



**2023 Operating Budget Review Committee
Room 204, 350 City Hall Square West
Monday, January 23, 2023 through Thursday, January 26, 2023
9:00 o'clock a.m. start time**

AGENDA

- 1. Call to order**
- 2. Selection of Committee Chair**
- 3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest**
- 4. Opening Comments by the Chief Financial Officer**
- 5. Public Delegations (if applicable)**

Delegates (5-minute maximum)

- a) Rakesh Naidu, President & CEO, Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce

Clerk's Note: Written submissions ***attached***

- a) Mark Legros
- b) Olivier Sauvé, Ward 2 resident
- c) David Boissonneault, resident
- d) Karl Mroczkowski, resident
- e) Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce
(Clerk's Note: Updated written submission received January 22, 2023 ***attached***)

6. Department by Department Budget Issue Review (see attached detailed schedule)

7. Motion to Move In-Camera if necessary

8. Motion to Move Back into Regular Session

9. Adjournment

**2023 Operating Budget Review Committee
January 23-26, 2023
Written Submission**

From: Màrk Legros
Sent: Wednesday, January 11, 2023 10:59 PM
To: clerks <clerks@citywindsor.ca>
Subject: city budget

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello, I am a disabled senior I cannot afford a \$160 increase on my property taxes because I am on a fixed income of CPP, and odsp i am already paying late charges on my account, thank you mark legros.

**2023 Operating Budget Review Committee
January 23-26, 2023
Written Submission**

From: Olivier Sauvé
Sent: January 13, 2023 10:28 AM
To: clerks <clerks@citywindsor.ca>
Subject: Opinions on the Budget

Hello,

I am a Windsor resident currently living in ward 2. I am in favour of increases to the budget which would improve public transit, and I am opposed to increasing the police budget. I would even be in favour of reductions to the police budget in favour of other social programs which would decrease crime.

Thank you for your consideration
O. Sauve

**2023 Operating Budget Review Committee
January 23-26, 2023
Written Submission**

From: David Boissonneault
Sent: January 13, 2023 5:57 PM
To: clerks <clerks@citywindsor.ca>
Subject: Property tax increase

As a home owner and tax payer I am completely disgusted with the proposed tax increase. Windsor city is already the highest taxed in the entire province of Ontario. The proposal offers services being cut and tax increases while other municipalities can seem to manage their budgets without these ridiculous increases. I am seriously contemplating moving out of Windsor in the near future due to the increase in violent crime and now this. Fix this mess or our city is going to the gutter.

**2023 Operating Budget Review Committee
January 23-26, 2023
Written Submission**

-----Original Message-----

From: Karl Mroczkowski
Sent: January 16, 2023 5:23 PM
To: clerks <clerks@citywindsor.ca>
Subject: 2023 Budget Opposition

Hello- First of all I apologize if this is a duplicate message. I could not find my message sent last week.

Looking at the 2023 budget and the proposed 5.23% tax increase, I object to the many new job positions being recommended.

None of the proposed jobs add any value to me as a taxpayer. There are requests for one time funding and also permanent positions. For example, the position for the Physical Demands Analyst- if you need a designated person to do just that, you have way too many injuries and that's a different problem. Your HR or H&S person should do these Physical Demand Analysis for the WSIB purposes.

I suggest a hiring freeze for all new positions until the budget is aligned with less of an increase or more value is added for the tax payer. "Up Skill" your existing staff to accomplish more, reduce non-valued tasks - don't add more new positions.

In addition, I also agree with the recommendation NOT to increase the snow threshold from 4" to 6" before city side streets are plowed. My street is usually a sheet of ice as it is.

Thank you

Karl Mroczkowski
1525 Stratford
Windsor

WINDSOR-ESSEX REGIONAL

Chamber of Commerce

2022 Municipal Budget Submissions

to the

City of Windsor

WINDSOR-ESSEX REGIONAL Chamber of Commerce

Introduction:

The Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce would like to start off by saying that we are very proud to have worked with many members on this council in the past and we look forward to working with and getting to know all of the new councillors. We know that everyone here is proud of our community and dedicated to making it a better place to live for all the residents of Windsor.

One of the ways we can make the City of Windsor a better place to live is to make it a better place to do business, attracting investment, and creating opportunity and prosperity. With one of the highest unemployment rates in Canada, a potential economic slowdown, and lingering challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, now more than ever we need to do everything we can to help make local businesses more successful.

As the leading voice of business in our region for almost 150 years, the Windsor-Essex Regional Chamber of Commerce has long advocated for policies to all levels of government to help doing business easier. The Chamber's Advocacy Committee with Chamber staff have developed policy recommendations to bring before you as part of your deliberations. Additionally, we will be responding to a proposal from city administration sharing the concerns of our members. To ensure that our advocacy efforts are well-rounded and impartial, our Advocacy Committee consists of representatives from both large and small businesses from a variety of sectors and industries. All of our proposals have been implemented either in the recent past, by the previous council, or in other municipalities in Ontario. The policies we discuss have track records of being beneficial to local businesses and serve as a helping hand to small businesses with their current challenges.

