

ADDENDUM TO COMMUNICATION 135193

Comments from the Public on the 2025 Draft Budget and responses to technical questions.

1. As a resident of Carleton Place I do not agree with the tax increase. We are already paying high enough taxes for a small town outside of Ottawa. Also people that are on acreages on the outskirts the rich are playing lower taxes. Therefore, this increase only affects those that are having to live in the city of Carleton Place. The people living in the city of Carleton Place are lower to middle class. . We lack the same amenities as a large cities in Ottawa regarding transportation, resources etc.

We do not have large industry here to offset the costs. People move to the outskirts of Ottawa for more affordable living and still need to commute into the city. The increase in taxes will make living unaffordable. Please do more research prior to increasing any taxes.

2. Municipalities are facing significant increased financial pressures due to increasing policing costs and other downloaded “provincial” services, not to mention inflationary pressures. Were there any increases to the grants municipalities receive from the province for Carleton Place to help offset these costs? Or are rate payers to assume all increases? If it is the latter, I believe the municipality should be clear with rate payers that stagnant provincial funding is the reason we are having to bear the brunt of such significant increases.

I can't imagine it is easy for staff and our elected council to grapple with these budget pressures in a rapidly growing town, so thank you for all the diligence and hard work put in. I'm reading that some municipalities are facing double-digit increases. The fact that ours is only 3.9% and 4.1% for OPP is miraculous!

Grant revenue from the Province has been reduced by \$357,679 over the last four years. Just for context, a 1% tax rate increase is equal to \$150,839 for 2025. Therefore, this reduction is equivalent to a 2.4% tax increase.

Please refer to the chart below for a 4-year history of annual grants provided by the Province to municipalities

	2022	2023	2024	2025
<i>OMPF*</i>	312,900	266,100	266,100	266,100
<i>OCIF**</i>	1,134,315	1,139,704	968,748	823,436
TOTAL	1,447,215	1,405,804	1,234,848	1,089,536

**OMPF – Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund*

***OCIF – Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund*

3. I find it somewhat tone-deaf to justify the 8% increase by comparing Carleton Place to other municipalities. This response risks making residents feel their concerns aren't being heard, and does little to acknowledge the hardship an 8% increase imposes on taxpayers who are already feeling the squeeze from rising costs in virtually every other area of life.

The rapid growth in Carleton Place, with new developments popping up across town, further strains our already stretched infrastructure. It's important to ensure that developers, rather than existing property owners, shoulder the costs of these developments. Greater transparency about how developers are contributing to infrastructure renewal would go a long way in building trust with residents.

For many, especially seniors, single parents, and those on fixed incomes, an 8% tax increase is more than just a number—it's a hardship. A \$200 increase per year may seem small, but for families already struggling with rising mortgage rates, food prices, and utility costs, even small increases can have a significant impact. I've also noticed an increase in homelessness, something I've never seen in the 30 years I've lived here, which only underscores the growing financial strain on our community.

I urge the municipality to consider alternatives, such as staggering the increase over several years or offering targeted relief for vulnerable groups like low-income households, seniors, and single-parent families. Additionally, I believe there's an opportunity for more community-driven discussions around budget priorities. As someone with experience in policy development and governance, I would have welcomed the chance to contribute, and I'm sure many others in the community would have as well. I don't think this was communicated widely and openly enough in advance.

While we all want a financially sustainable community, we also must ensure that the tax burden does not disproportionately affect those already struggling and that our community remains a desirable and affordable place to live. I urge you to revisit this proposed increase with these considerations in mind.

Among many other efforts to keep costs low and attract additional revenue, more than \$5 million in capital projects just to maintain the assets citizens use everyday were deferred to keep the increase as low as possible this year. Last year, a similar amount of projects was deferred, and Council used some reserves to artificially keep the tax rate low. Additionally, a few years ago when inflation was more than 7%, Council chose to use reserves to keep that year's tax rate at 2% as they felt it was an especially tough year for residents. We now need to

make up for some of that shortfall to get back on track and ensure the future financial sustainability of the Town.

The Town requires new developments to construct and provide all necessary infrastructure within the boundaries of that development to the Town at no cost. In addition, for those items that service more than individual developments, the Town collects development charges to fund those needs. We are currently updating our development charge By-law and there is a meeting this Thursday at 6pm if you are interested in more information.

