



December 2, 2021
For Immediate Release

Phone **306.242.3060** Fax **306.242.2205**
Email **info@nsbasask.com**
#9-1724 Quebec Avenue,
Saskatoon, SK S7K 1V9

NSBA disappointed in approved city budget for 2022/2023 as property taxes are set to increase in the coming years

Saskatoon, SK – On December 1, 2021, Saskatoon City Council passed the budget for 2022/2023 with a property tax increase of 3.86 per cent in 2022 and 3.53 per cent in 2023 after three days of deliberation. The NSBA is disappointed with the decisions made by the City Council to increase property taxes even more than Administration presented in the preliminary budget.

"It is undeniable that City Council did not think like business owners while deliberating on the budget for 2022 and 2023," said Keith Moen, Executive Director. "Rather than looking at the expenditures side of the equation for their solution, they simply said 'let's charge even more.' As a result, everyone now has rising taxes, rising utility rates, rising user fees and, oh, by the way, you now have to pay extra for garbage collection too because it's now a separate utility."

"Even more frustrating is that we gave them an easy and efficient option, to implement a short-term hiring freeze," Moen continued, adding 95.5 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) positions were being proposed in the 2022 budget, at an estimated cost of approximately \$7.6M. "And although it was brought forward as a motion, it was defeated."

Councillor Bev Dubois made the motion and only found support from Councillors Darren Hill, Troy Davies and Randy Donauer.

"When COVID first hit, we wrote a letter suggesting they reduce their staffing, which they didn't, and now they're adding to their ever-growing personnel," Moen said. "I'd accuse them of being completely out of touch with the people they're representing but at least they shot down snow clearing for bike paths. It appears that message finally got through but we just need to be more vocal about what our other concerns are."

Among those concerns are a fragile economy, particularly for small business, which is being negatively impacted by labour supply, supply chain issues, increased debt loads, the elimination of government support programs, and inflationary pressures, to name a few.

"A tax increase is not the right direction for our economy after a difficult year – instead, it hinders the recovery process the community is currently undergoing," Moen said. "Trying to survive will be the main priority for many businesses in the new year. And unfortunately, they'll likely have to try to do it with fewer employees themselves and less money for GDP growth as a result of this Council decision."

For more information:

The NSBA is a member-driven and focused business association in Saskatoon that serves, promotes and protects business throughout Saskatoon and beyond.

Daniel Afe

Research and Policy Analyst

NSBA

daniel.afe@nsbasask.com | (306) 242-3060

- 30 -



SASKATOON'S BUSINESS ASSOCIATION