



Crafting a Budget for 2022

Guelph Council Session

October 2021

Agenda

- **Introduction to Workshop**
- **Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting**
- **Setting the Budget**
- **Looking Forward – More, Less, or the Same**
- **Affordability**
- **Budget Strategy**
- **Key Takeaways**



Introduction to Workshop

Goal of Workshop

- Discuss Strategic Plan implementation in a constrained budget environment
- Setting a baseline on Council priorities and affordability
- Staff direction regarding 2022-23 budget and background information requirements
- Linking priorities to residents' expectations across all of Guelph's government.



Reminder: Why Create Strategic Plans?

- For exactly *moments like these*.
- Strategic plans help us **identify challenges and opportunities** in all contexts – *even COVID*.
- Revisiting the strategic plan now will help Council and Staff successfully find their way through to the end of this crisis.
- The questions you as Council need to answer are “**where to**”, while providing staff with the parameters for “**how**”.
- **The Strategic Plan** is where we got input from the community about **priorities**; the **budget** is about **implementing them**.



Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting

Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Q1 - What do you think the biggest challenges will be for Council to maintain its strategic focus while discussing the 2022/23 budget?



“Pressure to do more of everything and faster. Lack of focus on priorities in the strategic plan.”



“Overcoming ... individual ideologies to create an effective and efficient city budget”



“The size of the budget increase. In the heels of this pandemic Council will be keeping in mind that many local families are struggling with their finances”



“Tax increases”



“As a result of the economic stress created by the Pandemic, there will be pressure to produce ‘austerity’ budgets. this does NOT serve us well in the long term”

Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Q2 - What are you hearing from the public about their priorities for Guelph post-pandemic in relation to the strategic plan priorities?



“People are concerned about inflation and the cost of living, including their property taxes especially with skyrocketing values.”



“People want increased services and lower taxes – a juxtaposition that's no different than any other year.”



“Put non-essentials on hold. Stop spending on horribly expensive projects”



Investments in public transit, expand active transportation network, progress towards carbon goals

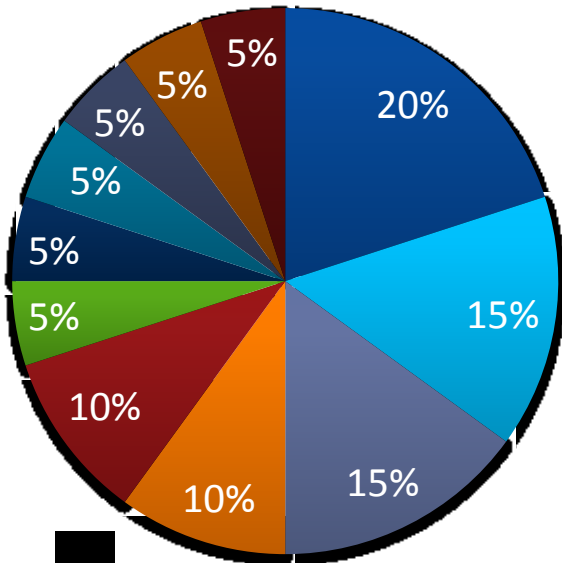


“They need time to rebuild their finances. Inflation is not transitory. It's here to stay and continues to impact their household finances.”

Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Q3 - From a **COMMUNITY** perspective, if Council had to choose just **TWO** things to focus on in **2022/23** - what would they be?

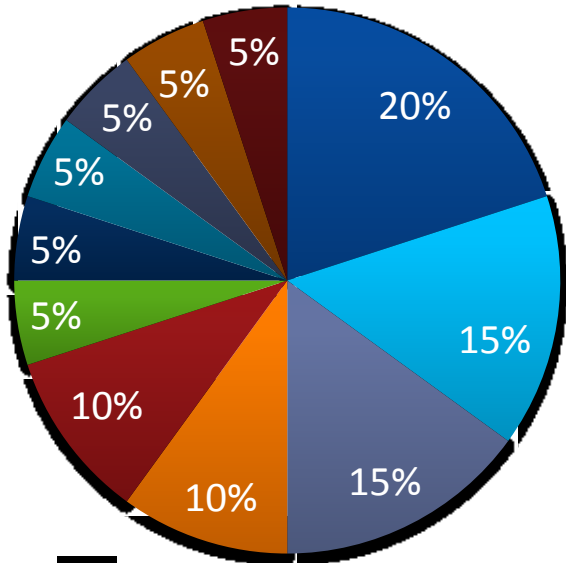
(please add to other below if you think something is missing)



- Affordable housing and homelessness
- Increasing non-auto mode share (transit and active transportation)
- Community safety in terms of feeling safe and increasing police, fire, and paramedic response times
- Other Option
- Community safety in terms of taking care of our infrastructure - safe service delivery via pipes, roads, bridges, facilities etc.
- Increasing 100% Renewable Energy gains / reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions
- Non-Strat Plan items: Rebuilding/continuing to manage through COVID impacts on our services
- Economic growth / tourism rebound and business retention / attraction
- Modernization, digital services and customer service
- Reducing climate risk exposure
- Community well-being and a sense of belonging

Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Q4 - From the CORPORATION perspective, if Council had to choose just TWO things to focus on in 2022/23 – what would they be?
(please add to other below if none of these apply)



