

I will start by saying I have never commented on budget costs nor increases, but likely as one of the silent majority I find it is time to oppose the proposed increase.

I am both a homeowner and recent retiree in ward 2. I have the following comments:

Challenge organizations to tap into the growing group of retirees who would like to volunteer; library shifts, gardening, etc.. I am looking to be useful in our community.

While serving as part of a condo group it was clear that capital items often had to be deferred or changed to lower cost solutions. For example the proposed bridge from Emma St to Earl St for \$1.8 million plus inflation increases. Another example is the new playground in Joseph Wolfond Park East. Many of us watched it being built and summer/fall and were constantly commenting on the likely significant cost. Was there a lower cost alternative?

Increase user fees more than property taxes on homeowners who likely are not using the service or facilities.

Comparison of our property tax rates to Kitchener and Waterloo (lower rates in KW) and the overall inflation rate in Ontario and Canada (8% at peak and currently under 4%).

Use budget surplus (2022) to reduce increase going forward. Are we just reallocating to another service to use up the funds?

Thank you for serving our ward and hope council can come up with a budget we can live with.

Don and Catherine Bowman