

# Budget Highlights



City of Regina

**REGINA**  
Infinite Horizons

## Strengthening our Foundation

The 2015 Budget invests in opportunities to strengthen our foundation as we continue shaping the future of our community for the next 25 years as outlined in *The Official Community Plan (OCP) – Design Regina*. To support the achievement of the vision laid out in the OCP, the Administration is developing a series of 3 to 5-year plans to ensure the actions, policies and business strategies required are in place. The first of these was finalized in 2014 – Building the Foundation (2014 – 17).

The Strategic Plan influences the City's budget development. By 2018, the City of Regina will operate from a position of strength to achieve the *Design Regina* community priorities. The City will be recognized, in particular, for a long-term financial sustainability strategy and increased ability to deliver innovative services in a fiscally responsible manner.

The 2015 budget focuses on balancing affordability with service levels, while delivering a wide range of services to meet citizen expectations in a growing community. City Administration is proposing a 3.3% tax increase for 2015, along with an additional 1% dedicated exclusively to renewing local roads. Utility rates for water and wastewater services were approved in 2014 and will increase 8% from current levels.

## About our Budgets

The budgets provide operating and capital plans for two different functions of the City: General, which includes all services except the Utility; and Utility, which provides water, sewer and drainage services. The operating budgets include ongoing costs, salaries, efficiency reviews and service delivery, while the capital budgets cover costs for maintaining and improving infrastructure.

### **General Capital and Operating:**

Our capital and operating budgets support a wide range of services to improve the quality of life for Regina residents. The Administration is proposing a 3.3% tax increase for 2015 to cover the costs of providing the programs and services that residents want. Also, it is recommended that an additional 1% will be collected and dedicated

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About our Budgets cont'd...

to renewing local roads, something that residents have clearly identified as a priority. If approved, this increase would bring the City's capital and operating budgets to \$661 million, including a record amount of \$21.7 million for roads and streets.

The municipal portion of your tax dollar pays for policing and fire protection, snow clearing and road repair, garbage pickup, transit, parks and recreation and other services residents rely on every day.

**Water & Sewer Utility:**

The City's water and sewer services are funded on a user pay basis through Utility rates. The Utility

budget describes how those rates are utilized. An increase of 8% for two years was approved in 2014 to fund investment in the safe operations of our water and sewer system. The 2015 water and sewer operating and capital budget is \$174 million. The cost increase from the 2015 rates is about \$10.50 per month for the average homeowner.

## Where are your taxes going?

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Continued dedicated tax to improve local streets</b>   | <b>1% – \$1.8 million</b>   |
| <b>Record investment in roads</b>                         | <b>\$18 million</b>   |
| <b>Record investment in snow clearing</b>                 | <b>\$8.9 million</b>  |
| <b>Investing in police and community safety</b>           | <b>\$1 million<br/>8 officers assigned to patrol duties &amp; support for police operations</b> |
| <b>Improving public transit</b>                           | <b>\$3 million<br/>6 new accessible buses</b>   |
| <b>Increased support for affordable housing</b>           | <b>\$5,000 more per door<br/>now \$15,000 per door</b>  |
| <b>Flood protection – sewer and drainage improvements</b> | <b>\$5.5 million</b>  |

**What a 3.3% + 1% increase represents for taxpayers:**

| <b>Current Value of Your Home</b>         | <b>\$200,000</b> | <b>\$300,000</b> | <b>\$450,000</b> |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 2015 Property Taxes (Municipal Portion)   | \$1,638          | \$2,457          | \$3,686          |
| Annual cost of 3.3% tax increase for 2015 | \$51.84          | \$77.76          | \$116.64         |
| Annual cost of 1% for local streets       | \$15.72          | \$23.52          | \$35.40          |

# Key Investments in 2015

## Improving Local Streets

- An expanding focus on local road improvements will make sure local roads are fixed and stay in good shape longer.
- 1% mill rate increase per year dedicated to local street program for five years (\$1.8 million) over and above regular road investment.
- Record-level investment on other road infrastructure, with \$18 million going towards our priority street system.

## Encouraging Affordable Housing

- Increased investment to support the development of low-income housing from \$10,000 per door to \$15,000 per door.
- Continued emphasis on policies, zoning and other urban planning tools to increase the availability of a wide range of affordable housing options.

