



RR-1

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: March 14, 2009
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Meeting Date: March 24, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Financial Services
SUBJECT: 2009 Interim Budget Estimates Update and Public Consultation Results

RECOMMENDATION A: To Maintain Existing Services, Including Outside Agency Costs, at a property tax increase of 5.74%

Approval of RECOMMENDATION A provides the funding to maintain existing service levels (Base Budget) including the cost of outside agencies. These Interim Estimates include all administrative review and corporate adjustments but exclude 2009 funding requests.

- A. THAT Council approve the 2009 Operating Budget - Interim Estimates as outlined in this report and detailed in Appendix 1, and instruct the Director of Finance to bring the budget into balance with a 5.74% general purposes tax increase, reflecting an increase of:
- 2.02% related to growth in base City costs
 - 2.26% reversal of the One-Time 2007 Work Stoppage Savings carried over into the 2008 Operating Budget
 - 1.15% 2008 Program Approvals
 - 0.31% cost of outside agencies

AND THAT Council approve the Parking Meter rate and fine increases outlined in Appendices 7 and 8 respectively, reflecting \$2.45M revenues incorporated in the 2009 estimates, and instruct the Director of Legal Services to amend the appropriate By-Laws.

AND THAT Council approve the Park Board Global Budget of \$61,366,080 which includes approximately \$856,300 of Added Basic and Appeals in the Park Board estimates.

RECOMMENDATION B: To Fund All Requests for RECOMMENDATION by the Corporate Management Team

Approval of RECOMMENDATION B provides funding for all Funding Requests that have been identified by the Corporate Management Team for RECOMMENDATION bringing the property tax increase to 5.83%.

- B. THAT Council approve the RECOMMENDATIONS included in Appendix 4, increasing property taxes by 0.09%.

All positions in Recommendations B are subject to classification by the General Manager of Human Resource Services

RECOMMENDATION C: To Approve Efficiencies Related to the First Phase Implementation of 311 Consolidated Citizen Service Centre

Approval of RECOMMENDATION C provides for the adjustments necessary to fund the first phase of operating costs for the 311 Consolidated Citizen Service Centre.

- C. THAT Council approve the adjustments identified in Appendix 5, including the deletion of regular full time and part time positions identified in Appendix 6, to fund the 2009 311 Consolidated Citizen Service Centre operating costs.

COMMENTS OF THE CITY MANAGER AND DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

On February 3, 2009, staff presented to Council the Interim Estimates on the 2009 Operating Budget, including funding requests, which would have resulted in a property tax increase of 6.29%. Since then, these estimates have been challenged by unprecedented revenue decreases due to a decline in development activity.

The global economic downturn has impacted Vancouver's development sector significantly over the last three months and staff have had to adjust revenue projections by \$12.6 million. To mitigate the impact, the Corporate Management Team has proactively identified further savings opportunities within the budget. Many of the savings identified are one time in nature and are a starting point for the quest to drive sustainable efficiencies in the City so that future budgets are protected. Overall, \$16.2 million savings have been identified for a property tax savings of 2.6%. Of these savings \$6.7 million relate to the hiring freeze introduced almost immediately after the Interim Estimates were presented on February 3, 2009.

The budget update presented in this report reflects a property tax of 5.74% to maintain existing services levels and a further 0.09% for funding requests, resulting in an overall property tax increase of 5.83%. Considering the fixed components to the Operating Budget, the tax implications to the budget included in this report can be summarized as following:

	Tax Impact
Base City Costs	2.02%
Outside Agency Impact	0.31%
Programs Approved in 2008	1.15%
2007 Work Stoppage Savings	2.26%
Cost to Maintain Services	5.74%
New Funding Requests	0.09%
Total Property Tax Increase	5.83%

The public consultation process in 2009 has been very extensive and included both telephone and web surveys, focus group meetings, public meetings, and a mixed stakeholder meeting hosted by the Mayor. The consultations have indicated that there is strong support for the services the City provides. This support is expressed either in the desire to ensure that programs are financially protected and/or through the acceptance to property tax increases. Residents continue to support property tax increases even as high as 8%. On the other hand, the business community is less inclined to support a tax increase beyond 2% and expects the City to find efficiencies to mitigate property tax increases.

