

City Council approved the 2012 budget, resulting in a 4.0% mill rate increase. The \$690.3 million budget includes \$344.4 million for Operating and \$345.9 million for Capital. **Fixing roads** and enhancing **public safety** are the two main themes of this budget, as those are the two areas deemed most important by the residents of Saskatoon in the 2010 civic survey.

One primary addition to the 2012 budget is a **Low Income Tax Deferral program for Seniors**.

Beginning in 2012, seniors may apply to defer the incremental portion of their property taxes, which will make it more affordable for seniors to remain in their homes. This program has been extremely popular with seniors in BC, and Saskatoon is the first city to bring such a program to Saskatchewan.

#### **Highlights of the 2012 budget:**

- \$4.1 Million extra has been added for road maintenance and repair for 2012
- \$1.0 Million added for road maintenance equipment
- \$411 000 added to pave gravel roads in the city
- \$3.9 Million added to the police budget for public safety (including 6 new police officers)
- \$10 Million for Waste Water Treatment Plant and processes (another \$8.5 M budgeted for 2013), much of which will help reduce odour when upgrades complete.
- Low income seniors tax deferral program
- New Accessible playground for underprivileged children
- New off leash park to be created
- \$200 000 added to the snow removal budget
- \$250 000 has been set aside to begin planning North Bridge and Perimetre Road (in partnership with the province)
- 3 fewer employee positions at City Hall (excluding additions to police)

#### **The 4.0% mill rate increase breaks down as follows:**

- 0.24% City of Saskatoon
- 0.74% Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services
- 3.02% Saskatoon Police Service

#### **What does this mean to me?**

The average assessed value for a home in Saskatoon is \$187 000. A 4.0% tax increase for such a house would be **\$56.80/year, or \$4.73/mos.**

#### **How does Saskatoon compare for 2012?**

- Calgary 6.01% increase (final)
- Edmonton 5.75% increase (tentative)
- Saskatoon 4.0% increase (final)
- Regina 3.9% increase (tentative)

For more information about Ward 5 issues, visit my website at [www.donauer.ca](http://www.donauer.ca).

- Randy Donauer  
City Councillor  
Ward 5