

- Paying Property tax for 40 years
- Last 30 years occupied a 1400 sq. ft. bungalow in Lakewood subdivision.
- Without complaint we've paid taxes to the city for services like Police/ Fire/ Garbage collection and others that we seldom or never used.
- A few years ago I retired on modest pension
- Since then my City property taxes and city utility costs have increased \$1500/yr.
- My pension has increased less than \$50
- City costs are now my highest and fastest rising fixed expense, consuming 35% of my disposable income.
- In 6 years if the city continues on its current taxation path, it will consume well over 50% of my disposable income
- Unlike City Council when my taxes rise I cannot go to my Pension plan and ask for an increase in pay.
- In 2015 we had to cut our YMCA memberships.
- In 2016 to we had to cancel our Globe Theatre Membership. Ironically while we taxpayers are having to cut our cultural enjoyment the city increased funding to the RSO for their 115 birthday party by \$20,000 this year.
- In 2017 to offset the increased cost of water I had to reduce watering my raised garden, lawn, trees, and let my outdoor fish pond sit empty. At the same time I watched the city parks dept. water the park I back onto every second day.
- The disparity between city expenditures and taxpayer income is most evident by the way you have normalized increasing our taxes and utility costs. Property tax increases should be seen as a failure on the part of the Administration to innovatively provide

services at an affordable cost. Increases should be the exception, not the rule.

- I do not mind paying taxes for efficiently provided services, which I am convinced we're not receiving. If we had a couple hours I could cite dozens of specific examples of waste, inefficiencies and mismanagement in city operations that I'm certain cost tens of millions of dollars a year.
- When I've raised these issues with city staff members and administration, the response is identical to the reaction I get from climate change deniers when I point out the adverse effects human activity is having on the climate. My concerns are not taken seriously and I am inundated with talking points, spin rationalization, denial or minimization.
- Is this city administration more focused on funding their self-perpetuating bureaucracy or providing quality affordable services to the people of this city?
- It appears the city has no external oversight or incentive to change from the status quo.
- I hear over and over that we have to pay for quality staff. I agree. So why is it that year after year the major solution to the city's financial situation is always to increase taxes?
- The last figures I have shown that 62% of the cities revenue is generated from residential tax payers. Whether city officials choose to accept it or not the current taxation strategy is not sustainable.

ALTERNATE STRATEGY

Before any tax or utility increases are considered all expenditures that are not essential should be on the table;

- Based on the fact over half of the operating budget goes to salaries and benefits, I believe an external review should be done using the upcoming 25% retiree numbers to right size staffing levels and direct human resources where most needed. As an example, to survive in a competitive environment, SaskTel had to take bold and transformative measures in mid-2000, using retirees to reduce and/or redeploy human resources where needed. They reduced full time positions by approx. 1000 to 1500. They also found it cost and operationally advantageous to contract out most outside construction work. Departments were combined and levels of management reduced.
- Adjust the vehicle fleet size accordingly and install a monitor system to curtail abuse.
- Establish an internal or external agency specifically responsible to investigate reports of excess, waste, inefficiencies, and mismanagement that will seriously investigate and make recommendations for improvements.
- Establish a reward system for employees identifying abuses, where savings are tracked and a percentage returned as bonuses.
- Conduct an external review of the city's park maintenance program to determine why Saskatoon's Parks budget is 14 million to take care of 2500 hectares of park and Regina's Parks budget is 22 million to look after 1,600 hectares.
- Conduct an external review of Roadways excessive abuse and application of the winter maintenance guidelines. Climate change has made it impossible to appropriately staff and equip roadways. It is therefore prudent that most of these services be contracted out using the Department of Highways experience as a model.
- Introduce a user pay recycling, garbage and waste collection system.

- Adjust residential property taxes to be more fair and consistent with other jurisdictions in Canada. Res. Pay 62%. Vs Business.
- Address the subsidization of new commercial and residential developments.
- Provide grants, subsidies and exemptions only if property taxes and utility costs don't increase above the inflation rate.
- Use money from the 20 reserve funds to offset property tax increases above the inflation rate.

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