- Non-Strat Plan items: Service Rationalization Recommendations
- Affordable housing and homelessness
- Modernization, digital services and customer service
- Community safety in terms of taking care of our infrastructure - safe service delivery via pipes, roads, bridges, facilities etc.
- Increasing 100% Renewable Energy gains / reducing community-wide greenhouse gas emissions
- Increasing non-auto mode share (transit and active transportation)
- Community safety in terms of feeling safe and increasing police, fire, and paramedic response times
- Other Option
- Non-Strat Plan items: Rebuilding/continuing to manage through COVID impacts on our services
- Economic growth / tourism rebound and business retention / attraction
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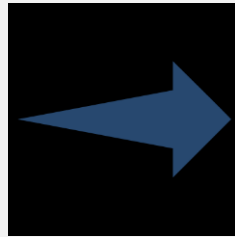
Setting the Budget

The Challenge: Setting the 2022-23 Budget

Municipal governments across Ontario are going to face very similar pressures this year. *These are:*



**Projected Budget
Gap**



**Tax Increase
Required to Fill It**

More than Numbers

- **The gap represents services, assets, and infrastructure priorities that Guelph intended to deliver on and may not be able to.**
 - Some spending is locked in through transfer payments and rates.
 - Some services even more necessary than they were before, while also driving up the costs.
 - Some of the gap is due to new facilities or services coming online.
- **The tax increase is the contribution we are asking of residents and businesses after nearly two years of extraordinary financial uncertainty and precarity.**
 - Some things we thought were important in 2019 might not be as important in 2022.
 - Things we thought were “nice to have” in 2019 might now be essential to address in 2022.
 - What is fair given the differentiated financial impacts the pandemic had based on people’s occupations, family structures, and service use?

Guelph's Vision and Mission



- **Guelph's vision**
 - An inclusive, connected, prosperous city where we look after each other and our environment
- **Guelph's mission**
 - Working together to deliver responsible and responsive public service to Guelph's growing and diverse community.



The Guelph Strategic Plan and the 2022-2025 budget

The Strategic Plan's five priorities lead this budget, setting us on a sustainable path for our economy, environment and transportation while supporting an efficient workforce and united community.

**Powering our
future**



**Sustaining our
future**



**Navigating our
future**



**Working together
for our future**



**Building our
future**

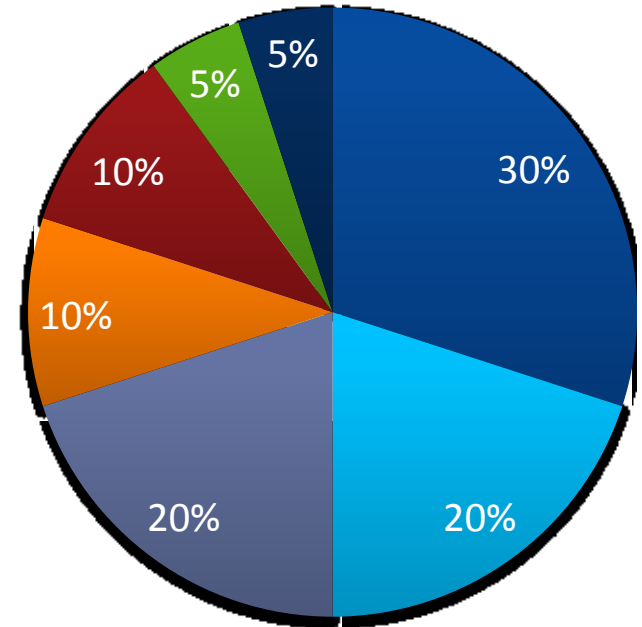


Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Q5 (a) - What TWO things are you most looking forward to during the City's very first multi-year budget process?

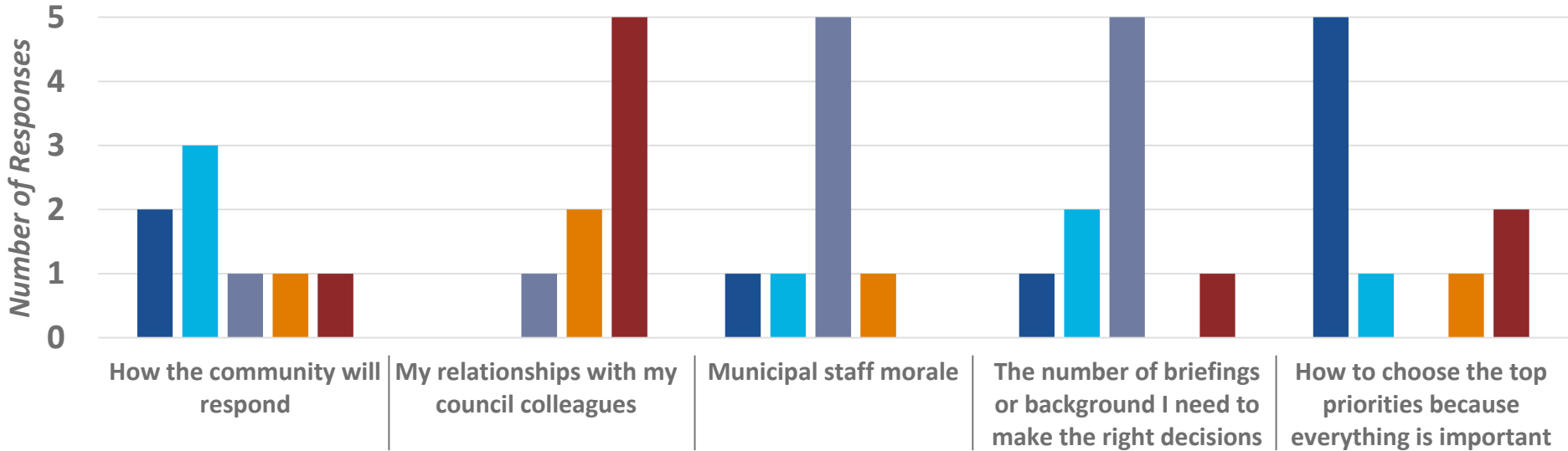
- Being able to communicate to the community about balancing priorities to ensure affordability is maintained.
- Being able to refer to the approved and forecasted budget through the year as decisions are made that will increase costs.
- Being able to focus on governance, and achieving our service goals rather than annual budget planning.
- Being able to communicate to the community what year the budget investment for their priorities falls within.
- Being a leader in local government financial management by approving a multiple year budget that resources the Strategic Plan.
- Providing transparency to the community on future tax and rate levy impacts so they can plan their business or household finances with confidence.