COUNCIL POLICY

The Vancouver Charter requires that the Director of Finance presents the estimates of revenues and expenditures to Council no later than April 30 each year and that Council adopt a resolution approving the budget and a rating bylaw establishing general purpose tax rates as soon thereafter as possible.

In approving the annual Operating Budget, Council has also adopted a practice of passing on to taxpayers the tax increases related to requisitions from outside agencies, including the Greater Vancouver Sewerage and Drainage District and E-Comm over which Council has no control, rather than providing offsetting reductions in City services/programs to meet Council's target tax increase. Also, Council, in the past, has passed on tax increases related to major funding initiatives, such as a significant increase in police staffing.

Council approvals are required for changes in service levels, either expansions or reductions; creation and deletion of regular full-time and regular part-time positions; and allocation of funding from general revenues or taxation.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the 2009 Operating Budget Estimates (including the strategies to address the February 3, 2009, Council Motion related to the budgetary impact of the recent economic downturn) and provide information on the results of the public participation program conducted for the 2009 Operating Budget.

BACKGROUND

On February 3, 2009, staff presented the 2009 Operating Budget Interim Estimates that reflected \$26.3 million of budget adjustments and resulted in a property tax increase of 5.96%, along with \$1.7 million of net funding requests for a total property tax increase of 6.29%. This was represented by:

	<u>Tax Impact</u>
Base City Costs	2.24%
Programs Approved in 2008	1.15%
Reversal of the Work Stoppage Savings	2.26%
Outside Agency Impact	0.31%
Interim Budget Position	5.96%
2009 Funding Requests	0.33%
Total Property Tax Increase	6.29%

In response to an unanticipated decline in development activity and a potentially material reduction in service and inspection revenues of \$10 - \$12 million not reflected in the 2009 Interim Estimates, Council passed the following motion on February 3, 2009:

THAT Council direct the City Manager to immediately take all necessary steps to produce a 2009 Operating Budget that will protect taxpayers and mitigate any compromise of key City services;

FURTHER THAT the City Manager be asked to consider steps which may possibly include:

- *review of all "projects" underway*
- *expedited implementation of shared services across all City departments, outside Boards (Parks and Recreation, Vancouver Public Library, Vancouver Police, Vancouver Civic Theatres) and owned/controlled entities (Parking Corporation of Vancouver, Pacific National Exhibition)*
- *hiring freezes*
- *pay freezes*
- *triage and limiting of all external consultant engagements*
- *early retirement*
- *review and adjust City business activities to align with the City core mandate under the Vancouver Charter; and*

FURTHER THAT the City Manager continue these efforts as necessary to limit future property tax increases in 2010 and 2011.

During February/March 2009 Staff have been addressing the Council motion and conducting a comprehensive public consultation process that involves a web and telephone survey, five focus groups, a public meeting, and a Stakeholder Mayor's Forum. This report includes the

results of these two initiatives.

DISCUSSION

2009 Budget Update

1) Budget Adjustments

a) Revenue Adjustments

City Staff have conducted a review of all revenues in light of the economic downturn that the City of Vancouver, like all major City's, has been experiencing. As a result of this review, the following revenue reductions have been made:

Table 1: Economic Impact: Revenue Adjustments

	\$million
Development Fees	\$12.00
Anchor Rods	\$0.25
Property Tax Search Fees	\$0.25
Fire Prevention Revenues	\$0.07
Total	\$12.57

Overall, such a revenue decline represents an unprecedented drop in development activity of approximately 50% over 2008 levels and translates to a 2.41% tax increase.

b) Budget Management Strategy

The City Manager and the Corporate Management Team have been working towards meeting the short term objectives of the Council Motion to find ways to mitigate the impacts of development related revenue losses. The following highlights the major savings that have been realized through these measures.

