on Sundays and so do many people who do not have a quiet place to learn and be, now we are losing yet another day of use of the libraries. These statistics show how utterly necessary our full library service is to Londoners:

London has the highest annual library use per capita in Ontario at 40.6 annual uses per capita (median use is 28.1), according to the most recent OMBI report

London has the lowest operating cost per use in Ontario at \$1.27 per use, according to the most recent OMBI report

In a 2012 survey, overall public satisfaction with library service was at 97.9%. 96.3% of people surveyed felt that the Library gives good value for taxpayer dollar spent. **(via email)**

What about 19 kids whose summer jobs are cut? Or don't have internet + use @londonlibrary for hmwk? **(via Twitter)**

I am certainly not in favor of cuts to the hours at libraries. In these harsh economic times, books are more important to people as they cope with the harsh realities.

So many people have written about how they coped with being a new immigrant, being poor, being abused -- and always when there was no money, there were still books available through the libraries. **(via email)**

Picked up a letter at the library regarding the proposed cut in service hours included in the budget.

- Family is on fixed income and uses the library extensively – primarily the Byron Branch and on-line services. Library staff provide excellent service.
- Although they support the 0% tax increase in general, they do not support reduced hours at libraries. They believe a third year of 0% increase is unreasonable.
- Library services should be maintained as is. Cuts to other services should be considered first. Do not support City funding for a performing arts centre.

Noticed that service hour reductions were supported by the comment that the Downtown Branch is still open, but it is difficult and costly for some people to get downtown. **(via phone)**

I have been reading about the London Public Library and the reduced hours of service that will most likely result at most locations due to trying to comply with a 0% budget increase.

I would like to give some feedback:

1. Computers at our public libraries are used in part by people who are unemployed as they search for work in our community. I would suggest that we would want to maximize these opportunities (not reduce them) as the more people who are employed the more money flows back into our city's economy and in addition fewer local social services are required which also saves money. Consider this time well spent as an investment in our community and our people.

2. Our province is working hard to make sure that all students who graduate from high school are literate. Reducing access to books, research materials and the assistance of library staff would seem to work against provincial goals around graduation and literacy.

3. In an increasingly technological world our libraries have provided some measure of equality for our citizens. Anyone can access the computers for free. Anyone can borrow books for free. Anyone can do the research required for their courses for free. Not all citizens have technology or books in their own home. Do we want to widen the gap between the have and have not parts of our community?

4. We really cannot go wrong when it comes to supporting reading and learning in our society as a whole. An educated society benefits everyone.

For all of these reasons I strongly believe that a 0% budget increase for our library system which results in a reduction of services is short-sighted. It will be a monetary saving that jeopardizes everything that I mentioned above. We really need to think about the bigger picture here. **(via email)**

In the strive to create another year's zero budget, I understand city council has imposed a zero budget increase on the London Public Library, and that council has received a letter from them that to do so, it will need to reduce service and development of its catalogue and public programs which will greatly impact many vulnerable citizens like myself.

I am a disabled senior of London, on a fixed pension, who relies on borrowing books for recreation, leisure and knowledge, as well as its excellent phone service. I am mostly house-bound, due to my physical disabilities, and less service from the library branches closest to my home will severely impact my life. I rely on books to improve my life and provide a diversion from the many health issues I must face daily.

If you demand the public library cut its budget to comply with your overall objective of a zero budget, you will create more pain and suffering from residents like myself who rely on our excellent library system every day.

Please reconsider your budgetary impact that will not allow the London Public Library to properly service the citizens of London, particularly the vulnerable that needs it. We have a system to be proud of, and we should be doing all we can to financially support and encourage its development. **(via email)**

Please don't deprive the citizens of London of updated collections, or force the library to offer reduced hours of operation! As a London voter, I would be disinclined to vote for any councillor who agreed with and supported the 0% budget target that has been given to the London Public Library. The library delivers invaluable services to the community, is well run and well used.

I suffered a severe head injury almost two years ago, and for just over a year it left me able to do very little other than visit the library and read. It kept my spirits up, allowed for social interaction, and kept me in touch with my community. Many Londoners feel the same - please take another look at the numbers; our tax dollars are well spent when they support the local library. **(via email)**

I want to say that I support an increase in budget for the London Public Library system. The London Public Library system is part of the soul of the city.