■ Other



Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Q5 (b) - Making decisions in a fiscally constrained environment will bring a lot of unusual challenges for Councillors... what part of this budget cycle concerns you most? *(Please rank as many of the following as you like, starting with 1 for your biggest concern.)*



Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Have a different answer for what part of this budget cycle concerns you most or want to explain your thinking?



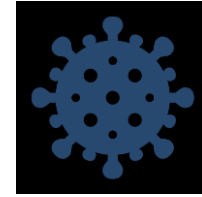
“What we need to do is to establish and rank priorities prior to budget and budget accordingly.”



“I can't imagine how staff can bring a budget forward that I would vote for”



“The concern is that almost everything seems to be a priority”



“How future year budgets will be impacted by unforeseen circumstances like the Pandemic or natural disasters which will force us to re-evaluate budgets in-year after we had already made decisions.”

Anticipated Challenges for Budget Setting in Current Environment

Q6 - What is a single request you would make of your council colleagues when working together to set the budget for 2022-23?



Work collaboratively, be reasonable, and be willing to prioritize



Read your material, ask questions prior to meetings



Maintain a long-term vision



Ensure that the budget is affordable for the community and municipality



Cooperate rather than pontificate

Looking Forward – More, Less, or the Same

Looking Forward

- The following questions were about the priorities identified in the ***Guelph. Future Ready. City Strategic Plan: 2019-2023.***
- You were asked whether you think the City should do a little more, about the same, or a little less to make progress on those strategic priorities and directions.

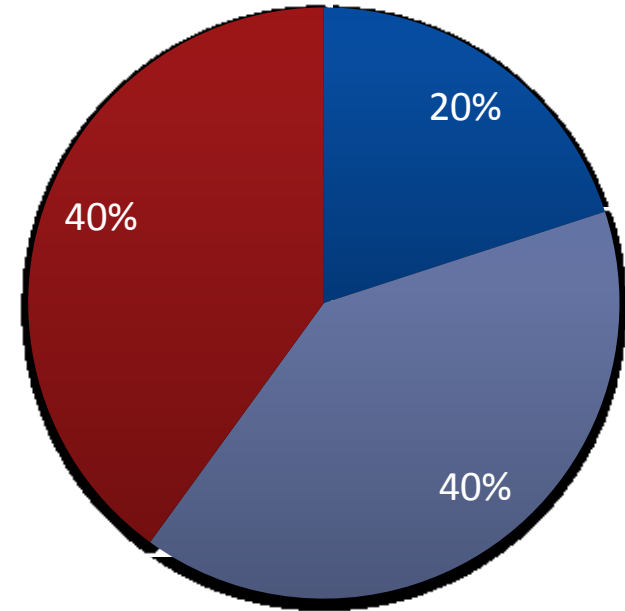


Strategic Plan - More, Less, or Same

Powering our future:
an economy that empowers us

Contribute to a sustainable, creative and smart local economy that is connected to regional and global markets and supports shared prosperity for everyone.

- Accelerate Guelph's innovation economy through partnerships
- Help businesses to succeed and add value to the community
- Support businesses as they adapt to changing workforce needs



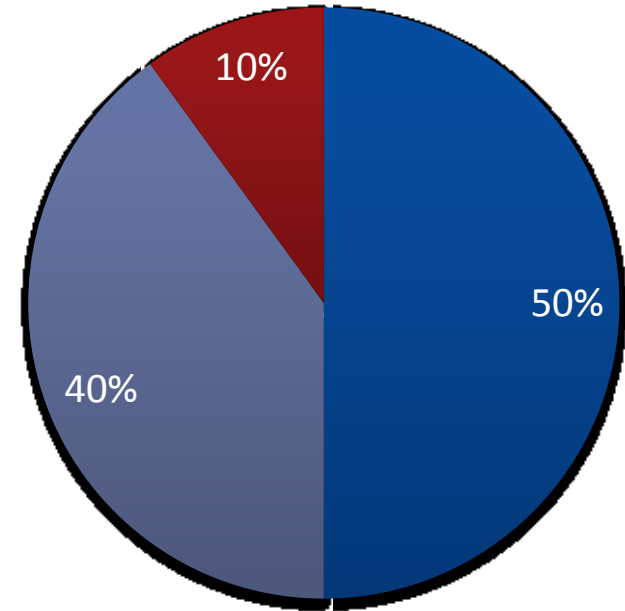
- Do More
- Do About the Same
- Do Less

Strategic Plan - More, Less, or Same

Sustaining our future:
an environment that sustains us

Care for the local environment, respond to climate change and prepare Guelph for a net-zero-carbon future.

