
Subject: FW: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council
Attachments: spc_finance_-_indicative_rate_.pdf

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Monday, August 30, 2021 10:40 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED]

Submitted on Monday, August 30, 2021 - 22:40

Submitted by user: Anonymous

Submitted values are:

Date Monday, August 30, 2021

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name Cameron

Last Name Choquette

Phone Number [REDACTED]

Email [REDACTED]

Address [REDACTED]-102 Cope Cr.

City Saskatoon

Province Saskatchewan

Postal Code [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable) Saskatchewan Landlord Association

Subject Comments - 2022/23 Indicative Budget

Meeting (if known) SPC Finance - August 31, 2021

Comments

Please see the enclosed comments from the Saskatchewan Landlord Association for consideration at the August 31, 2021 Special Meeting of SPC on Finance.

Attachments

[REDACTED]

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting? No

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

[REDACTED]



August 31, 2021

Standing Policy Committee on Finance
Saskatoon City Council
222 3rd Ave N.
Saskatoon, SK S7K 0J5

RE: 5.1 – 2022 and 2023 Indicative Budget

Dear Mayor Clark and Councillors,

On behalf of the members of the Saskatchewan Landlord Association, it is my pleasure to provide comments on the setting of the indicative rate for the 2022/2023 multi-year business plan and budget. The opportunity for increased stakeholder engagement as part of the budget process is important and we are appreciative of the opportunity to participate.

Property Taxes in Rental Housing

Approximately 14% of the expenses related to operating a rental property are allocated to municipal property taxes. In 2016 alone, our industry contributed over \$106 million in taxes to municipalities across Saskatchewan, while investing another \$520 million in development, construction, and renovations.

COVID-19 Impact on Rental Housing

Our industry was an essential service throughout the pandemic – providing housing to over 30% of Saskatoon’s population. However, we were not immune to the impacts of COVID-19. We faced a provincial eviction moratorium, reduced immigrant and student tenants, and increased operating expenditures. These factors have forced our members to be more efficient in delivering services to our renters.

Setting the Indicative Rate

Setting municipal property taxes, user fees, and budget priorities is certainly one of the most challenging aspects of municipal governance. While we understand the need to raise property taxes, we are concerned about the present indicative rates of 5.96% and 5.42%.

Over the past year and a half, businesses and individuals have been forced to make difficult choices on how to spend their money amidst declining income. They’ve been resilient, creative, and realistic. The City must now do the same. Rental housing providers, renters, and the rest of our City cannot face a tax increase of nearly 6%.

The reports circulated to this Committee and Council contain several options, administrative adjustments, and other items for your consideration in setting the indicative rate. When reviewing these items, we ask you to ponder the following questions:

1. Are the service levels that “need to be maintained” the service levels that are desired by citizens?
2. What are the most pressing strategic priorities or goals that Council wants to focus on and how is the budget addressing those priorities? Have priorities like the BRT plan been re-evaluated since the pandemic?
3. Amidst rising property taxes due to the reassessment cycle of 2021, can individuals and businesses handle an increase of 6%? What will a tax increase due to the growth and investment in our City?
4. What are the strategic outcomes that are impacted by raising or lowering the indicative rate?

These and other questions should be answered so that you can make informed decisions on where to spend the City’s limited funds over the next two years. While the City does have a consistent revenue source at its fingertips in the form of property taxes, that revenue source has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and is still recovering. Increased taxation should be carefully weighted against the need to remain a City that has an affordable and diverse housing mix, a vibrant downtown, and competitive taxation.

As a community of rental housing providers, we are proud to provide homes for the people of Saskatoon and look forward to continuing our investments across the neighbourhoods of our City. We are also committed to providing information and constructive commentary to the budget process over the coming months and look forward to what will likely be a lively and productive discussion.

Sincerely,



Cameron Choquette
Chief Executive Officer