Even from a purely economic point of view, it makes no sense to cut back. Many job seekers learn new skills and find jobs through library services. Students have a place to study. Services for newcomers help them be productive members of our city. In the long run, students become tax payers and innovators, the unemployed get jobs and become productive members of society etc. There are lots of statistics in the Library Annual Report.

A healthy library system is important to the economic well-being of a city.

I am a regular user of the library system. I usually use the Cherryhill branch. **(via email)**

Does not support service cuts at libraries. Library services should be maintained as is. Personally uses the library weekly to take out books.

Especially supports the following special services provided by the library that are very beneficial for seniors and house-bound citizens.

- Select branches (ie. Byron) sell a package of tickets to a matinee performances at the Grand Theatre plus bus transportation from the library.

- Libraries will deliver a “bag of books” monthly to house-bound citizens.
- The Central Library offers a service to provide multiple copies of the same book for book clubs, as selected from a list set up by the branch. *(via phone)*

I have been reading up and attending information sessions about the City of London Budget 2013, and I am very upset with the proposed cuts to library services. I use the library to study; I attend events and documentaries at the Central Library and am very fond of how they work to make the London community a more enriching and educated place.

Libraries are where people learn, ideas are sparked, and projects are built. People without internet have access to the internet in libraries; they have access to a free education and the many enjoyable programs such as knitting or computer skills. Libraries are the brains of a city, and closing them down for one to two days a week is unheard of, except in the United Kingdom where austerity measures have forced municipalities' hands. This is not the case with London; we do not need another year of 0%. The last time there was a 0% increase (1999-2001), the following years London experienced spikes in taxes (4%, 8%, 6%). 0% means 0% right now, not indefinitely. It is not practical, and future generations of London citizens will pay the price for a 0% budget this year. The library needs the funds to continue operating, and expanding their collections.

Without a tax increase, the library system will face huge losses, such as not purchasing necessary collections, running essential programs; there will be pay cuts, reduced hours or loss of employment for the employees. It is a place for many community groups and organizations to meet and with these cuts these groups will be forced to find somewhere else, which really, for free space I guess they would end up at Tim Horton's or Coffee Culture.

The 0% increase would not only devastate the library, but many other services and sectors in London Ontario. With a 0% increase, we are making London a less attractive place to live, and reducing the livability for all current residents. If this year's budget goes through at 0%, I'm terrified to see what a fourth year of 0% could mean for the London communities and library system. I will be at the afternoon budget session this Saturday, and I hope to talk to you in person and see how you feel about this proposed budget. I have one question Nancy, and that is will you vote to maintain funding to the library at its current level?

Thank you for your time and consideration, I eagerly await your response. *(via email)*

Being able to peruse the library on a Sunday (especially the London Room at the main branch) is part of the culture of a city-- and it, among other things (like keeping firefighters employed) are what I happily pay taxes for. If I have to pay a little more to keep them, PLEASE allow it. Your constituents do not want to lose what makes a city great to live in just to have a 0% tax increase. *(via email)*

I write today to ask that as you shape our 2013 budget, you consider how much the public library means to Londoners. In 2011 (according to the library's website), 3.2 million people visited a library location, 1.31 million people asked library staff for help finding information, 4.25 million items were borrowed, 192,000 people attended a program, 972,000 holds were placed on items, 567,000 uses of library computers were logged, and 4.5 million people visited the library website. Absolutely stunning numbers!

As well, they write that "London has the highest annual library use per capita in Ontario at 40.6 annual uses per capita (median use is 28.1), according to the most recent OMBI report. London has the lowest operating cost per use in Ontario at \$1.27 per use, according to the most recent OMBI report. In a 2012 survey, overall public satisfaction with library service was at 97.9%. 96.3% of people surveyed felt that the Library gives good value for taxpayer dollar spent."

Our public library is so much more than just the books on the shelves. Libraries are a gateway to early literacy, social programs, and continue to be one of the key community hubs for a city. Libraries are also important community centres, with classes for numerous social skills, job search portals, community lectures, research centres, and much more. In London, we're fortunate to have a central library that includes a community lecture and performance hall, as well as easy access to city and county records and archives.