- Create and execute an ambitious and achievable climate adaptation plan
- Mitigate climate change by reducing Guelph's carbon footprint
- Plan and design an increasingly sustainable city as Guelph grows



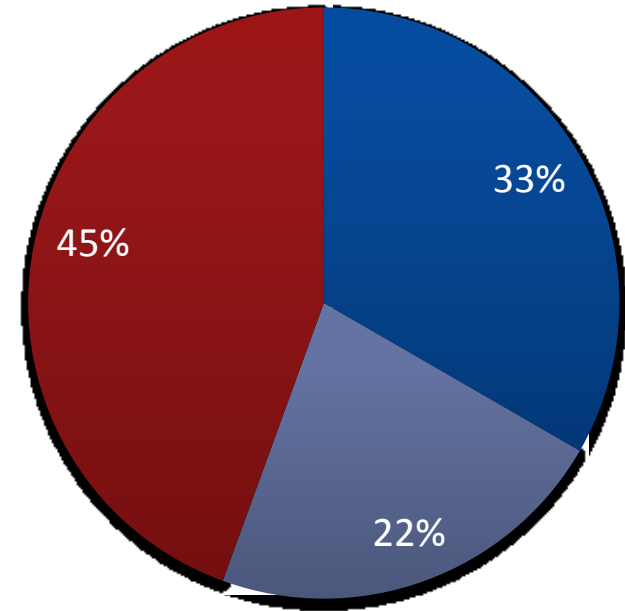
- Do More
- Do About the Same
- Do Less

Strategic Plan - More, Less, or Same

Navigating our future: a transportation network that connects us

Foster easy, accessible movement through trails, paths, roads and corridors to tie the community together and connect Guelph's economy with other regions.

- Build Guelph's capacity to adopt clean and efficient technology
- Provide attractive, affordable and reasonable transportation options for everyone
- Improve local transportation and regional transit connectivity



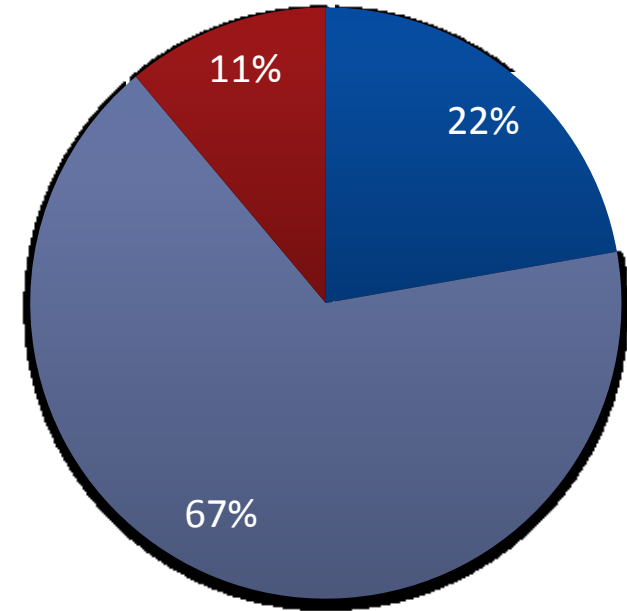
- Do More
- Do About the Same
- Do Less

Strategic Plan - More, Less, or Same

**Working together for our future
a modern government that works with us**

Run an effective, fiscally responsible and trusted local government with engaged, skilled and collaborative employees.

- Attract and develop accountable employees who work collaboratively and creatively to deliver services
- Improve how the City communicates with residents and delivers services
- Develop a long-term financial and resource strategy that is achievable and affordable



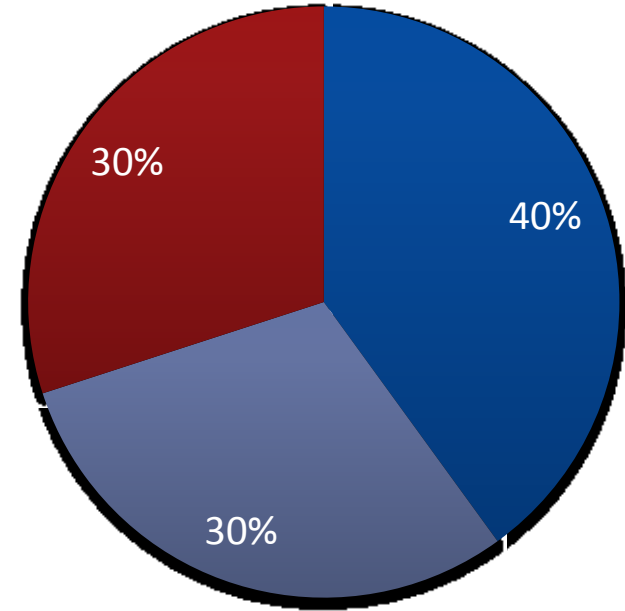
- Do More
- Do About the Same
- Do Less

Strategic Plan - More, Less, or Same

Building our future a community that supports us

Make strategic investments that nurture social well-being, provide landmark beauty and offer a safe place where everyone belongs.

