

NEWS RELEASE

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Nanaimo City Council adopts a zero per cent property tax increase

Summary

Nanaimo home owners are set to receive a break on property taxes following Council's unanimous motion to adopt a zero per cent property tax increase for 2016. The decision follows several months of discussion, prioritizing and planning between individual Councillors and between Councillors and staff, as well as outreach to the public in the form of a survey and eTown Hall. The result is the City's first zero per cent property tax increase in many years.

The total budget outlined in the City's 2016-2020 Financial Plan is \$189 million, of which \$128 million will go towards operations and \$61 million will go towards capital projects. Included in the budget is a commitment to continue to grow the City's reserve funds which, for 2016, will grow by \$4.1 million. The 2016 budget also includes funds to review public safety operations addressing service levels, staffing and facility requirements.

A summary of the 2016-2020 Financial Plan is available on the City's website or can be accessed via the link supplied with the online version of this news release.

Strategic Link: Taking responsibility to be an excellent municipal government through long-term financial planning.

Key Points

- The 2016-2020 Financial Plan does not require a property tax increase in 2016 for the municipal portion of taxes. Looking ahead, an average property tax increase of 1.3 per cent for municipal purposes is projected for the 5 years covered by the plan.
- The City was able to avoid increasing property taxes in 2016 due to \$1.2 million in new property tax revenue from construction growth and savings from management positions rationalization.
- Property tax notices will be mailed to taxpayers after the Victoria Day weekend.

Quotes

"Council and staff have worked diligently for months to return a 2016 Financial Plan that reflects the will of council to be more accountable and efficient. This is an extremely positive step and I look forward to concluding the Core Services Review and getting to work on the 2017 Financial Plan."

Bill Bestwick
Councillor
City of Nanaimo

"During the election, tax fatigue was stated quite often, therefore I am pleased that Council is working in that direction."

Bill Yoachim
Councillor
City of Nanaimo

"While I am happy we have managed to achieve a 0% tax rate in 2016 and am pleased to hear no services were cut to the public, I would not expect a city the size of Nanaimo to achieve 0% every year if we wish to move forward and continue to grow."

Wendy Pratt
Councillor
City of Nanaimo

"I am extremely pleased with the work staff and council have done this year to achieve the 0% increase. This will greatly benefit the residents and businesses in our community."

Jerry Hong
Councillor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- The 2016 budget includes a zero per cent property tax increase for municipal purposes, a water rate increase of 7.5 per cent, sewer rate increase of 5 per cent and garbage/recycling increase of 1 per cent. For an average residential home, the total increase will be approximately \$38.
- The 2016-2020 Financial Plan includes service level enhancements including two additional RCMP members, 911 public safety answering point contract changes, new water treatment plant operations, and additional staff in water operations and information technology.

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