

## Improving Commutes in Our City

Residents may have noticed construction adjacent to Highway 403 and Eastgate Parkway during the past few years. What you are seeing is Phase 1 of the City of Mississauga's new transitway, expected to open this fall. As part of the Big Move in Mississauga – a 25-year regional transportation plan led by Metrolinx, it is the first transit service in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) to construct a dedicated transitway that links to surrounding municipalities.

Four new bus stations including Central Parkway, Cawthra, Tomken and Dixie will be operational in fall 2013. The City's transit service, MiWay will transition MiExpress routes 107 and

109 and MiLocal route 21 onto the transitway. These east-west routes between City Centre Transit Terminal and Dixie Road will connect with north-south MiWay routes. Travelling across Mississauga on this dedicated corridor will be more efficient and offer a more reliable service, bypassing congestion.

When fully complete, the 18 kilometre transitway will have 12 stations beginning at Winston Churchill Boulevard in the west and ending at Renforth Drive in the east. This project is funded through a joint partnership between the City of Mississauga, GO Transit, the Province of Ontario and the Government of Canada.

There are also exciting plans to bring Light Rail Transit (LRT) to Hurontario Street and our downtown. The City of Mississauga and the City of Brampton have a vision for a vibrant Hurontario-

Main Street corridor from the Lakeshore in Port Credit to downtown Brampton. An LRT system, providing key north-south transportation connections to both cities and with GO Transit, has been identified as the preferred choice for sustainable growth. The Hurontario-Main LRT Project is now in the Preliminary Design and Transit Project Assessment Phase (TPAP), which includes design and technical studies supported by extensive stakeholder and public consultations.

In June, Metrolinx is expected to unveil an investment strategy that will propose dedicated funding tools to address infrastructure needs across the region.

Visit MiWay's website: [miway.ca/transitway](http://miway.ca/transitway). Check out the City's blog for regular construction updates and photos at: [thetransitwayblog.ca](http://thetransitwayblog.ca)

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the City doing to minimize tax increases?

The City is focused on providing good value to our citizens. The 2013 budget is built around maintaining service. There are very few service adjustments. At the same time, continuous improvement and finding innovative new solutions are an integral part of planning for the future. As part of the budget process, each service area identified operating cost reductions and efficiencies equal to 1 per cent of their 2012 budget, which resulted in \$5.9 million in savings.

### How does the recent Property Assessment Notice I received from the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) affect my property taxes?

An increase in assessed value does not automatically mean an increase in property taxes. The average rate of assessment increase for Mississauga was listed on your Property Assessment

Notice. If the increase in assessed value of your property falls in line with the average increase for the property tax class, you will see minimal impact on your taxes due to reassessment. The City of Mississauga does not benefit financially from reassessment. Tax rates are reduced to offset reassessment increases and ensure the City does not receive a windfall gain as a result of an increase in assessment. The City continues to collect the same overall tax levy after the reassessment as it did before the reassessment, excluding budgetary tax increases.

### Who qualifies and how do you apply for the property tax rebate program?

A \$400 tax rebate is available for those 65 years of age and over receiving a Guaranteed Income Supplement or for disabled persons receiving income support under the Ontario Disability Support Program Act. Applications are available online, by mail or can be picked up in person at the Tax office. The application deadline is December 31st of the year in which the tax rebate is claimed. Call 3-1-1 (905-615-4311 if

outside city limits), if you have any questions about the program.

### How do I update my mailing address, get a tax statement for income tax reporting or register for the pre-authorized tax payment program?

The Tax Self Service Centre at [mississauga.ca/tax](http://mississauga.ca/tax) provides quick and convenient online access to a variety of tax services, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Services available include:

- Tax account details
- Change your mailing address, name, mortgage company or agent information
- Advise that you are moving
- Purchase a tax certificate
- Enrol in the Pre-authorized Tax Payment Plan (PTP)
- Manage your PTP banking information
- Manage your tax PIN
- Purchase a tax receipt

# MAYOR'S UPDATE

SPRING 2013



Every year, more and more people call Mississauga home or choose it as their place of business. At the same time, Mississauga is faced with the same challenges as other big cities – a growing population, aging infrastructure, rising costs and revenues that have remained flat. The reality is that the costs to deliver the services our citizens have come to expect from the City are increasing.