- Maintain existing community assets and secure new ones
- Help increase the availability of housing that meets community needs
- Continue to build strong, vibrant, safe and healthy communities that foster resilience in the people who live here



- Do More
- Do About the Same
- Do Less

Group Discussion

- We are going to select two of the Strategic Plan Priorities there was relative consensus: environment and working together.
- Questions to answer:
 1. What did the Council ranking identify? (Why is this the “right” answer)
 2. What did the Council ranking miss? (Why is this the “wrong” answer)
- We will then look at a third priority with an almost even split, building our future. Why do we think this split is here?
- Open Discussion, StrategyCorp will take notes



Affordability

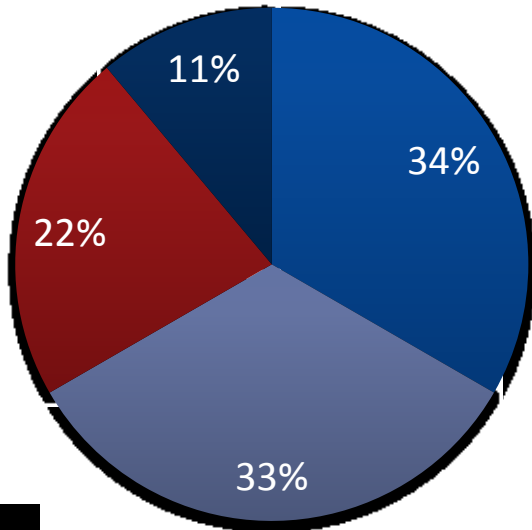
Affordability and Municipal Taxes in Guelph

- In the following questions, you were asked about perceived affordability in Guelph and your views on tax rates in the City.
- Some questions that were explored included:
 - Does the target being set at 5.05% still work for Councillors?
 - Do Councillors currently perceive Guelph as “affordable”?
 - What level of tax increases are acceptable?



Affordability and Municipal Taxes in Guelph

Q7 (a) - On average, Guelph residents currently pay about 5.05% of their income towards municipal rates and taxes. This is slightly higher than the total municipal survey average of 4.8%, and slightly lower than our identified municipal comparator average of 5.2%. With this in mind, do you think Guelph is currently affordable?



■ Yes, I think 5.05% IS affordable and we should MAINTAIN existing service levels

■ No, I think 5.05% IS NOT affordable and we should REDUCE service levels (and reduce costs)

■ No, I think 5.05% IS NOT affordable and we should MAINTAIN existing service levels

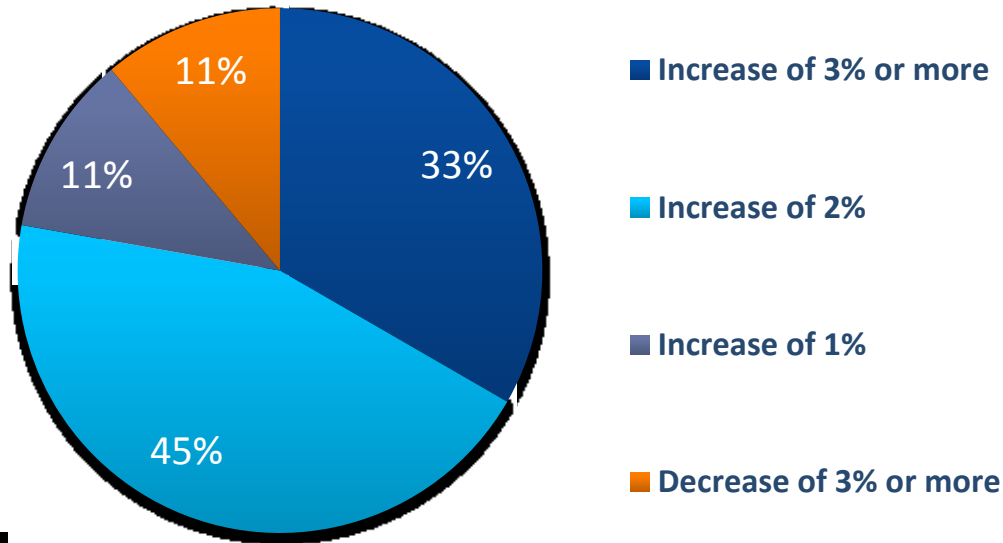
■ Yes, I think 5.05% IS affordable and we should INCREASE service levels (and increase costs)

Other Responses:

- “Targeted service increases in some areas and decreases in other areas can create balance”
- “My concern is for those who cannot afford to live in Guelph any longer and generally they are renters who pay taxes indirectly via their rent”

Affordability and Municipal Taxes in Guelph

Q7 (b) - Understanding that community building takes fiscal investment and therefore beyond inflationary tax and rate increases, building on your answer the previous question about the affordability of Guelph today, what change in tax levy do you think is appropriate in each of 2022 and 2023?