I write to you to ask that you would consider this as you examine the hard budget decisions before you. I understand that you want to ensure that tax payer dollars are spent in the most efficient and appropriate ways possible, which is absolutely commendable. However, I'm

concerned that without proper funding for our library as well as our public safety, transportation and community service programs, we will pay much more in the long run by running ineffective programs stretched beyond their means, failing to serve the people that rely on these services.

As you consider the public library and how important it is to our city, please also examine the overall cost the goal of 0% tax increase will have on our city. As we get into the budget process, London Public Library, London Transit Commission, London Community Foundation, Pillar Nonprofit Network and United Way London & Middlesex have all spoken out against the path to 0% and the cuts that will be necessary to reach the target this year. More organizations will likely join them as the budget process continues, and the cost that will be born by London's most vulnerable. **(via email)**

I feel compelled to let you know that our family has already noticed the impact of cuts on the LPL. We went to the Central location one Sun. afternoon to find that it was closed.

My husband and I are raising four children in London. We have been frequent library users since the birth of our first child in 1991. I understand as the head of a household that there is only so much money to go around but I encourage those that sit at the table where the decisions are made to consider the importance of families and individuals having access to our libraries.

Please take the time to make the decisions that will impact the LPL system with utmost care. **(via email)**

@CityofLdnOnt Council: please no cuts to Affordable Housing & Capital Grant Program **(via Twitter)**

Clone this person "@Emerginglondon: Comment by participant : culture is a big driver of Economic Development **(via Twitter)**

Amazed at richness of programs offered @londonlibrary . Take a look: catalogue.londonpubliclibra... . @CityofLdnOnt , don't cut. **(via Twitter)**

Eons ago, when I was a young mom we used @londonlibrary for books, movies+social time. Was priceless. Protect funding. **(via Twitter)**

When working in new town, I visit library to get sense of the place. @londonlibrary one of best. Protect funding **(via Twitter)**

Students hand hmwk in electronically now. Many can't afford computers/internet service + use @londonlibrary . Protect funding. **(via Twitter)**

Our @londonlibrary provides much more than books. **(via Twitter)**

Strong public library systems are one of the hallmarks of vibrant communities world-wide. @CityofLdnOnt Don't cut our libraries! **(via Twitter)**

@CityofLdnOnt Do not cut our libraries! We love and need our libraries!

Libraries saved me as a kid, not just the books but the peace of mind!!" cc/ @CityofLdnOnt Central Library brings lots of foot traffic downtown. Have it open Sundays, all year round. **(via Twitter)**

@londonlibrary we love our library. Girls & I have used them for 25 years for books, movies, research, computer/internet, groups. **(via Twitter)**

Library cutbacks? We might as well remove the city's heart. **(via Twitter)**

Library cuts are never a good idea. **(via Twitter)**

You can still have a "strong" public library system operated by non-profits. **(via Twitter)**

Hoping that @CityofLdnOnt doesn't approve the #ldnbudget13 cuts for @londonlibrary since I love Sunday studying at the library! **(via Twitter)**

Economic Prosperity

Students leaving London from lack of opportunities. As a graduating student I agree completely
(via Twitter)

Protective Services

We believe that trying to achieve a zero increase in the budget is irresponsible. Many necessary services will be reduced and the infrastructure urgently needs improvement. Taxes should be spent wisely but we must continue services and improvements.

The salary increases for the Police and Fire Departments have been too generous and should be reviewed. It seems that they always receive the increases they request. Their services are essential and appreciated but are unrealistic in our present economic situation. *(via email)*

I'm writing to you as a lifelong Londoner of 48 years about my concerns of the ballooning budget, specifically the Police budget. To be frank at what point in time is the city going to have a serious conversation about the Police Services budget. The draft budget for 2013 indicates that approximately 18-20 cent from every dollar that comes into the city coffers will go to our fine men and women in blue. We are told over and over again how there are no places to cut in the budget the police budget, yet over and over again I'm surprised by police spending decisions. The most recent example is the repainting of the fleet vehicles; really, I ask you, was this necessary? We constantly hear about how petty service cuts will happen in library services, garbage pick-up, etc. yet these services account for 3-5 cents of every dollar the city spends. We are trying to cut spending from high impact community services, yet we have fat juicy tomatoes ripened and ready to be picked. It's time we challenge the police services budget and reduce the cost. I would like to see the city reduce the police budget at 14 cents of every dollar to come in line with our fire services. If you look back to the 2007 budget the Police services budget was ~\$70.0 million and now for 2013 ~\$95.0 million a 35% increase in 6 years. Additionally over this time total protective services went from ~21% of the total budget to ~35%, this is too much for a city of this size.