## Supporting a Safe Community

- The **Regina Police Service** continues to work in partnership to improve the safety of all our citizens.
- A comprehensive review of police and civilian resources resulted in:
  - › Eight police officers assigned to patrol duties to enhance our front-line delivery of service.
  - › A new Mental Health Liaison Officer to bring focus to persons-in-crisis due to mental health issues and establish solutions through collaboration with health care professionals.

› A new CARE (Canine Assisted Response and Education) Officer to support victims of trauma, assist investigations and build community.

- Enhanced support of Information Technology, Technological Crime and Criminal Record Checks.
- **Fire and Protective Services** will continue to improve regional cooperation and services with individuals and communities outside Regina.
- Fire and Protective Services will upgrade technology to support the 911 system.
- Consolidation of equipment and services at a new Emergency Operations Centre to ensure quick, coordinated action when needed.



## Improving Transit

- Council is investing \$3 million in six new accessible buses, which will complete a full replacement of the transit fleet.
- Ridership is up 21% in two years.

## Maintaining Winter Roads

- \$8.9 million budget to invest in snow clearing; record level.



- Focus on keeping priority streets clear after major snowfalls.
- Extending service as new neighbourhoods grow (Harbour Landing, The Creeks, Hawkstone), keeping streets clear and local roads safer.
- Increasing sidewalk snow clearing participation through ongoing public engagement.

## Protecting Regina Residents from Flooding

- Drainage area work to address issues in the South Albert Park neighbourhood and the Cathedral neighbourhood, including Edward Street.
- Continued emphasis on efficient ways to renew underground infrastructure such as relining of sewer and drainage pipes.
- Extend the berm along Wascana Creek to include Rotary Park and Les Sherman Park, which brings the area up to 1-in-100-year flood protection.
- Continuing the construction of the new Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- A long-term sewer trunk relief strategy.

## Innovation and Efficiencies

The City of Regina is committed to providing efficient services.

Over the last eight years, the City has achieved annual and one-time savings of more than \$27 million. These savings helped keep property taxes lower. Regina has one of the lowest property tax rates among major Canadian cities.

## Investments in Key Community Projects

### Regina Revitalization Initiative (RRI) – Stadium Project

The Stadium Project is the design and construction of a new 33,000-seat stadium. It will be the heart of the larger urban revitalization initiative and provide a facility to support a growing Regina.

- \$4.67 million for project operating costs.
- Capital funding has been previously approved and no new funding is required for 2015.

### Regina Revitalization Initiative – Land Development Projects

The Regina Revitalization Initiative is a unique opportunity for the City to plan a new community within walking distance of downtown that meets the social and economic needs of the area.

Planning the revitalization of approximately 37 acres of land in the centre of the community will change how people live, work, shop and play.

- There will be a number of important decisions about financing, land use and urban design, and the provision of City infrastructure and services that will be brought to City Council in 2015.
  - No new capital or operating funds are requested in 2015, with planning and site preparation efforts to be funded from the \$2.1 million and \$245,000 in approved funding for the Railway and Taylor Field neighbourhood projects respectively.
- **The project has realized a cost savings of \$247.5 million from what was originally budgeted over the 30-year life of the project agreement.**
  - All capital and operating funding is in place for this important project.
  - The Canadian Council for Public-Private Partnerships (CCPPP) awarded the City of Regina's Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Project the Chuck Wills Award for Municipal infrastructure at its 2014 National Awards for Innovation and Excellence in Public-Private Partnerships (P3s).

### Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Project (WWTP)

Through an innovative public-private partnership model, EPCOR Water Prairies Inc. will design, build, finance, operate and maintain the WWTP, while the City will continue to own the asset and set utility rates.

An upgraded WWTP will better protect public health and the environment, meet new provincial regulations and provide capacity for growth.



# Tax Facts

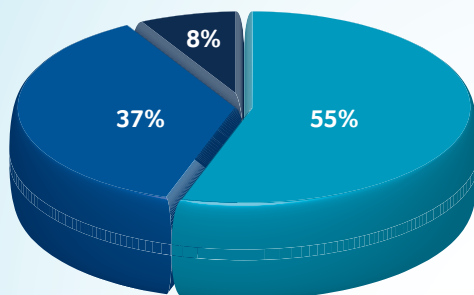
Cities have limited ways to increase revenue and tax increases are necessary for growth, maintenance and rising costs and, most importantly, to protect quality of life and deliver the programs and services that residents

desire. Municipal taxes are only a small portion of the total taxes residents pay.

The City of Regina receives just eight cents of every tax dollar residents pay. The rest is paid to other governments through a variety of taxes.