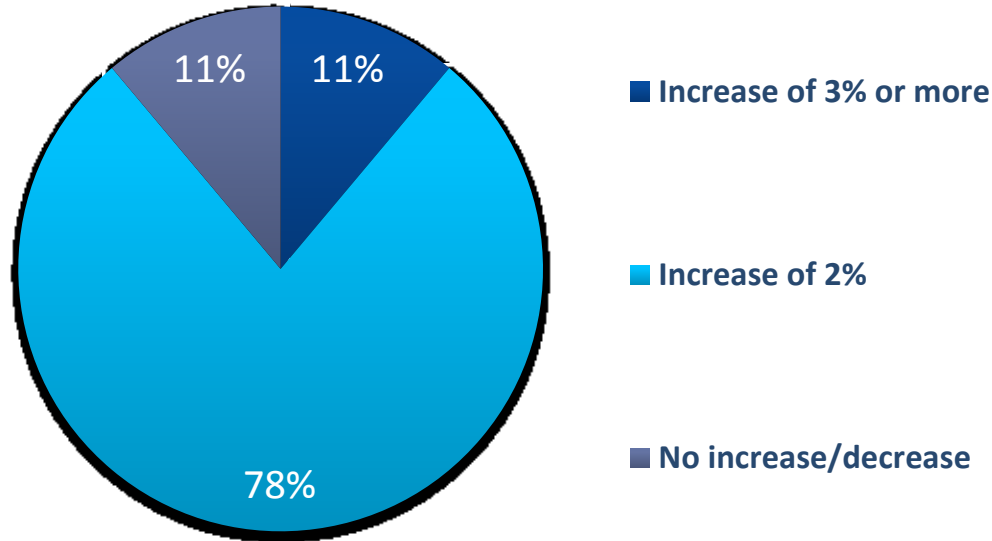


Other Responses:

- “Affordability is key... 6% is [impossible]”
- “Early indications point to higher increases needed to maintain our council-approved pace”
- “It makes more sense to establish priorities and then determine what we need to pay for them.”
- “...achieving 3-4 percent increases would be acceptable, given that we are undertaking several major city building initiatives, as long as ... increase in services delivered”

Affordability and Municipal Taxes in Guelph

Q7 (c) - Building on your answer from the last two questions about the affordability of Guelph today and the fiscal investment needed for community building, what change in combined rates (water, wastewater and stormwater) do you think is appropriate in each of 2022 and 2023?



Other Responses:

- "...increases in Water services costs should be close to cost of goods increases."
- "This is based on user use and can be controlled somewhat."
- "...How do we factor apartments, townhomes, lot size, demographics etc."

Budget Strategy

Budget Strategy – Balancing Affordability with Achieving Goals

- The budget is the affordability tool that dictates the PACE of implementing the Future Ready Action Plan initiatives