Make no mistake, I WANT A CUT IN SERVICES!!! Tough time call for tough decisions...Now is the time to take a stand and I implore the city to doing something earlier rather than later.
(via email)

How about cutting back on supervisory staff and look at the cost of policing and fire salaries all are too high. *(via email)*

Suggested increases in residence rental unit fee=students and renters pay more to cover 0% #brutal *(via Twitter)*

Social & Health Services

My heart is with the Council members who stand against a zero tax increase.

I know that you do and I congratulate you for having some basic common sense and practical vision for the city.

Why would anyone want to move to a city that is reducing certain healthy living opportunities and services that are presently provided and put up with the inconveniences and felt losses that necessarily will follow a 0%?

When I see a possible reduction in monies provided for the Affordable Housing Project, my heart sinks!! What kind of inhumane principles stand behind such a stance?

And how can the same Council be talking about the progressive Re Think of London while at the same time be drawing the city back into unacceptable standards of living!!

I pity the next Council that will be forced to raise taxes to cover deterioration caused by these years of 0% increase and to restore needed services to liveable standards.

I support your position and want to see real "needs" of the city respected and assisted.

(via email)

@CityofLdnOnt Council: please no cuts to Affordable Housing & Capital Grant Program

(via Twitter)

Only 3,500 people waiting for affordable housing. Just to clarify everyone ONLY 3,500.

(via Twitter)

Transportation

I am writing to express some thoughts on the upcoming debate of the 2013 budget. While I do hope to make it to a public participation forum, I wanted to give my input on this matter in case I can't make it.

I am very pleased with the outreach being provided by the City on this matter. More and more, public participation is being welcomed in the creation of this budget, and I think that merits recognition. I also believe the hard work by city staff to find cost savings with minimal impact to the public at large is a sign of their professionalism in difficult times.

That being said, I must voice caution and concern with the current attempts to get the taxes to 0%. I am in favor of reducing the tax burden on the families of London, but I also wish to ensure the City thrives, and maintains high standards of services. This can't be achieved when core services begin to be starved of needed increases year after year.

My particular focus is on public transit. As a rider of the 28 Lambeth route, I am extremely concerned that the LTC may be forced to cancel that bus (along with several other service reductions) if they are to match the budget requested of them. I rely on this bus to bring me to a community for work that would otherwise be unreachable to me. As London grows and works to attract more people, a thriving public transit system is a must. 0% can't be achieved at the cost of the community and be dwindling the integrity of the services provided.

While I think 0% is a lofty goal that has the right principles in mind, eventually political idealism must be replaced by financial realism. I ask only that the city and council as a whole keep up the great work of limiting the taxes on Londoners, but to remember that the City must thrive not on ideas and rhetoric, but cash and investment. *(via email)*

I sent the email below to my ward counselor and I am forwarding it to this email address as well to make sure that my views get heard. I do not want to see cuts to the transit service or to the library services. In fact, I would like to see the transit service improved - the service is very poor at the moment due to underfunding. *(via email)*

The business case regarding reduction in LTC service hours references "Elimination of the approved 2012 service changes impacting the #10 Wonderland, #14 Highbury, #17 Oxford West, #20 Cherryhill and #18 Masonville".