Table 2 - Budget Management Strategy Initiatives

Budget Measure	Description	\$Millions	%Tax
Hiring Freeze		\$6.9	1.31%
<p>On February 13, 2009, the City Manager provided notice that effective immediately the City was to institute a hiring freeze of all vacant positions to meet the budget challenge. Recognizing that there were positions critical to the organization, an exemption process to the freeze was developed. All exemptions had to be reviewed and approved either by the City Manager, the General Managers of the three Boards, or the General Manager of Human Resources in dealing with blanket exemptions. Along with these exemptions, the vacancy analysis also factored out those permanent positions that were backfilled by temporary employees. Overall, \$6.9 million savings has been identified assuming that non-exempted vacant positions are held vacant until December 31, 2009.</p>			
Departmental Adjustments		\$1.5M	0.28%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments were requested to review areas within their budget that were considered more discretionary in nature. Areas identified for savings were: travel and training, overtime, consulting, and temporary help. Appendix 2 provides adjustments by department. 			
Project Contracts & Carry forwards		\$2.2M	0.41%
<p>A major portion of projects and contracts for each Department was reviewed to determine overall priority. Overall, \$2.2 million of projects/contracts/carry forwards have been determined to be of lower priority. The major savings (\$1.4M of \$2.2M) relate to three projects - the Ambassador Program, Cultural Tourism, and Cultural Plan Implementation. The remaining projects are under \$100K in savings each.</p>			
Fuel Adjustment		\$0.5M	0.10%
<p>Given the continued low cost of fuel, a further adjustment to the fuel rate has been made from \$1.30/litre to \$1.15/litre.</p>			
Staff Review Group Recommendations: Supplementary Capital/NNRs		\$1.5M	0.30%
<p>A Staff Review Group reviewed and prioritized all of the 2009 requests for New and Non-Recurring funding and Supplementary Capital funding. Given the current budget restraints, only those items deemed to be of high priority were recommended. This has resulted in a savings opportunity of \$1.5M (\$0.4M from NNRs and \$1.1M from Supplementary Capital). The reduction in Supplementary Capital is reflected in the budget as a reduction to Capital from Revenue. Council will provide final budget approval for the projects recommended as part of Supplementary Capital during the 2009 Capital Budget in May 2009.</p>			

Table 2 - Budget Management Strategy Initiatives (Continued)

Budget Measure	Description	\$Millions	%Tax
Legal Services Cost Allocation		\$1.0	0.19%
<p>A review of the allocation of costs within the Law Department has identified that a much more significant portion of the Department's work supports other funds such as Capital, Utilities, and the PEF. This is now properly reflected in the budget.</p>			
Funding Requests		\$1.3M	0.25%
<p>The 2009 Interim Estimates included \$3.0M (gross funding) of funding requests for a total tax implication of 0.33%. A review of the funding requests was made in light of the current budget management situation to determine if any of the requests can be eliminated or deferred. Three of the requests provided for Council's CONSIDERATION have been removed: Ambassador Program (which has been cancelled by Council), Project Civil City, and the Temporary Opening of Hillcrest Pool. These resulted in \$1.2M savings to the budget. As well the following of the administrative requests have been removed and, where applicable, the original funding sources have been captured:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information Technology - Systems Administrator, Programmer Analyst & Web Systems Analyst • Information Technology - Learning Support • Streets Administration / Filming - Temporary help in the Film Office • Solid Waste Mgmt - Keep Vancouver Spectacular (KVS) Expansion 			
VPD Cost Pressures		n/a	n/a
<p>As a result of the unprecedented level of gang shootings within the Lower Mainland and Vancouver, the VPD's budget needed to be adjusted. \$0.8M has been added on a one time basis to the Criminal Investigation Fund. This increase has temporarily been funded by using a portion of the 2010 Traffic Fine Revenues advanced by the Provincial Government, pending negotiations with the Provincial Government.</p>			
Parking Revenues		\$1.3M	0.24%
<p>Appendix 7 and 8 reflect the recommendation to increase parking meter fees and fines, partly to address the revenue increase in the Interim Budget Estimates (\$1.2M) and partly to provide further revenues incorporated in the updated Budget Estimates(\$1.25M). The increased revenues in the updated Budget Estimates reflect \$0.5M from Parking Meter revenues and \$0.75M from Parking Fine revenues.</p>			
TOTAL BUDGET SAVINGS		\$16.2M	2.64%

