



INFORMATION REPORT  
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February 3, 2015

**JOINT CAO'S OFFICE – CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS AND STRATEGIC INITIATIVES,  
CORPORATE SERVICES INFORMATION REPORT – FINANCIAL SERVICES 2015-07**

TO: Mayor Tony Van Bynen and Members of Council

SUBJECT: 2015 Budget Process Status Update

ORIGIN: Director, Financial Services/Treasurer

In accordance with the Procedure By-law, any Member of Council may make a request to the Town Clerk that this Information Report be placed on an upcoming Committee of the Whole agenda for discussion.

**COMMENTS**

The purpose of this report is to provide a status update on the 2015 budget process.

**Budget Process Schedule**

The revised budget schedule is included below under the Future Consultation section. The following list highlights changes to the Budget process schedule.

- February 2, Financial Services report 2015-05, which outlines some of the challenges and proposes some approaches to the budget, was received at Committee of the Whole.
- February 23, presentation of the preliminary draft budget – this is scheduled as a Special Committee of the Whole meeting at 10:00 am.
- March 23, public meeting on the draft budget – this has been changed as the original date, March 16, was during spring break.
- March 2, April 13 and April 20 – no change

In addition:

- January 23 – the 2015 budget brochure was mailed out with the interim tax bills, accompanied by the launch for the interactive budget survey.

## **BUSINESS PLAN AND STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGES**

This report aligns with Newmarket's key strategic directions in being Well Managed through fiscal responsibility.

## **CONSULTATION (CURRENT & FUTURE)**

Community engagement is one of the key focus areas expressed by the Town of Newmarket Council, community and staff. The community survey results along with the 2015 Budget Engagement results will help inform the 2015 budget process.

### **Community Survey**

Results of the Community Survey were shared at the Council Orientation workshop held December 10, 2014. Some highlights include:

- 95 per cent of residents are satisfied living in Newmarket.
- Four out of five residents are satisfied with local municipal government.
- 84 per cent of residents felt they were receiving at least fair value for their tax dollars and user fees for Town services.
- Four out of five residents are satisfied with overall services provided by the Town, particularly in the quality of service delivery.
- Residents want more engagement on budget and municipal services and programs

### **Council Interviews**

The Treasurer has completed all but one of the scheduled meetings with Members of Council. A lot of the discussion was providing background information but one common theme did arise – public engagement. Some of the suggestions included attendance at ward meetings and a simplified presentation. Most agreed that the level of participation is low.

### **Budget Community Engagement & Current Survey Results**

The goal of the 2015 Budget Community Engagement Plan is to continue to increase community awareness and engagement in the budget process.

**Communication Tools** - As presented and passed by Council in December, this year's budget communications continues to focus on driving online participation and engagement (identified by residents as the preferred format). The 2015 online budget engagement tools are also complemented by a variety of additional tools and tactics, which include;

- Interactive online budget tool - launched
- Call out to 15,000 to get engaged and completed week of Jan. 25
- Public meetings (CoW) - ongoing
- Town website, flash banners, social media

- Newmarket Now e-newsletter
- Postcards (for distribution at town events and facilities)
- Media releases/advisories
- Print ads (Snap and Newmarket Era)
- Radio ads (The Jewel)
- Budget engagement at events and facilities – ongoing
- Council engaging residents through multiple channels

The greater part of the 2015 Budget community engagement campaign runs from January to February and is meant to gauge how residents would like to see their tax dollars invested and level of satisfaction in relation to our key service areas.

**Interactive Budget Survey** - With only one week into the campaign, we wanted to share the following preliminary results:

- Over 100 surveys completed
- On-line survey traffic has been mainly driven through Facebook and the Town's Web-site
- Respondents wish to maintain current service levels or their monthly tax dollars invested in Newmarket services

**Future Consultation**

Future community consultation will continue as indicated in the following chart.

<b>Consultation</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Status</b>
Budget Community Engagement	January - February	√
CoW – Budget approach recommendation	February 2	√
CoW - Presentation of preliminary draft budget & Community Engagement results to date	February 23	
Draft budget info available to public and on website	March 2	
CoW – Public meeting on the draft budget	March 23	
CoW and public meeting on remaining Fees & Charges	April 13	
Council approval of Budget and remaining Fees & Charges	April 20	

**HUMAN RESOURCE CONSIDERATIONS**

Not applicable to this report.

**BUDGET IMPACT (CURRENT & FUTURE)**

Not applicable to this report.

**CONTACT**

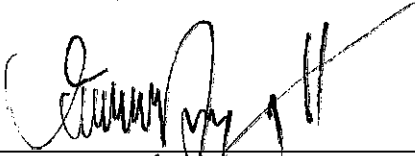
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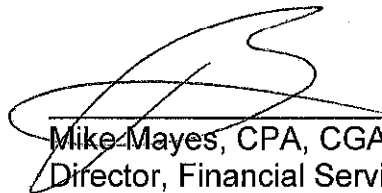
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