What were these approved changes and what will be the effect on these routes? *(via email)*

Please retain all current London Transit bus service. I rely on the bus to get to and from work. This seems like a foundation of economic strength in our City, especially as families attempt to be more fiscally responsible with our personal expenditures while continuing to contribute via employment. *(via email)*

LTC 0% means service cuts or fares rise. LTC service already terrible, overcrowded with long waits. *(via Twitter)*

Hard to understand how we can talk about economic development, student retention etc. while letting services like LTC collapse *(via Twitter)*

Citizen speaking against route reductions of LTC service, harm London's economic viability *(via Twitter)*

Corporate, Operational & Council Services

AODA cuts fly in the face of council's declaration of #ldnont as an Age Friendly City. *(via Twitter)*

Budget 2013/ General

This gov't is killing London. No jobs, cut services. Roll up the roads because city is dying a slow death" *(via Facebook)*

If I thought for a moment I could write something that council would listen to I would in a heartbeat I believe staff want to hear from Londoners but given the Orser's of council what's the point. *(via Facebook)*

Responsible budgeting would help... as soon as we hear 0% everyone starts talking about cuts and the first cut is always staffing. Which is crap, and a scare tactic. maybe if the police didnt cover thier building in copper there would be money left in thier budget. Or maybe we dont do feasibility studies on every little decision made, and maybe council should start making some decisions instead of asking the public what they think everyday, we had this thing called an election, where the public voted and picked people to represent them and make decisions. What is the budget on these "townhall" meetings? .. add up all these little things (poor budgeting) in every department and there would be nothing to argue about. **(via Facebook)**

0% is unreasonable and unsustainable! Mel Lastman tried it and they are still trying to catch up on deferred maintenance. Keep it lean, but do NOT use the reserves to keep taxes artificially low, or we will all pay more in the long run. **(via Facebook)**

I think that the budget needs to cut back on what they use the money for. The money should be used for better ways to restore lives and create better ways of living. There are more and more people out of jobs and on the streets as a result because of cost of living going up. The low income people are suffering more because as the aconomy gets higher and inflation rises, the benefits don't apply or go up, they stay the same. Its time to think about that. The more people without on the streets, the more the governments lose out, because more people will die, and population will be smaller. Those who are alive are becoming more ill as a result, costing the governments more money for health costs to families and single people. I could go on, but i won't, you figure it out. **(via Facebook)**

The city is still dying as no regular job, no new manufacturing, only professional work which is not for everyone. Stop the freeze and stop cutting services that regular people need as rich seem to run this city! **(via Facebook)**

I'd love to commit some time to this process but believe council 8 will do what they believe.
(via Facebook)

Hey Joe - I don't want zero percent tax this New Year - I would like police to make sure we are all safe, teachers to teach our children, nurses and doctors to look after them, firemen watch over us and accessibility for all special needs people. That's what I want for Christmas.
(via Facebook)

I am writing as a concerned citizen. It is very disturbing that the public sector workers do not get it.

The voice we need to say is, 'There is no more money in the pot.' The private sector has been hit again and again with downsizing, pays reduced, laid off workers, or reduced to working part-time instead of full-time, etc. And yet the public sector keeps demanding, and getting may I add, pay increases. The Public Sector should be thinking of pay reductions, laying off workers, or hiring the private sector people at less pay, which they would be thrilled to get t work.

As an accountant I know the base income is made up of new money. The public sector pays taxes too, but since the taxes pay their pay it is like recycled money. It is like a company depending on the income from employees to run a company. It would not work. The company would require new money from customers who are not on their payroll, in order to make a profit.

It is though I am not realizing their desire to want to do better year after year. We are all innately desire to do better. But this is not the time in an economical slow down.

But reality needs to hit home, and know it is the time to get tough and hold the line. **(via email)**

The Unthinkable

It is unthinkable, even absurd, how heads of departments can even think of asking for wage/benefit increases – any increase! We have 25 thousand unemployed in London nearing 10% unemployment, with further announcements of layoffs. Yet we have those in public positions of influence, who try to justify why they need more, when many others are found in food-bank lines.

Forget the unemployed; forget about those working 2 or 3 jobs, trying desperately to keep their homes, or a simple roof over their heads. Forget about those who go hungry, children and parents alike. As a community of people, it is responsible to share the load, when the economy cries for restraint. Responsible people understand the obvious, and work to cut costs, yes, by

working harder and smarter, to provide the necessary services of a city. "A job is better than no job"! This endless cry for more money; proves they lack ingenuity and creativity!! But it is only 3% they say; yes, if one ignores the fact that everything else is going up as well.