Waiving of Permit Fees and Accelerated Timelines:

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the City of Windsor offered a critical support to businesses by waiving many fees and shortening timelines for permits.

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Chamber of Commerce

We saw how businesses were able to take advantage of this opportunity presented by the city to build upon their success and help them through uncertain and trying times. This includes such things as parklet patio fees, which has resulted in numerous patio expansions across various areas of the city, especially downtown. These fee waivers and the shortened timelines enacted by the city have proven especially helpful to business owners during a time of crisis and uncertainty.

While we may have moved on from lockdowns and stay-at-home orders a new crisis has emerged. The crisis that was the COVID-19 Pandemic has morphed into a crisis of the labour market and supply-chain challenges. And the uncertainty of global pandemics and the lockdowns has transformed into uncertainty about an upcoming economic slowdown or recession. The simple reality on the ground is that the cost of business is going up and businesses cannot keep up their margins for fear of losing customers. Bringing back the fee waivers with shortened timelines means that businesses can lower their overhead by just a little bit and better prepare for upcoming challenges. If bringing back this program saves one small business, it means saving a vital piece of the heart and soul of our city, community, and neighbourhood.

Small Business Property Tax Subclass

In 2020, the Government of Ontario created the Small Business Property Tax Subclass for municipalities to consider implementing. This subclass allows municipalities to provide tax relief to small businesses with discounts on their property tax. It provides the ability for the municipality to establish eligibility criteria to determining qualifying properties with a process for property owners to apply and appeal if they are denied. The Chamber would like to recommend that the City of Windsor adopt the subclass for small businesses in the city. Both the City of Ottawa and the City of Toronto have adopted this proposal to reduce the effected businesses tax bill by 10% and 15% respectively. This is also matched by a decrease in their education taxes from the provincial government's side.

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Our Advocacy Committee debated the effects of this proposal to determine whether it would be good for businesses overall. Particular concerns were raised about tenant businesses and the fairness of reallocating the tax revenue that would be lost under this proposal. Based on our research we found that many businesses have “net” or “net-double” leases where they are responsible for the operating costs of the property which includes property taxes. Thus, any savings are directly flowed through to the tenant businesses. As for businesses with “gross” leases the city should encourage landlords to pass on their savings.

As for the reallocation of the burden of tax revenue lost, we feel that such impact would be limited based on the criteria for qualification established by the city. In the two noted examples above, the loss of revenue was reallocated to the remaining tax class who did not qualify for the subclass. This ultimately resulted in an approximate increase of 0.75% for two-years for other taxpayers in the applicable class in the City of Ottawa. The City of Toronto chose to adopt a one-time increase of 0.85% for their remaining applicable taxpayers in the same class. These are the models adopted by those municipalities, but should the city proceed, it can develop its own model for reallocating the lost revenue.

#SupportLocal

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce partnered with the Federal Government to fund its Shop Local campaign. The Windsor-Essex Chamber of Commerce worked with local businesses and business organizations to promote the campaign under our #SupportLocal banner to include businesses beyond retail including sectors such as the hospitality sector. This was one of the Chambers largest ever campaigns and helped numerous local businesses and remains ongoing beyond the initial project. Numerous activities were undertaken with this campaign that supported local businesses and BIAs and provided great exposure through local media.

Given the current economic climate and challenges faced by small businesses we ask the City of Windsor fund a Shop Local/Support Local campaign for businesses

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to once again have the resources to get community attention and raise support for small businesses. If the original campaign helped small businesses weather the challenges of a global pandemic, now is to opportunity to restart it to help small businesses weather the challenges of high inflation and an upcoming global economic slowdown.

Extension of Parking Hours:

The Chamber is concerned with the proposal before city council to extend the current parking times from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, Monday to Saturday. Parking is already a challenge for businesses in the core urban areas. These business areas are already struggling with numerous other challenges, especially in our downtown core. Foot raffic has not returned to pre-pandemic levels. The city will benefit from doing everything possible to encourage patrons and consumers to visit and spend at our great local businesses.

This proposal would further hurt their recovery efforts at a time when businesses are facing an increase in costs due to high interest rates and inflation. The Chamber feels that a moderate increase in parking rates would be a preferred solution and keep the current free period from 6:00 to 9:00 PM which incentivizes foot traffic during peak business hours for many establishments.

All of these issues aim at making our community a better place to live by giving our local business community just that little bit of extra support to grow. At the heart of every vibrant and strong community is prosperity, with prosperous community organizations, prosperous arts and entertainment scenes, and a prosperous investing and business climate. For the past two years, our Chamber has been at the heart of #SupportLocal encouraging consumers to shop, ship, and dine locally. Now is the perfect opportunity, by adopting these proposals, for the City Council and Administration to say we #SupportLocal too. The Chamber is proud to be the voice for business for

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almost 150 years and we look forward to working with great partners like the City of Windsor to help our community live up to its full potential. We know that everyone benefits when we create the conditions for success.