c) Restructuring Fund

The majority of the components of the Budget Management Strategy developed by the Corporate Management Team are short term in nature and will mainly result in one-time savings to the budget. Given that on-going savings are required for future budgets to mitigate taxation impacts, and the need to address the longer term initiatives included in the Council Motion, such as Shared Services and Core Services reviews, the Corporate Management Team felt it was important to provide a source of funds for Departments to access to help them during this transition period. The budget includes \$1.0 million (a 0.19% tax increase) towards a Transition Fund that will be available to Departments should they require either outside assistance or seed money to drive efficiencies. This funding will be supplemented by \$0.83 million available from the 311 capital project that also provides this type of support, and the Strategic Initiative Fund. This funding will be carried over as project funding until the objectives of the Council motion have been fully met.

2) Property Tax Impacts

The following table summaries the major changes to the budget as reported on February 3, 2009.

Table 3 - Property Tax Impacts - Summary

Budget Adjustment	Tax Impact	Cumulative Tax Impact
Interim Budget Position		6.0%
Economic Impact - Revenues	2.41%	8.4%
Restructuring Fund	0.19%	8.6%
Vacancy Savings - Hiring Freeze	(1.31%)	7.3%
Departmental Adjustments (discretionary savings)	(0.28%)	7.0%
Projects, Contracts & Carry forwards	(0.41%)	6.6%
Fuel Adjustment	(0.10%)	6.5%
Supplementary Capital & NNR Reduction	(0.30%)	6.2%
Legal Services Cost Allocation	(0.19%)	6.0%
Parking Revenues	(0.24%)	5.7%
Updated Budget Position - Existing Services levels		5.7%
Funding Requests as of February 3, 2009	0.33%	6.1%
Reduction to Funding Requests	(0.24%)	5.8%
Final Budget Position including Funding Requests		5.8%

¹A 1% property tax increase is equivalent to a \$5.2 million increase to the budget

3) Property Tax Implications for 2009

Along with the budget impact on property taxes, property taxes will be impacted by the 2008 Council approval to redistribute the property tax levy between residential and non-residential properties based on the recommendations of a Property Tax Policy Review Commission.

Table 4 identifies the property tax implications of the Updated Budget position, the 2009 Funding Requests, and the Property Tax Redistribution on residential and non-residential properties.

Table 4 - Total Potential Impact on 2009 Property Taxes

Description	Property Tax Impact	Overall Property Tax Increase	Property Tax Distribution	
			Residential Properties	Non-Residential Properties
Opening Budget Position	5.74%	5.74%	5.74%	5.74%
<i>Property Tax Impact of Property Valued at \$783,000¹</i>			+\$87	+\$428
Funding Requests	0.09%	5.83%	5.83%	5.83%
<i>Property Tax Impact of Property Valued at \$783,000¹</i>			+\$88	+\$435
			+\$1	+\$7
Property Tax Redistribution of \$5.5 million Between Residential and Non-residential Property²			7.83%	3.83%
<i>Property Tax Impact of Property Valued at \$783,000¹</i>			+\$121	\$280
			+\$33	(\$155)

¹ Calculated on using base levy of \$522 million

² 2.0% increase for residential property taxes and 2.0% decrease for non-residential property taxes

4) Estimated Tax Impact in 2010

As was noted in the Interim Estimates, Council should be aware that decisions in 2009 will impact the 2010 Operating Budget. This is even more evident because the majority of the funding measures outlined in this report are one time in nature. Should development revenues not return to historical levels, the City could face an approximate 2% property tax gap over and above the gap projected in the interim estimates. The longer term measures in the Council Motion (shared services/core services), therefore, become critical to drive on-going savings to offset such an increase.