No, it is not just 3%, but a compounding percentage across the board that robs others, of any form of disposable income. Without this disposable income, the economy does not grow. Expenses must fall in line with income. If income is down, which it is, thus expenses must be cut! Those who insist on increasing taxes should offer to pay higher taxes, for they are in a position to do so. "Robbing Peter to pay Paul is unjust"! It is also unjust to allow the creation of a 2 class society – public vs. private – the have vs. the have not. Taking from one segment of society, to enrich the pockets of another segment of society is repugnant.

Allowing at this time, human resources to increase, and thus creating higher infrastructure costs, makes for an uncompetitive city. We must be competitive to attract new growth – this takes time in a depressed economy. Promoting businesses to purchase from those paying taxes within London, should be a constant message that produces good results, yet where is this message? Yes, it can be subtle, but it must be encouraged.

It would be wonderful, even exemplary, when head of departments would say, they will work to ease the financial burden of those out of work, low income, and/or with part-time jobs, by making the necessary sacrifices. Sharing the load, rather than loading it on the backs of the private sector. Can you image, heads of services from London Ontario, inspiring other heads of departments, of other cities to do the same?

Now that's a city worth living in, that's a city to be proud of!! *(via email)*

Shared a link. Hey city Council it can be done, you can say no to budget increase requests. If Toronto can do it we can too <http://toronto.ctvnews.ca/toronto-s-top-cop-denied-budget-hike-request-1.1074630> *(via Facebook)*

A 0% target for tax increases is unrealistic, even though she is a senior on a fixed income.

- Does not support service cuts at libraries. Personally uses the library extensively.
- Does not support cuts to fire or police either. *(via phone)*

Shared a link. <http://muni2.com/examples-of-generating-revenue-for-cities/>

- Examples of generating revenue for cities - Municipal Marketing 2.0
- muni2.com The answer is advertising and sales. There are a number of advertising tools on the digital scene that will create revenue for a city. However, choosing the right ones and maximizing their potential is paramount *(via Facebook)*

How is ZERO TAX FREEZE helping pay down our debt? *(via Facebook)*

It is my understanding they've been dipping into reserves to keep a 0% tax increase. That's almost like cheating. We need reserves for when something goes wrong. It is just scary.

We are selling the farm to keep 0% but in other communities taxes have skyrocketed. *(via phone)*

A 1.5% tax increase over 3 years would have been better then 0% and cutting services. We need to look at the future of the city not just the present.As a taxpayer I do not agree with 0 % or cutting services to a community as a whole.Lets be responsible and move forward and pay down debt and have better wages , a better community and stronger economy. The price for that is a reasonable tax increase and make every penny count. *(via Facebook)*

I am extremely disturbed by the tax freeze obsession. The last 2 have done nothing to improve London, and the prospect of another two could bring nightmares when one thinks of how much catch-up there will have to be when sanity returns to City Council. If we are pandering to Mayor Fontana's ego then it must stop right now. His credibility is zero and even more so when one thinks of the money wasted on fireworks and etc. for the World Skating competitions. Why try to put on a false face to the world when we Londoners are struggling so hard? A flashy firework display or a chintzed-up approached to a market and fancy plant pots are not going to bring industrialists flooding in. Or tourists for that matter. We are not a tourist destination. And was it \$50,000 for planters?

As a senior on a tight budget I do not want to see my taxes rocket. However, neither do I want sidewalk snow removal stopped or library services curtailed. The City has spent many dollars on

workshops and public input on Building Communities, yet our true community centres are our libraries. Why are they being targeted. ReThink London is all very well, but it is a bit like papering over the cracks. The problems the City has need to be exposed, acknowledged and fixed. Cosmetic refurbishments aren't going to help.

Cutting back bus services is not acceptable either. For those without personal transport it is all they have. As our city spreads out more and more it is just going to be impossible to get around. Police and firemen have us over a barrel. But what if we called their bluff? Can we do without another hire? Should they be only ones who get raises?

Perhaps you should do a survey of those moving into the expensive new homes around the periphery of London. Are they new residents, and if so, why? What brought them here? Is it a good place to retire? Are there new jobs we don't know about? Are they all civil servants? Perhaps that would give you some leads as to whether you are doing something right.

