



Media Advisory

Taxpayers Overwhelming Oppose 2016 Budget

Newmarket, ON, March 3, 2016 – The Newmarket Taxpayers Advocacy Group Inc., (NTAG) recently provided Town of Newmarket taxpayers the opportunity to provide feedback on the recent 2016 budget. 197 people participated in the survey which asked residents three questions:

1. Do you feel the Town of Newmarket should seek internal cost savings to reduce, or maintain property taxes?
2. What are your thoughts on the 2016 budget?
3. How does the most recent Town of Newmarket property tax increase affect your household?

63% of participants voted that the Town should absolutely pursue aggressive internal cost savings and aim for a zero increase in property taxes.

74% of participants voted that the tax increase is unwarranted – the Town can maintain and/or increase services without increasing taxes.

45% of participants indicated that they are “not happy about the tax increase, but we will manage.”

41% of participants voted that the tax increase “causes great financial difficulty to our household.”

There were a range of on-line comments by participants, including lamenting a decrease in service levels, suggesting that economic development in Newmarket is stagnant, and concern at the ability to keep one’s home as a widow on a fixed income. Two comments (of over 20 comments posted) stated tax increases are a reality necessary to maintain service levels, and professed their confidence in the current Town Council. NTAG did not alter or amend any comments.

The findings of the NTAG survey is consistent with the Community Satisfaction Survey - Key Findings Report completed by the Town of Newmarket and found on their website at

<http://www.newmarket.ca/towngovernment/documents/town%20of%20newmarket%20community%20survey%20results%202014.pdf>

The Town of Newmarket survey [Additional Suggestions section] clearly indicates that residents want more accountability and transparency from their local government.

“Town council/Councillors are out of touch/not accountable” ranked third on the survey, with *“Listen to what the public has to say”* ranking fourth. There were several comments relating to taxes. When added together, taxes are the #1 issue with taxpayers. ⁱ



“Overall, Newmarket taxpayers are not willing to pay more for services”, states Teena Bogner, President of NTAG. “Residents are stating loud and clear that they want internal efficiencies and productivity gains to control the property tax rate. Taxpayers are fed up with yearly tax increases without any effort to find internal cost savings. The Town’s data states as much. However, is anyone listening? It doesn’t appear so.”

The Newmarket Taxpayers Advocacy Group Inc. (NTAG) is a provincially incorporated non-for-profit ratepayers group in Newmarket, ON. NTAG is a non-political, non-partisan, advocacy organization dedicated to fair taxes, less waste and transparent and accountable government in all levels of government (town, region and school boards) in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada.

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¹ Community Satisfaction Survey - Key Findings Report, page 30 - Greater transparency/accountability on how tax dollars are spent (11); Lower taxes (6); Curb spending of tax dollars (6).