To calculate the 2010 potential property tax increase, the following was considered:

Table 5 - 2009 Property Tax Increase Estimate

	2009 Funding (\$000)	2010 Budget (\$000)	2010 Budget Increase (\$000)	2010 Tax Impact ¹
BUDGET GAP - INTERIM ESTIMATES				
Funding Requests	1,711	1,600	(111)	n/a
2008 Police Approvals	7812	8,996	1,184	0.2%
One-time Budget adjustments ²		4,826	4,826	0.9%
Reversal of Incremental Turnover ²		2,357	2,357	0.4%
Opening of Capital Facilities	1,940	5,168	3,228	0.6%
Cost to Maintain Base Services			16,665 to 24,975	3.2% to 4.8%
Total			\$28,149 to \$36,459	5.3% to 6.8%
BUDGET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS				
Economic Impact - Revenues	12,570	0 to 12,570	(12,570) to 0	(2.3%) 0.0%
Vacancy Savings - Hiring Freeze	(6,863)	0	6,863	1.2%
Department Adjustments ³	(1,452)	0	1,452	0.3%
Projects, Contracts & Carryforwards ³	(2,151)	797	1,354	0.2%
One-Time NNR Adjustment	(444)	0	444	0.1%
Parking Revenues ⁴	(1,250)	(2,000)	(750)	(0.1%)
Total Impact of Budget Management Initiatives			(2,901) To 9,669	(0.6%) To 1.7%
TOTAL POTENTIAL 2010 PROPERTY TAX IMPLICATIONS			\$25,248 To \$44,313	4.7% to 8.5%

¹2009 Base Taxes at \$555 million assuming Council approves 6.29% property tax increase

²All one-time and turnover adjustments to the budget will be assessed during the 2010 Operating Budget process to determine whether savings can be extended.

³Some within these categories may result in on-going savings

⁴2010 Parking Meter revenues difficult to predict given impact of the Olympic Games

The potential property tax increase to maintain Council approved service levels will range from 4.7% to 8.5% due to anticipated inflationary/wage increases and the reversal of one-time budget adjustments, the 2008 police staffing approvals, the 2009 funding requests, and the inclusion of one-time budget adjustments in the budget estimates.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION RESULTS

In February 2009, the City conducted an extensive public consultation process on the 2009 Operating Budget. The City engaged Andrew MacKey and Associates to oversee the consultation process and eNRG Research Group (eNRG) to conduct a representative phone survey on the issues. Appendix 9 (limited distribution) includes a complete summary of the 2009 Operating Budget consultation process completed by Andrew MacKey and Associates titled *Public Consultation - City of Vancouver's 2009 Operating Budget*. This report details

the public process, and provides Council with an overview of the major themes that were heard through the process, including the community focus groups, Mayor's forum, public meeting, written submissions and the eNRG Group surveys. Appendix 9 also includes two reports from eNRG Group outlining the results of the public opinion poll of residents, businesses, the City's website, and focus groups, public meetings, and Mayor's Forum.

A) Elements of the Public Consultation Program

The public consultation program related to the 2009 Operating Budget was made up of the following elements:

1. Education and Advertising: The City utilized a number of different communication channels to educate the public on the 2009 Operating Budget, and inform the public of opportunities to provide input. These included the City's website, development of a backgrounder, print advertising, radio advertising, GVTV public service announcements, development of a "TOGETHER" card insert, email notifications, and posters.

2. Public Meeting: The City hosted one, three-hour public meeting, on February 21, 2009, at Vancouver Technical Secondary School. Professional facilitation and recording services at these meetings was provided by the consulting firm.

3. Mixed Stakeholder Meeting (Mayor's Forum): Leaders from over 200 stakeholder groups were invited to attend a meeting on February 18, 2009, hosted by Mayor Gregor Roberson at the Wosk Centre of Dialogue. Professional facilitation and recording services at these meetings was provided by the consulting firm.