And finally – whomever is involved in bringing industry to London (I forget the Economic Development group's name) should be let go. I believe over a million dollars can be saved there. It isn't working and hasn't for a long time. In the UK I worked in an industrial development office and there was the Industrial Officer, his assistant and 2 clerical staff. Perhaps a smaller office in City Hall with one officer could deal with the present situation.

Grow London from the inside. Growing it for growing sake for assessment value is really skating on thin ice without a solid foundation. London really doesn't have a heart any more. I think people may just start to move away. It has become too depressing. We should Think Small and work on getting what we have fixed and operating well. Then we can ReThink Big.

Many thanks for allowing me to express my thoughts. *(via email)*

While I appreciate Council attempting to restrain our tax bills, could we please define a 0% increase as one that keeps pace with inflation? I am driving on city streets filled with potholes, sinkholes, and ill-repair. I feel like the city is going rapidly downhill in the attempt to save a few tax dollars - and that's not smart.

3 years at 0 will mean a HUGE increase in a couple of years, and most of my social circle agrees this is foolish at best. *(via email)*

Thank you for hosting the 'Build a Budget Workshop'. I did attend and thought it quite useful. I did post some thoughts during the day however upon reflecting I would like to pass along some further thoughts/opinions.

Overall, my general budget feeling is that we do indeed need to say 'no' to things rather than saying 'yes' to absolutely everything however I think sticking to an absolute 0% increase may NOT be wise. I think there are initiatives that can be started that will improve the city and potentially decrease the need for tax increases in the future and these should not be passed up. I don't have a problem with a 1-3% increase if after significant due diligence that is what is considered appropriate.

With respect to a couple of particular issues;

1. Police and Fire Services: Although it is beneficial to keep a good relationship with the Police and Fire Services, I believe that amounts (salaries and benefits) previously agreed to are unsustainable regardless of any economic cycle. I think that both Police and Fire Service should NOT get any increase over last year. If this means going to some arbitration then I think that should be the path. If municipalities are consistent in doing this then the message will be taken seriously and unsustainable salaries and benefits will no longer be awarded. If this is not done then the Police and Fire Services will grow and grow as a percentage of the City budget and there will be no room to do other things.

2. On a high level I quite like the 'Kilmer Brownfield Equity Fund' proposal as part of the Prosperity Plan. Subject to a reasonable relocation cost of London Hydro then I think this could be a great deal. It by itself will increase the tax base (ongoing revenue) but also kick start a revitalization along the Thames River near the city's core. This could trigger a number of related projects nearby. This in-fill growth seems key to a sustainable city budget - existing infrastructure already in place and avoids additional costs associated with urban sprawl. Additionally, creating a relationship with Kilmer may seed further Brownsfield development at other sites in London.

This is a prime example of an item that should NOT be deferred just to get to a 0% tax increase. Again, subject to reasonable relocation costs this should go forward soon then later.

3. Structure tax to fit with London's long term plan. I have attended a couple of ReThink London events. Thank you for creating this public participation forum. If the goal is to grow smart, increase density in certain areas and avoid the full costs of urban sprawl then we need the tax to work intandem with other policies to create that incentive. Things such as tax zone (encourage development where you want it or add costs to new outlying areas to help represent the true costs of those developments) could make sense. Additionally, a land value tax could also make a difference. If balanced correctly, most existing residential areas would see no net increase in tax however a lower rate on the building may encourage more improvements (more intensive uses in existing areas) and encourage those sitting on vacant land or parking lots to build.

