

Peter Hume hosts town hall meeting to discuss local issues

Alta Vista Councillor Peter Hume told attendees at a recent town hall meeting that he supports the proposed City of Ottawa 2012 budget because it addresses current needs and future plans at the same time.

A small group local residents attended the meeting at Rideau Park United Church on November 1 to learn more about the proposed budget and how it could affect Ward 18 development. Councillor Hume discussed several local issues and took questions on the potential impact of next year's budget.

Council will vote on the final draft budget on November 30, and residents are invited to provide their comments in writing as the final draft is considered. The initial draft approved by Council on October 26 would increase taxes by 2.39 percent, which is equivalent to \$75 for the average household with a property value of \$304,800.

"No one likes to see a tax hike, but this small increase could be the best money our residents will ever spend," explains Hume. "It will help the city keep the services it has, as well as building our police force, libraries, transit and health care services. We will also be addressing our aging infrastructure to make sure we don't pass along our infrastructure debt to the next generation, because they deserve better."

Hume says the budget will pay for several road and infrastructure projects in Alta Vista, and it will contribute to the quality of life in Ottawa. The budget will target the Outdoor Rink Infrastructure Upgrade Program by providing \$200,000 to deliver improved community outdoor rinks. Additional projects will improve our city's culture through a \$12-million capital investment in redeveloping Arts Court, Ottawa's centre for local arts organizations. There is also a \$200,000 allocation for the new Rink of Dreams artificial ice surface on Marion Dewar plaza at City Hall. The budget targets \$520,000 to renew infrastructure in city parks, including furniture, fixtures, sports fields, and tennis courts.

"It's important to keep our bus service vibrant, maintain public safety with excellent police protection, enhance paramedic service, ensure access to libraries for young and old, and move more people out of hotels and into good subsidized housing," says Hume. "Mayor Jim Watson has a track record for urban maintenance and city building, and he worked closely with councillors to achieve both goals. We are also planning enhanced cycling routes and a pedestrian overpass from Coventry Road to the VIA train station. I hope Ward 18 residents will let me know which portions of this proposed budget they support so I can pass their sentiments along to council."

Alta Vista road resurfacing projects on the books for 2012 include:

- ▲ Russell Road from St. Laurent to Walkley
- ▲ St. Laurent Boulevard from South of Smyth Road to north limit of the railway overpass
- ▲ Walkley Road from Russell Road to CNR overpass
- ▲ Dauphin Road from Haig Drive to Smyth Road
- ▲ Haig Drive from Dauphin Road to Cork Street
- ▲ Baycrest Drive from Heron Road to Sandalwood Drive
- ▲ Kilborn Avenue from Bank Street to Kilborn Place
- ▲ Industrial Road from Riverside Drive to West of Russell Road

"While I think we're on track, I am open to any and all suggestions from Alta Vista residents because we're building our city with your guidance and your taxes," says Hume. "We need to do our very best without raising taxes unreasonably. I see this as a group effort, and we are all part of that group."

Details on the proposed budget according to municipal departments are available by clicking on "Budget 2012" at www.ottawa.ca.

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