This year, the City Budget when combined with the Region of Peel Budget resulted in a 2.6 per cent residential property tax increase. For residents, this equals an additional:

- \$118 in property taxes on an average home assessed at \$479,000, or
- \$25 per \$100,000 of assessment.

As residents you enjoy our city parks, natural areas, trail systems, our waterfront, community centres and libraries. Our businesses draw on a diverse pool of talent and reap the benefits of easy access to seven major highways and the busiest airport in Canada. With our Business Plan and Budget as our guide we are working hard to ensure our infrastructure remains in a state of good repair, that we are preserving our environment, enhancing our transit system and providing opportunities for youth,

older adults and newcomers to enjoy and be a part of our great city.

It is important for you to know how we put your property tax dollars to work in order to fund these initiatives. For every dollar you pay in property tax, the City receives only 31 cents – and that 31 cents funds the programs and services you value. The remaining 69 cents is divided between the Region of Peel and the Province. Property tax remains the City's biggest source of funding for everything we need to keep our city running.

Through our Strategic Plan we established a vision for our city together with our residents. Now we are working hard to make that vision a reality. Together with Council, I am committed to meeting the needs of our citizens and providing the quality programs and services on which you depend.

Hazel McCallion, C.M., LL.D.  
Mayor

## Emerald Ash Borer

The emerald ash borer (EAB) is a highly destructive invasive insect that will have a significant impact on the City's 116,000 ash trees over the next 10 years. The Forestry Section has implemented a 10-year management plan to preserve approximately 20,000 City-owned street

## 2013 CITY BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

- Providing 741,000 residents with recreation facilities and programs, library services, parks maintenance, street lighting, winter maintenance and other City services
- Redevelopment and renovation of the Rivergrove and Meadowvale Community Centres
- Rehabilitation of bridges, major roads and some City facilities
- 13,400 additional transit service hours
- Opening of the new transitway in the fall
- Improved boulevard maintenance
- Increased grants to cultural groups
- Increased funds for maintenance of the City's \$8 billion in infrastructure
- Treatment and preservation of a percentage of the City's ash trees threatened by the emerald ash borer (EAB)

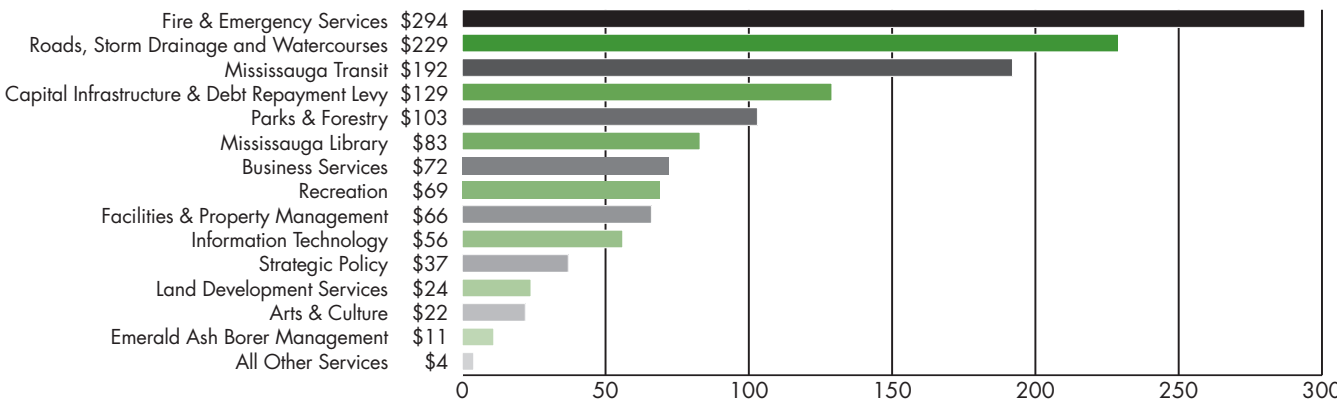
and park ash trees. The plan provides for the removal and replacement of trees not suitable for treatment on a one-for-one basis. Residents are encouraged to monitor their property and contact a certified arborist for information on management options. For more information on the City's management plan, visit [mississauga.ca/eab](http://mississauga.ca/eab).

# Your Property Taxes in Perspective

In 2013, the average home in Mississauga was assessed at \$479,000 and homeowners paid \$4,438 in property taxes. Of that, the City received \$1,391.