Budget Strategy – Service Decision Hierarchy



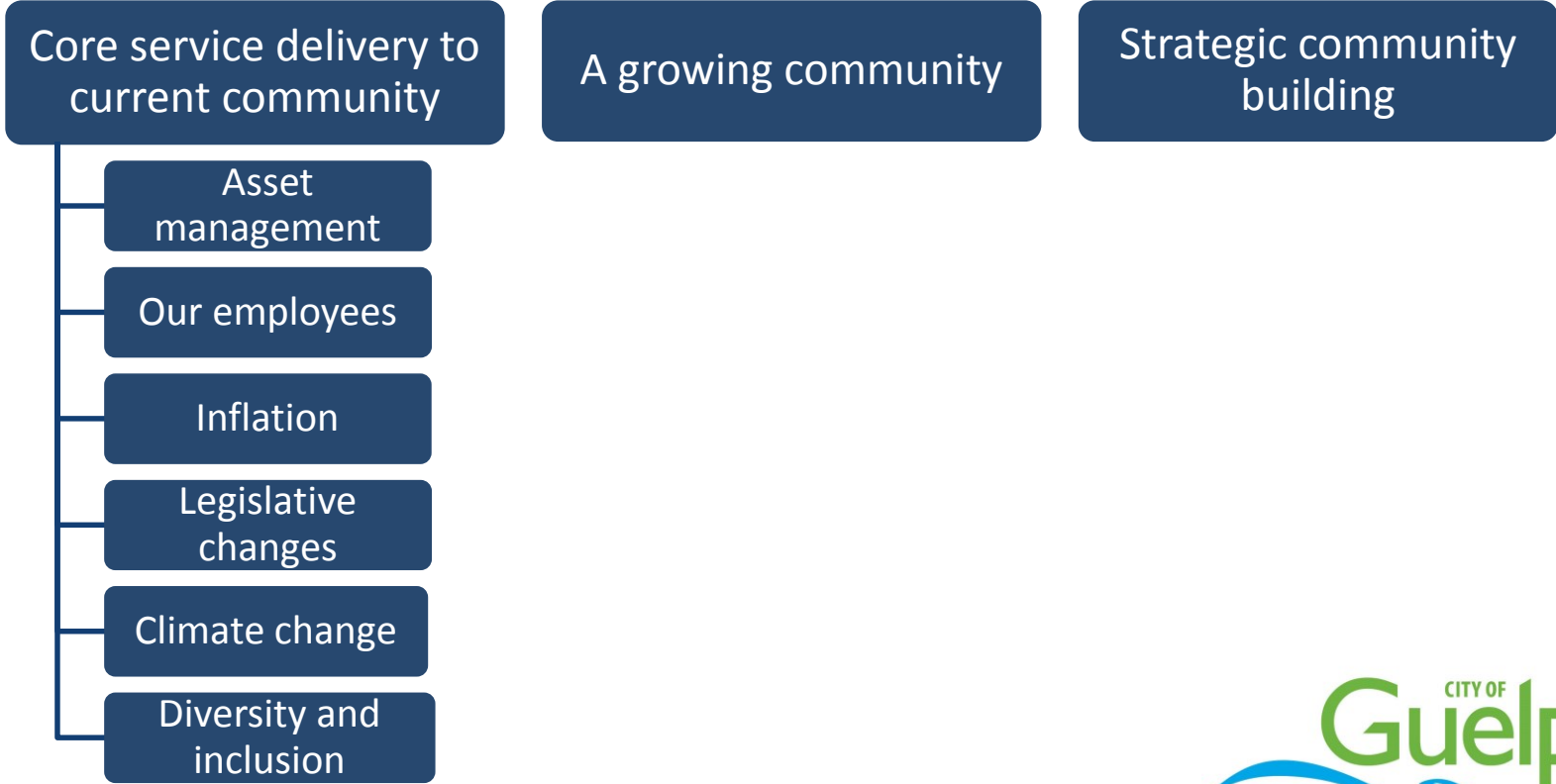
Budget Strategy – Service priorities

Core service delivery to
current community

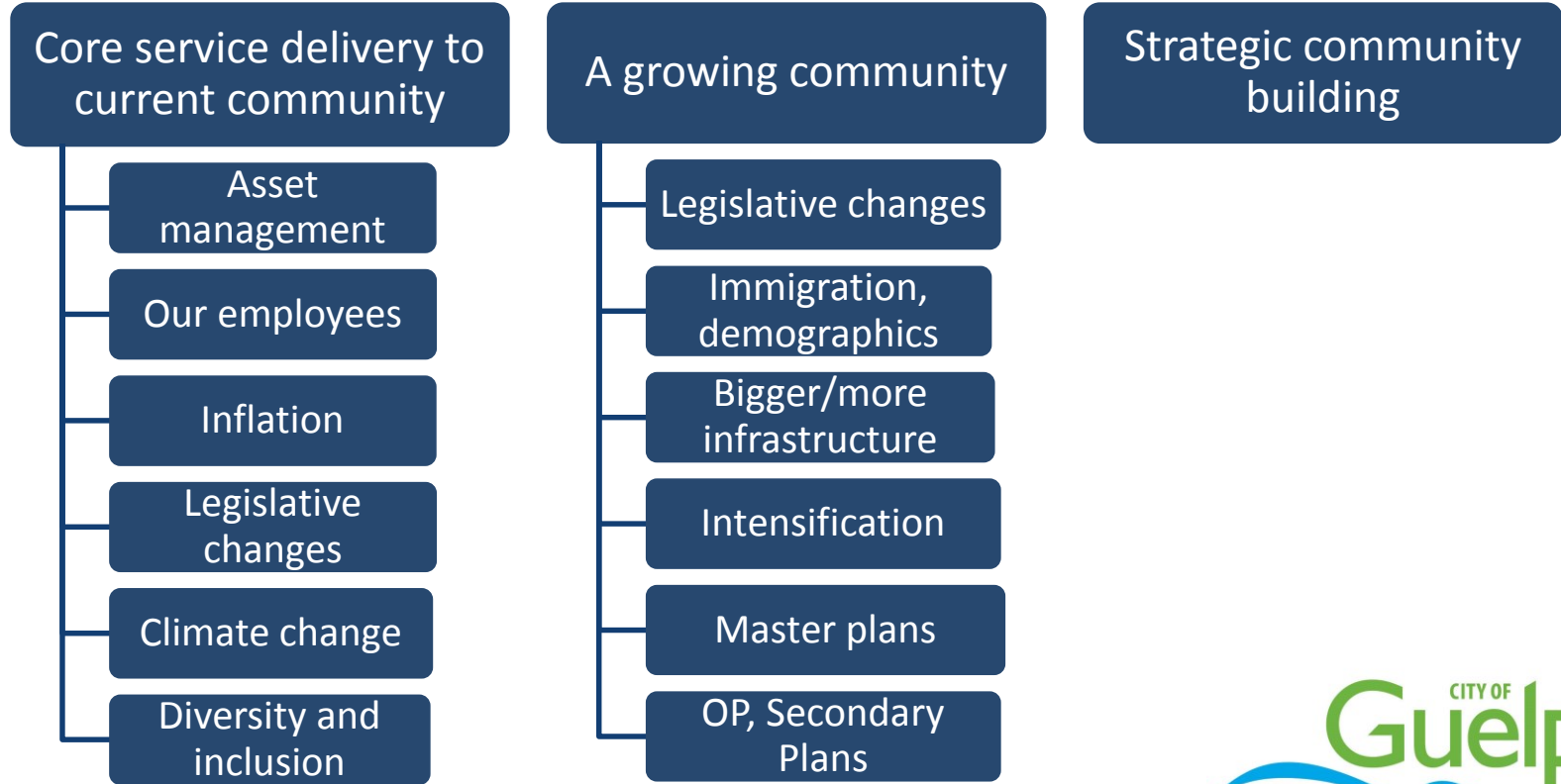
A growing community

Strategic community
building

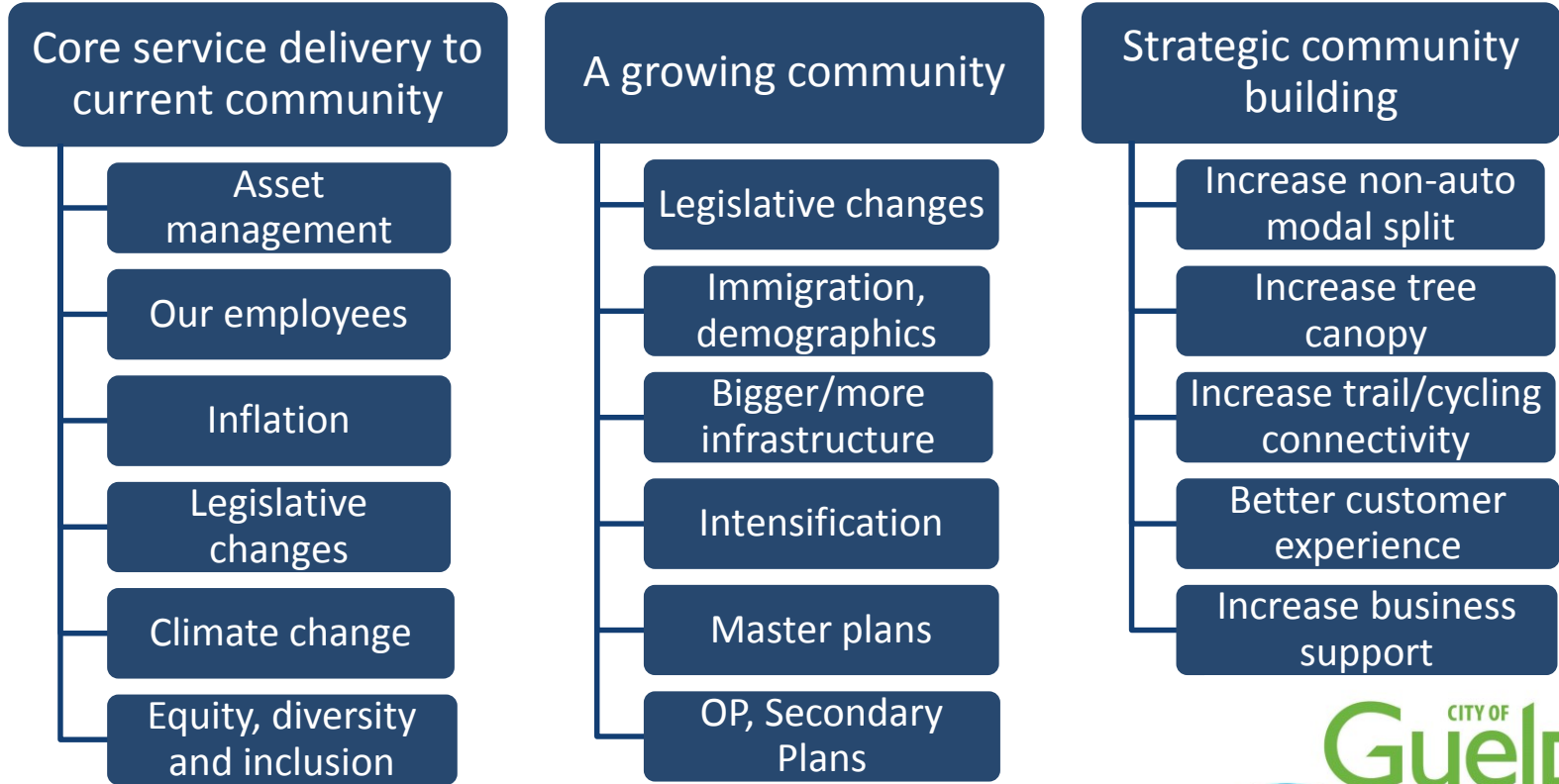
Budget Strategy – Service Priority Impacts



Budget Strategy – Service Priority Impacts



Budget Strategy – Service Priority Impacts



Budget Strategy - What is being done already?

- Multi-year budgeting and fiscal impacts of decisions
- Performance measurement culture
- Innovation and digital modernization
- Service rationalization review
- Service level decisions and master planning
- Continuous improvement and lean
- A focus on the customer

Budget Strategy – Affordability levers available to Council

- Slow down
- Stop
- Taking on more financial risk through use of reserves
- Match cost increases to associated revenue increases
- Create new revenue sources, increase user fees and charges
- Clearly defined performance objectives/outcome from the investment

Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways for Budget 2022-2023

What are some of the key takeaways from our conversation today for you, councillors, staff?



Thank You For Participating Today



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