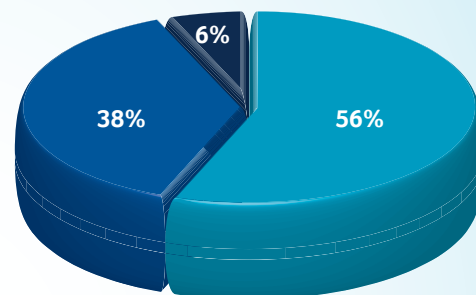
The City of Regina receives just over half of the municipal property tax you pay. The remainder goes to School Boards and Regina Public Library (based on 2014 tax rates).

**BREAKDOWN OF WHERE TAX DOLLARS GO**



- Federal taxes
- Provincial taxes
- Municipal taxes

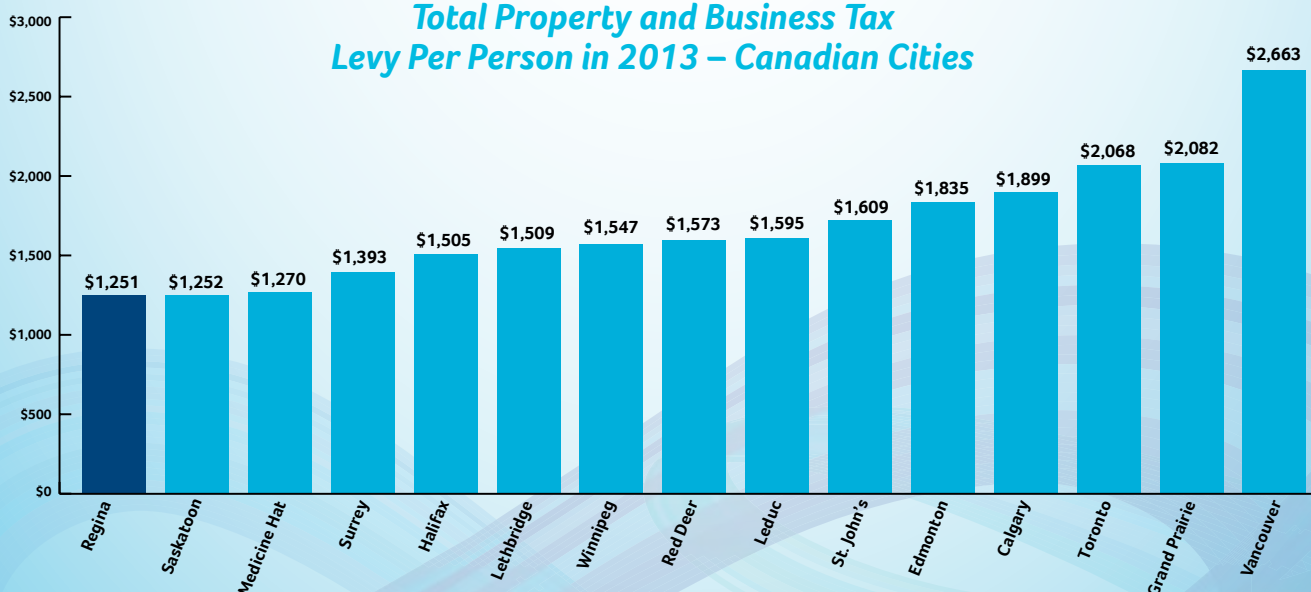
**BREAKDOWN OF WHERE PROPERTY TAXES GO**



- City of Regina
- School Boards
- Regina Public Library

## Regina's Municipal Taxes Per Capita Among the Lowest in Canada

*Total Property and Business Tax Levy Per Person in 2013 – Canadian Cities*



Source: City of Calgary's 2013 Residential Property Taxes and Utility Charges Survey



# Get Involved

Residents are encouraged to go online at [Regina.ca](http://Regina.ca) to review the Proposed 2015 Budget documents.

In addition, residents can test how their personal choices between service and affordability affect the overall budget through the Citizen Budget tool.

The proposed 2015 budgets and any amendments will be considered at the Monday, December 8, 2014 City Council meeting. Media and the public are invited to attend this meeting at 5:30 p.m. in Henry Baker Hall at City Hall.

Residents may appear as a special delegation by filing a written brief with the Office of the City Clerk no later than noon on Thursday, December 4, 2014. These submissions will be made public on the website on Friday, December 5, 2014. Information on preparing a submission is available on [Regina.ca](http://Regina.ca), or contact the Office of the City Clerk at 306-777-7262.

Visit [Regina.ca](http://Regina.ca)

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