4. Focus Groups: Five randomly selected groups (each with approximately 12 participants) were chosen by a survey company to participate in the budget consultation process. Four of the groups were residents and one group represented businesses. These focus groups were run in exactly the same manner as the public meeting and once again professional facilitation and recording services at these meetings was provided by the consulting firm.

5. Surveys: eNRG was engaged to conduct a representative telephone survey on the 2009 Operating Budget. eNRG also analysed the survey results from the web survey and the surveys used for the focus groups. These latter surveys were identical to the telephone survey.

6. Written Submissions: Through the various advertising channels listed above, the public was invited to send written submissions to Council, through email, web-forum, fax or surface mail. Citizens were also given the alternative of phoning in with their comments.

B) Public Consultation Results

1. eNRG Surveys

eNRG has completed two reports (Appendix 9). The first is the telephone survey of both

businesses and residents. The second report is a comprehensive evaluation of the survey conducted either on the web or through a paper feedback form. Below is a summary comparing the results of the telephone survey to the feedback form (both web and paper forms combined).

When considering the results, the telephone survey is considered statistically reliable while the feedback survey is based on a self selecting group of participants.

- Priority Services:** The most important issues identified by both residents and businesses in the telephone survey facing the City are social issues and crime. The third highest issue for residents was transportation and for businesses taxation. The top two priority services identified by both residents and businesses in the telephone survey are Police and Fire. Residents felt Garbage Collection as the next service of priority while businesses identified Sewerage and Drainage Services. When asked which services to protect from budget cuts, again, both residents and businesses chose Police and Fire. However, residents identified “support for community service organizations” while businesses identified “traffic management” as the next priority service to protect against budget cuts. As can be seen by the tables below, those responding through the feedback form identified similar priorities but the ordering is somewhat different. The most notable difference is the priority place by the participants to taxation which may reflect their interest in participating in the budget process.

Most Important Issues Facing Vancouver - Major Mentions¹

		Business	Residents
Social	Feedback Form	②43%	①61%
	Telephone	①33%	①44%
Transportation	Feedback Form	①48%	②45%
	Telephone	24%	③30%
Crime	Feedback Form	②43%	25%
	Telephone	②30%	②33%
Taxation	Feedback Form	①48%	③42%
	Telephone	③28%	19%

Most Important City Services

		Business	Residents
Fire Protection	Feedback Form	③41%	①59%
	Telephone	②55%	②52%
Policing	Feedback Form	①62%	①59%
	Telephone	①56%	①58%
Garbage/Recycling	Feedback Form	36%	③50%
	Telephone	37%	③43%
Sewerage/Drainage	Feedback Form	②45%	②52%
	Telephone	31%	35%

Traffic	Feedback Form	17%	29%
	Telephone	③40%	34%

¹ Numbers represent overall priority

Top Priority Service Areas (Last Areas in Which to Make Cuts)

		Business	Residents
Policing	Feedback Form	①40%	①46%
	Telephone	①44%	①50%
Fire Protection	Feedback Form	③20%	②35%
	Telephone	②32%	②30%
Community Service Org.	Feedback Form	②33%	③32%
	Telephone	13%	③21%
Traffic Management	Feedback Form	③20%	10%
	Telephone	17%	16%
Planning/Development	Feedback Form	③20%	16%
	Telephone	15%	20%

- **Property Tax Increase** - A majority of municipal residential taxpayers are willing to accept the possible municipal tax increases proposed to maintain present service levels even as high as 8%. Businesses are much more sensitive than residents to property tax increases and majority agreement is provided when the amount is a 2% tax increase.

		Business	Residents
2% Tax Increase	Feedback Form	50%	81%
	Telephone	61%	82%
4% Tax Increase	Feedback Form	50%	73%
	Telephone	25%	74%
6% Tax Increase	Feedback Form	n/a	62%
	Telephone	n/a	62%
8% Tax Increase	Feedback Form	n/a	55%
	Telephone	n/a	53%

- **Preferred Participation in Public Consultations:** The majority of residents and business owners/operators surveyed appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the annual budget process. Surveys are the preferred method of providing input on the City's annual budget (both random and web-based). Other preferred methods of participation include mail surveys. Less preferred methods of participation include attending public meetings and web-forums.

