



Public Meetings Minutes

November 19, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
Whitby Town Hall
2025 Budget Public Meeting

Present:

- Mayor Roy
- M. Gaskell, Chief Administrative Officer
- B. Harasym, Associate Solicitor
- M. Hickey, Fire Chief
- S. Klein, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
- J. Long, Head of Organizational Effectiveness
- J. Romano, Commissioner of Community Services
- R. Saunders, Commissioner of Planning and Development
- E. Watson, Senior Manager of Financial Planning/Deputy Treasurer
- F. Wong, Commissioner of Financial Services/Treasurer
- K. Narraway, Sr. Manager of Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk
- K. Douglas, Sr. Legislative Specialist (Recording Secretary)

1. Public Meeting - 2025 Operating and Capital Budget

Mayor Roy provided an overview of the 2025 Operating and Capital Budget Public Meeting format. Mayor Roy advised that Members of Council will consider comments made by the public and may bring forward amendments to the proposed budget at the Special Council meeting scheduled for November 28th at 7:00 p.m. She advised that members of the public who wish to be notified of further budget updates may email the Financial Services Department at treasury@whitby.ca.

1. Presentations

1. Elizabeth Roy, Mayor, F. Wong, Commissioner of Financial Services/Treasurer, and E. Watson, Senior Manager of Financial Planning/Deputy Treasurer

Re: 2025 Strong Mayor's Budget and 2025 Budget Overview

Elizabeth Roy, Mayor, F. Wong, Commissioner of Financial Services/Treasurer, and E. Watson, Senior Manager of Financial Planning/Deputy Treasurer provided a presentation regarding the 2025 Strong Mayor's Budget. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the Town's community vision and corporate mission;
- completion or commencement of over 95% of the Community Strategic Plan key action items;
- results of the hospital campaign;
- grant funding to support housing development;
- details of the 27-acre, zero carbon, and accessible Whitby Sports Complex design and development site;
- legislative requirements for the Strong Mayor's Budget, informed by the Community Strategic Plan and key action items, community engagement, and the draft budget prepared by staff;
- an outline of the 2025 Budget process and timelines;
- an overview of 2025 Budget engagement strategy and participation rates;
- results of the budget Prioritize Tool and citizen participation;
- demographics of Citizen Budget Survey participants;
- a comparison between the draft budget prepared by staff and the Strong Mayor's Budget;
- an overview of the priorities and budgetary pressures considered when building the 2025 Budget, such as the Consumer Price Index and previous Council decisions;
- budgetary pressures related to maintaining Town assets, resulting in an infrastructure funding gap of \$10.8 million;
- the Whitby Housing Pledge and the financial impact of planning for growth;

- assessment growth revenue and user fee increases that help offset budget pressures;
- a summary of the 2025 proposed budget, resulting in a 4.5% increase on the Town's portion of the property tax bill;
- an overview of the proposed property tax increases for lakeshore municipalities in Durham Region and throughout the Greater Toronto Area;
- the impact of the proposed 2025 Budget on the average residential property tax bill;
- a summary of the revenues and expenditures included in the proposed 2025 Operating Budget;
- a summary of the proposed 2025 Capital Budget, funded by Asset Management Reserves, Development Charges, the Growth Reserve Fund, and other reserves, grants and external contributions;
- the projected annual Municipal Accommodation Tax revenue;
- proposed investments into Economic Development and Downtown Whitby, other Whitby neighbourhoods, parks and active transportation, and roads and infrastructure;
- programs that support residents including tax rebate programs, the tax deferral program for seniors, the windrow snow clearing program, the Access Program for recreation, and support for housing programs;
- additional investments required to reduce the Town's annual greenhouse gas emissions as part of the Zero Carbon Whitby Plan; and,
- next steps in the 2025 Budget process.

2. Delegations

Mayor Roy indicated that comments regarding the proposed 2025 Strong Mayor's Budget would now be received by members of the public.

1. Martin Krull, Resident

Martin Krull, Resident, expressed concerns regarding the Town's proposed 2025 budget, including the cost of delivering services and the portion of the budget allocated toward staff salaries, wages and benefits. Mr. Krull noted the impact of increased property taxes on affordability for residents.

Mayor Roy, F. Wong, Commissioner of Financial Services/Treasurer, and M. Gaskell, Chief Administrative Officer provided information regarding the expenditures impacting the Town's budget, including the financial impact of planning for growth. They also explained how the total residential property tax rate is calculated.

2. Jasper Hyslop, Resident

Jasper Hyslop, Resident, expressed concerns with the proposed increase to the Town's portion of the property tax bill and sought clarification regarding efficiencies identified in the proposed 2025 budget.

Mayor Roy and F. Wong, Commissioner of Financial Services/Treasurer provided information regarding efficiencies identified in the draft budget including identified expense reductions from staff. They also highlighted revenue sources including user fee increases and assessment growth and budget reduction strategies including the phase-in funding for staffing the Whitby Sports Complex and hiring 20 new Firefighters.

3. Allison Rew, Resident

Allison Rew, Resident, expressed concerns regarding the proposed increase to the property tax rate, noting the limited amenities on the unassumed street where she lives. Ms. Rew sought clarification on the Town's development process and consultation between staff and developers to ensure that minimum requirements are met in order for the Town to assume responsibility for newly developed neighbourhoods.

Mayor Roy, F. Wong, Commissioner of Financial Services/Treasurer, and R. Saunders, Commissioner of Planning and Development provided information regarding the development process and the process and timelines for the Town to assume newly developed neighbourhoods.

There were no additional submissions from the public.

Mayor Roy, F. Wong, Commissioner of Financial Services/Treasurer, and J. Romano, Commissioner of Community Services responded to questions submitted online through the budget engagement process clarifying the Town's property tax rate and highlighting the Town's recreational services compared to those of neighbouring municipalities.

The meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.