



Durham Region has passed its 2012 budget, and the result will be a small tax increase for Clarington property owners.

Durham Regional Council has approved the 2012 Regional Business Plans and Budgets (for property-tax-supported purposes) and the 2012 Property Tax Rates, during its meeting at Regional Headquarters. The 2012 Business Plans and Budgets, totalling \$1.015 billion, will provide essential services and investment in needed capital infrastructure to more than 600,000 residents.

As a result of the 2012 Regional Property Tax Business Plans and Budgets, residents will see an average 1.95 per cent increase on the Regional portion of their property tax bill (after reassessment), which equates to about \$45 on an average home assessed at \$319,000. This number may vary, however, as rates for waste management and transit differ within each municipality.

"With this budget, Durham Regional Council has ensured it is providing local residents and businesses with investments that will directly enhance the quality of life in our region," said Roger Anderson, Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer. "Staff from all Regional departments worked together to keep costs down, while still providing the highest-quality programs and services to our local taxpayers."

Budget highlights include expansion and improvements of the Region's road networks and Durham Regional Police Service facilities; increased Children's Services spaces; initiatives to help increase emergency response capabilities; enhancement and expansion of transit routes; and further plastic waste-diversion initiatives. Water and sewer services are not included, as these services are funded from sources other than property taxes.

"Throughout this budget process, careful consideration was given to the important issues facing council, balancing the current economic climate and long-term sustainability," said Regional Councillor Don Mitchell, Chair of the Finance & Administration Committee. "Staff has worked diligently to ensure current and future funding is available for Regional programs and services, while always keeping in mind taxpayer affordability."

"This year's budget continues to advance the strong financial fundamentals that underlie the Region's excellent credit rating--a fiscal strategy that guards against unforeseen impacts." said Jim Clapp, Commissioner of Finance.

This spring, the Finance Department will distribute a newsletter to each home in Durham Region, which outlines the services funded from the 2012 Regional portion of residents' property tax bills.

Highlights of the Region's 2012 Property Tax Regional Business Plans and Budgets:

- Additional funding for Durham Region Transit to complete, one year ahead of schedule (2013 to 2012), the Ajax Pickering route restructuring for improved transfers and future Highway 2 Bus Rapid Transit service.
- Additional funding for solid waste management initiatives, including remediation action plans for the Brock Landfill Site and monitoring and improvements for other former landfill sites, as well as implementation of #3 to #7 plastics recycling.
- Infrastructure renewal including Next Generation Communication Platform, Fairview

Lodge Long-Term Care facility and capital expenditures for Durham Regional Police Service related to the Clarington facility.

- Almost \$50 million dedicated to the expansion and improvement of the regional transportation network, including proposed major improvements to the Winchester and Ritson roads intersection in the City of Oshawa, and Bayly Street/Victoria Street (from Shoal Point Road to Halls Road) in the towns of Ajax and Whitby, and several bridge rehabilitation and replacement projects, including the replacement of the McCully Bridge on Regional Road 13 in the Township of Brock.
- Additional funding for economic development as part of the new, three year strategic program to enhance the Regional profile and attract investment in the Region.
- An additional 46 new child-care fee-subsidy spaces, 100 per cent funded by the Province of Ontario.
- Addition of five 911 Emergency Telephone System operators in order to meet call answer standards.
- As part of its mandate to provide accessible and responsive emergency services, Durham Region Emergency Medical Services to replace seven ambulances and two emergency response vehicles.
- The Region's commitment for funding to Lakeridge Health and Durham College, and new funding for the Rouge Valley Ajax Pickering Hospital.

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