		Business	Residents
Random Survey	Feedback Form	n/a	17%
	Telephone	45%	47%

Web Survey	Feedback Form	45%	79%
	Telephone	47%	49%
Mail Survey	Feedback Form	23%	25%
	Telephone	38%	44%
Public Meeting	Feedback Form	32%	27%
	Telephone	15%	21%
Web-Forum	Feedback Form	27%	26%
	Telephone	21%	17%

2. Focus Groups (53 Participants)

The participants in the focus groups provided a range of feedback to the 2009 budget which is detailed in the consultants report (Appendix 9). In summary, the most consistent feedback provided was:

- The City should not reduce services especially during an economic downturn. Many participants said that these services would be more in demand during the economic downturn;
- Most participants said they would accept a property tax increase to maintain City services;
- Participants supported the city reviewing its services to see where efficiencies could be identified;
- Concern over homelessness and social issues was raised through most of the meetings.

Some of the consistent suggestions to tackle the budget issues were:

- Rotating closures or rotating shortened hours in City facilities would be acceptable as long as there were some facilities open during regular hours. For instance, closing one library one day and another a different day would be acceptable;
- Development of a City volunteer program to support areas where services needed to be reduced, but making sure that any volunteer program not take jobs from city staff;
- Expedite the collection of parking fines and develop a sponsorship program;
- Negotiate with higher levels of government about areas where the city currently provides services that are the responsibility of higher levels of government, e.g., low income housing, social services.

3. Mixed Stakeholder Meeting (Mayor's Forum) (70 Participants):

The Mayor's Forum included 70 different organizations representing a broad range of City stakeholders. These organizations included business, community groups, arts, sustainability, etc. Though varying opinions were provided, some consistent themes emerged from the meeting:

- Most participants said they were prepared to accept a tax increase to avoid service reductions;

- Most, if not all, participants said that service reductions should be avoided. Some participants said this could be avoided by increasing taxes;
- Representatives of the business community said the City could avoid tax increases while retain service levels by finding efficiencies;
- Some participants said the City should restrain expenses, seek efficiencies and eliminate programs that no longer work, before the City raises taxes;
- Many participants said that the City needed to avoid collateral damage that would result from reducing service levels to residents. This included such things as reducing services in community centers and libraries at a time when they might be most needed;
- Participants suggested that the City needed to approach higher levels of government and in particular the provincial government and ask them to fund services that are provincial jurisdiction such as housing for the homeless, social services and community programs facing cut backs;
- Several participants said the City should support “social enterprise” or micro-businesses as a way of supporting citizens and creating jobs.

4. Public Meeting (16 participants):

Some of the comments provided at the public meeting include:

- The need to protect services especially during an economic downturn while some noted that increased property taxes during such a time may be difficult for those facing financial instability;
- The city should look hard to find efficiencies in the current system, including job-sharing and ways generate more revenue from parking, and make it easier for residents to pay fines;
- Some participants identified dealing with social, mental health and non-residents as an extra cost to Vancouver’s police force and that the Province should be addressing and funding these areas.

5. Written Submissions (34 participants)

The input received by email or via the web-forum focused on the need for the City to find efficiencies and mitigate property tax increases. Some of the key themes included:

- The City should look at efficiencies before it increases taxes;
- Need to cut taxes and reduce services;
- Contracting out and/or increase competition for the City’s work so as to reduce costs;
- Focus on basic services;
- Re-evaluate labour contracts negotiated prior to the recession;
- Participants said that the Province, not the City, should fund the programs for which they are responsible such as mental health, drug addiction, homelessness and crime.

NEXT STEPS

On March 24, 2009, Council will receive the results of the public consultation and provide staff with direction on balancing the 2009 Operating Budget. On March 31, 2009, an evening meeting has been scheduled to hear from the public on Council's final budget strategy. The final 2009 Operating Budget estimates will be presented on April 07, 2009. On May 05, 2009, Council will approve the 2009 Property Taxation Bylaws and Averaging Resolution.

