

Budget 2014 Community Consultation Form



Deadline for submissions: Friday, June 21, 2013

As part of Council's commitment to balancing the need to provide excellent, efficient services with the desire to maintain low property taxes, the Finance and Administration Committee of Greater Sudbury is looking for your input into the 2014 municipal budget.

The Committee will begin budget deliberations this fall for the 2014 municipal budget, but the process starts now to ensure that Council has time to consider all ideas and suggestions.

The Committee is looking for creative solutions to find efficiencies or increase revenues, as part of their long-term fiscal sustainability plan. If you have suggestions for fiscal opportunities for our City, the community consultation is your chance to talk about them.

The community consultation is also an opportunity to make funding requests. Such requests should be in line with the City's vision, mission, and values, which speak to quality of life, excellence of service, innovation, and the social, environmental, and economic development of our community.

RECEIVED

JUN 04 2013

CLERK'S

Budget 14
Have your say.

The 2014 Municipal Budget Begins with You:

Gordon A. Este

Name

Organization (if applicable)

Daytime telephone

Email

Check here if you would like to make a presentation to the Finance Committee by attending the Public Consultation on Tuesday, June 18, 2013, starting at 6 p.m. in the Council Chamber of Tom Davies Square. Presenters are asked to limit their remarks to five minutes.

Comments/Suggestions/Opportunities for Savings:

Concerning Seniors Property Tax

Description of project/program requiring funding and why this project/program would benefit the community (if applicable):

Estimated one-time cost or saving: _____

Estimated on-going costs or savings: _____

Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act

I hereby acknowledge that the City of Greater Sudbury collects this information for the purpose of collecting information for the 2014 municipal budget process in accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001. I consent to the information in this form, its attachments and any further information provided being disclosed in its entirety to Council, City staff and/or members of the public and the information may be discussed in public meetings and posted on the Internet. Any questions relating to the collection, use and/or disclosure of the information provided in this form may be addressed to the Deputy City Clerk at Tom Davies Square, 200 Brady Street, 2nd Floor, P3A 5P3 or by telephoning 705-674-4455 ext. 4206.

Complete and mail/deliver to:

City Clerk, Tom Davies Square,
200 Brady Street, 2nd Floor,
P.O. Box 5000, Str A,
Sudbury, ON P3A 5P3
Fax: 705-671-8118

Note: Failure to sign may result in the information or portions thereof not being considered for the 2014 Budget Process.

Gordon A. Este
Signature

June 11, 2013

To:

Madame Mayor Marianne Matichuck

Members of City Council

Members of the Finance and Administration Committee of Greater Sudbury

In regard to the upcoming Community Consultation for the 2014 Municipal Budget June 18th, 2013 as it applies to the City's vision, mission, and values, which speak to quality of life, excellence of service, innovation, and the social development of our community.

My suggestion for change speaks specifically to how we as a society treat our Senior Citizens, it is a forward thinking and perhaps radical idea, but I feel that it's time has come, and I believe that Sudbury has the opportunity to set an example for every city and municipality across Canada in regard to how elder citizens should not only be respected and cared for, but protected by Municipal and Federal Tax Laws and Policies.

It has grown increasingly difficult for senior citizens who are able to care for themselves in their own homes to meet the financial challenges associated with their independence. This is especially true when the individual's spouse has passed on. A senior in this situation, who is on a low fixed income, can not possibly meet the financial challenges they face without it affecting their quality of life.

I believe, and I am sure you would agree, that any senior who is capable of living independently and wishes to do so should not only be encouraged by the community, but also be afforded that opportunity by the municipality and its policies.

My request for change is aimed specifically at property tax assessment. It is my belief that property taxes could be, and should be, assessed on a geared to income basis for our senior citizens. Most seniors in the financial situation I have described have encountered difficulty meeting the property tax demands of their assessment, many are behind with payment and are struggling to make ends meet as a result, they do without to meet the demand, or have been forced to leave their homes prematurely due to this burden.

I am aware that help is available for those seniors who qualify for the Guaranteed Income Supplement, I believe that the amount for this year is \$275, I agree this is a step in the right direction, but I respectfully suggest that when the property tax assessment is in excess of \$3000, this assistance, though well meaning, simply isn't enough. Further, only those seniors who receive the Guaranteed Income Supplement qualify. If the individual's income exceeds, even slightly, the allowable amount, the additional \$275 is not available.

I believe that these policies fall short of ensuring our seniors quality of life and fail to protect them from the perils of financial ruin.

At the risk of being dramatic these are the mothers, fathers, grandparents, and great grandparents, who bounced us on their knees, soothed our hurts, and pioneered our community. They have put their time in, and they have paid their fair share of tax during that time.

So this is my proposal:

-that the City of Sudbury create a new policy that would see geared to income property tax assessments for senior citizens who are eager and able to continue living in their own homes.

-that this new form of tax assessment be made available to all seniors living in their own homes, not just those who qualify for the Guaranteed Income Supplement, in order to ensure that everyone who needs the help gets it.

-that the program be simplified so that any senior can participate by supplying a copy of their previous years tax return.

-that a fair formula be created through consultation with directives followed by other geared to income social programs already in place.

-that by doing so the City of Greater Sudbury set a new standard concerning how senior citizens are protected and revered within all Canadian communities.

Thank you for your consideration, it is my intention to voice my ideas in person at council chambers on June 18th, 2013 at 6 pm.

Gordon A. Este