Unfortunately, the Town is not able to offer senior or other discounts. The municipal Act prescribes that the Town applies a consistent tax rate to all property assessment values as provided by MPAC. Please see slide #30 and 31 of my public budget presentation for more information on what the Town is permitted to do.

4. You are seriously increasing taxes this high when people can barely afford to eat and pay mortgages??
5. Thank you for this info. My question is why newer subdivisions are paying higher taxes for homes that are of equal value in other areas of the town. If assessments are based on 2016 values, are newer homes “penalized” in this respect since they didn’t exist at that time? It seems we’re shouldering a higher burden of taxes and receiving subpar services - slow-going park processes, full garbage bins for days, etc. I’d like some clarification on this specifically as so many of my neighbours but no one wants to ask because they think they’ll just get non-answers and they don’t have time to deal with the runaround.

Again, please refer to MPAC’s website for information on how assessment values are calculated. The Town does not calculate assessment values and therefore we do not have the same level of knowledge of the Assessment Act or the process as MPAC does.

Newer homes are not assessed at 2024 current market value. For example, I looked up a newer home that sold in 2024 for \$1.1 million. The assessed value on that home is just over \$600,000. According to MPAC, current market value is “deflated” to be 2016 amounts. New subdivisions do seem to have far different finishes and are typically larger than the homes in the older part of Carleton Place. If you feel that your assessment is not reflective of 2016 values, you can appeal your assessment directly with MPAC.

6. Although I understand some portions of the budget are beyond the towns control there are many factors that I just don't understand.

We seems to pay comparable rates to the city of Ottawa however our services do not compare. For example transportation and recycling of compostable items we do not have in Carleton Place. So why are our taxes here as high as in the city?

Once you raise the taxes it's never going down again and eventually it will be too expensive for many families.

As for office space I watched that whole debate. What exactly did they decide? Seems like there is space in other facilities and perhaps OPP station one day. Which raises a whole other issue.

Where can we view the breakdown of what town councillors get paid. Is this a paid position? Some of them are very much involved with the community in person and social media while others not so much. While perhaps they are more behind the scenes.

Just my two cents. My goal is to start to pay better attention as life is getting very costly.

Ottawa has the benefit of much more commercial and industrial taxation. Commercial properties pay 1.84 times the residential rate and industrial properties pay 2.53 times more than residential properties.

The office space project was approved.

I produce an annual Councillor compensation report that is presented to Council. I have attached the 2023 report to this email.

7. We came to know about the tax increase for the town of Carleton Place residents. We are middle class family who decided to move to Carleton Place just last year with those increasing taxes for this town and that too 8% right away is just unimaginable. We are already paying high number of taxes for living here and this is cherry on the top of that. Please this is advisable for the growth of town and help residents like us. Municipality need to rethink and remove this budget change. Otherwise that being said with very heavy heart this place is not for us.

8. The feedback below is primarily for Council. Your presentation itself was excellent and becomes more informative and useful every year.

- The Ann street reconstruction strikes me as being quite unnecessary and a low return on the \$100k investment. This is a very short cul-de-sac serving only 4 homes, and it is in acceptable condition considering the amount, type and speed of traffic it serves. This project represents a 0.8% tax increase to the whole town in order to serve 4 households. Please consider deferring this project so that the money can be put to better use on more effective projects which will serve more households. (I will be providing more in-depth feedback of this nature in the Asset Management survey that was recently posted - but it is acutely relevant in this 2025 budget).

- The benefits of the \$500k software expense were not clearly communicated beyond nebulous "efficiencies". What is the ongoing operational/subscription cost for this investment? What is the payback period for this investment? Is this investment better than the Building Automation project which is being deferred (\$150k, payback period of ~5 years)?

- In general, the costs of projects are more clearly communicated than the benefits.

9. As a resident of Carleton Place, and a Treasurer at another local municipality, I strongly recommend Council think about the future of the town and not just current. From my understanding of the budget, it is not addressing the infrastructure gap as outlined in the Town's Asset Management Plan and it appears that the Town is using up reserves without a plan to replenish those reserves or deferring projects. I understand times are tough and every dollar matters but as a resident I would like to know that my Town Council is planning for the future and not just the "right now". I appreciate all the services and the amenities our Town offers, and I would like to see those be maintained and looked at as investments within our community, investments that need to be here for many years to come. My family loves this Town and are proud to live here and look forward to raising our family right here in Carleton Place.