Again thank you for creating a well run workshop over the weekend. *(via email)*

Young, smart, professional - do you want to return to city that's cutting transit, libraries, bike paths, housing? *(via Twitter)*

Statement that 0% will shift costs to non-profits and charities that are already overburdened, and compound existing problems *(via Twitter)*

It's clear to me that the road to 0% for the #ldnbudget13 affects the most vulnerable people in #ldnont (ie: Housing, Transit, Library) *(via Twitter)*

All communities who have achieved 0% are the communities with highest unemployment rates. *(via Twitter)*

Financial perspective london will be okay, from a liveable perspective we are making it worse #ldnbudget13 #ldnont your opinion? *(via Twitter)*

Trimming the fat? More like picking at the bones. Turning #ldnont into a skeleton of a city. *(via Twitter)*

\$20M is going to hurt someone and it isn't me or my middle-class friends *(via Twitter)*

APPENDIX C



January 14, 2013

Dear Mayor and Council:

I am writing on behalf of WOTCH Community Mental Health Services and the nearly 2,500 people we support across greater London. WOTCH is the largest provider of mental health services in Western Ontario. Our programs include case management, employment and vocational training, clinical services, residential treatment services and homeless outreach (through My Sisters' Place). In addition we are the city's primary provider of mental health housing services and provide supports to over 300 people across London in various types of affordable housing. WOTCH employs 170 dedicated mental health professionals to do this important and vital work.

Over the past two years we have viewed, with growing alarm, the budget deliberations of Council. Last year and this year in an effort to achieve a zero percent tax increase, London City Council has looked to reduce funding to affordable housing and to reduce or eliminate one-time capital grants for non-profit organizations. Reducing funding for affordable housing and eliminating capital grants will have a direct negative impact on all vulnerable persons in London including those struggling with mental illness and homelessness.

It should come as no surprise to anyone on Council to learn that the vast majority of persons with mental illness live well below the poverty line. Most are recipients of the Ontario Disability Support Program. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association the unemployment rate for persons with mental illness hovers around an astounding 70-90%. Canadian government statistics estimate that two thirds of persons who are homeless have a significant mental illness and this goes up to 75% for women when a gender lens is applied. The proposal to reduce affordable housing and reducing or eliminating capital grants will have a disproportionate impact on our fellow citizens. People who struggle each and every day to access what many take for granted; a home and equality of service.

As a former municipal councillor I know all too well the impact of successive years of zero percent tax increases. You always end up paying in the long run. Delays to maintaining affordable housing will ultimately result in greater future costs to ensure housing infrastructure is habitable. Eliminating the capital grants for non-profits may seem like an easy cut, but one-time capital allows agencies to expand capacity with existing operating dollars.

Twice My Sisters' Place has applied to the City of London for a one-time capital grant to renovate and expand our existing facility. This would allow us to serve more women who are homeless and marginalized with our existing resources. The number of women seeking a safe haven within our shelter increases on a monthly

basis. We are averaging over 120-140 women a day and space to support and accommodate them is limited. Consideration of a one-time capital grant from the City would allow us to access and renovate existing space.

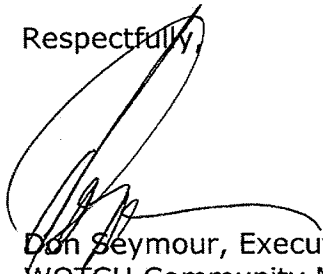
Persons who are homeless or marginalized often require significant intervention by the police, emergency services, hospital emergency rooms and community health centres. *Canada Without Poverty* estimates the cost of poverty in Canada is 72-86 billion dollars a year (approximately 2,000 dollars for each and every Canadian). The same reports states that moving people from the lowest level of poverty to the second lowest level would save the Canadian health system 7.6 billion dollars per year.

Affordable housing is a tangible first step to moving people, our fellow Londoners out of poverty. For a sixty dollars a year increase per tax-paying household or as Abe Oudshoorn, Chair of the London Homeless Coalition points out, for the cost of a single tank of gas we can maintain the commitment to creating affordable housing in London.

WOTCH Community Mental Health Services is prepared to do its part in creating new affordable housing opportunities in London for the people we serve and support. We are currently looking at how we can repurpose existing housing resources to create more housing supports for persons with mental illness. We are willing to collaborate and partner with both our fellow non-profits and the for-profit sector to ensure persons with mental illness in London have safe, secure and affordable housing.

We are hopeful London City Council will give serious consideration to maintaining the affordable housing reserves and continuing the capital grants program. London is a city of generous citizens and incredible resources and WOTCH believes that we should not create a budget that does not also support our most vulnerable citizens.

Respectfully,



Don Seymour, Executive Director
WOTCH Community Mental Health Services

Cc

S Estabrooks, Chair WOTCH Board of Trustees