## Where Your Tax Dollars Go

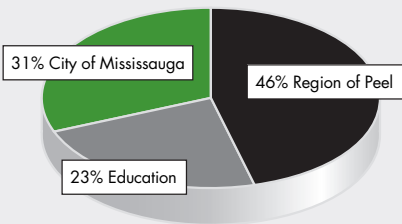
The money the City receives from an average homeowner is distributed as follows:



## Understanding Your Property Tax Bill

Your 2013 residential tax bill consists of three separate components –

- the City's portion
- the Region of Peel portion; and
- the education component (set by the Province of Ontario)



If you compare your 2012 tax bill to your 2013 tax bill, there has been an average increase of 2.6% on the total tax bill. In the City portion this includes 1.2% for operating costs, 0.6% for infrastructure repair and 0.3% for the emerald ash borer management plan. This excludes any changes resulting from market reassessment of your property.

## Property Taxes Compared to Other Household Expenses

The list below compares the amount an average homeowner pays to the City versus other annual costs.

| 2013 City portion of Property Taxes on a home assessed at \$479,000 | Average Annual Cost |
|---|---------------------|
| House Insurance per \$479,000 home                                  | \$900 - \$1,000     |
| Electricity for average house                                       | \$984               |
| Average Basic Cable/Internet Bill                                   | \$1,000             |
| Natural Gas for average house                                       | \$1,094             |
| Gas for an average auto driver for 1 year                           | \$2,200             |
| Taxes paid on a car worth \$20,000                                  | \$2,600             |
| Income Taxes on \$96,700 of household earnings                      | \$16,748            |

## Comparing Property Taxes in the GTA

The following chart provides a comparison of 2012 taxes for an average four bedroom home in various municipalities, primarily from the GTA. Mississauga's taxes are among the lowest.



Infrastructure: the physical structures and facilities needed for the operation of a community.

## Mississauga owns over \$8 billion in infrastructure, including:

- 5,210 km of roads
- 6,700 acres of parks
- 11 community centres
- 25 ice rinks
- 18 pools
- 255 playgrounds
- 18 libraries with 1.4 million library items & 443 public use computers
- 530 sports fields
- 2 marinas
- 49,234 street lights & 511 traffic lights
- 225 km of trails
- 20 fire stations & 47 fire vehicles
- 458 buses
- 129 pedestrian bridges
- One million trees
- 244 km of bicycle lanes and multi-use trails

## Infrastructure Update

Many of the services the City provides depend on safe reliable infrastructure. As well, our future success depends on Mississauga remaining competitive with other major urban cities by ensuring it is well maintained and that it meets the needs of our diverse and changing city.

Over the years, much of the City's infrastructure was paid for by funds generated through development fees. Today, many of those buildings, roads, sidewalks and vehicles are aging and need to be repaired or replaced. Much of that work will need to be funded primarily by property taxes.

Delivering on the City's commitment to manage property tax dollars responsibly and to deliver services in the most efficient manner, we know it is much more cost effective to conduct regularly scheduled maintenance, repairs and replacement than to let our assets deteriorate. If we neglect regular maintenance and repairs, over time, maintenance calls and emergency repair costs will escalate with possible program and service disruptions. It is a balance. If we allow our infrastructure to deteriorate too much we will face higher costs in the future.

We have prioritized all our infrastructure maintenance needs and it is a part of our 4-year Business Plan. This year, the City will raise an additional \$6.9 million through

property taxes in an effort to reduce the \$83 million infrastructure funding gap. The infrastructure gap can only be narrowed by increasing tax based funding raised through an infrastructure levy and by issuing debt. Alternatively, the City can reduce service levels by maintaining infrastructure at a lower level.

In the past, the City has received funding from other levels of government in the form of programs such as the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund and the Recreation Infrastructure Canada Program. While these funding programs have been helpful they are only one time funding opportunities. Municipalities need sustainable funding to ensure our infrastructure remains in a state of good repair.

## Did you know?

Municipalities own the majority of public infrastructure but receive the smallest share of tax dollars

Ontario municipalities receive only 11 cents of every tax dollar raised in Ontario, yet own 65 per cent of the capital infrastructure. The Provincial and Federal governments receive 34 cents and 55 cents and own 31 per cent and 3.2 per cent of the capital infrastructure, respectively.