CONCLUSION

The 2009 Operating Budget has been updated to include savings of \$16.2 million to offset the extra ordinary revenue losses associated with the economic downturn. The public consultation process - a telephone and web survey conducted and compiled by eNRG, five focus Groups, a Stakeholder Meeting and a public meeting - has been conducted and the results are enclosed in this report.

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City of Vancouver 2009 Operating Budget Projections

	2008 budget	2009 Estimate	\$ change	% change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)		

SECTION 1: Summary of Revenues

Taxation Revenues

Base Levy	506,287	516,563	10,276	2.0%
New Construction	10,276	5,500	-4,776	(46.5%)
Total Taxation Revenues	516,563	522,063	5,500	1.1%
Tax Adjustments	-4,000	-3,000	1,000	(25.0%)
Local Improvement Taxes	3,113	2,710	-404	(13.0%)
Receipts in Lieu of Taxes	32,045	33,286	1,241	3.9%
Penalties and Interest	4,500	3,907	-593	(13.2%)
Total Revenue from Taxation	552,222	558,966	6,744	1.2%

Other Revenues

Provincial Revenue Sharing Programs	20,500	22,550	2,050	10.0%
Investment Income	16,185	13,551	(2,634)	(16.3%)
License Fees	15,622	15,771	149	1.0%
Property Rental Income	1,509	993	(517)	(34.2%)
Service and Inspection Fees	33,160	17,798	(15,362)	(46.3%)
Municipal By-Law Fines	12,420	14,256	1,836	14.8%
On Street Parking Revenue	27,805	30,720	2,915	10.5%
Civic Theatres Revenue	5,977	6,359	382	6.4%
Park Board Revenues	38,508	40,622	2,114	5.5%
Miscellaneous Revenues	5,873	5,701	(172)	(2.9%)
Total Other Revenues	177,558	168,320	(9,238)	(5.2%)

	2008 budget (\$000s)	2009 Estimate (\$000s)	\$ change	% change
Utility Fees				
Waterworks	75,901	80,872	4,971	6.5%
Solid Waste	31,708	36,451	4,743	15.0%
Sewers	36,636	40,744	4,108	11.2%
Total Utility Fees	144,245	158,066	13,821	9.6%
Total Revenues before Transfers	874,025	885,352	11,327	1.3%
Transfer from Other Funds/Reserves				
Sinking Fund Prior Year Surplus	0	0	0	
Property Endowment Fund	7,000	7,000	0	0.0%
Art Gallery Reserve	160	160	0	0.0%
Revenue Surplus	0	0	0	
2007 WORK STOPPAGE SAVINGS	11,800	0	(11,800)	(100.0%)
Other	1,500	0	(1,500)	(100.0%)
Total Transfer from Other Funds	20,460	7,160	(13,300)	(65.0%)
Total Revenues after Tax Increase	894,485	892,512	(1,973)	(0.2%)

	2008	2009	\$	%
	budget	Estimate	change	change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)		

SECTION 2: Summary of Expenditures

General Government

Mayor and Councillors	1,976	2,068	92	4.7%
City Manager / EEO	3,826	3,649	(177)	(4.6%)
City Clerk	5,208	3,747	(1,462)	(28.1%)
Legal Services	4,899	3,821	(1,079)	(22.0%)
Business Planning & Services	22,236	26,548	4,311	19.4%
Financial Services	11,885	12,306	421	3.5%
Human Resources	8,162	7,825	(337)	(4.1%)
Other General Government	11,312	9,030	(2,282)	(20.2%)
Community Services Administration	8,226	6,220	(2,007)	(20.7%)
City-Wide and Community Planning	7,807	8,716	909	11.6%
Total General Government	85,539	83,930	(1,609)	(1.9%)

Protection to Persons and Property

Police Services	181,854	195,152	13,299	7.2%
Fire and Rescue Services	82,368	86,385	4,016	5.0%
E-COMM Services	18,238	19,157	918	5.0%
Permits and Licences	22,928	22,212	(716)	(3.1%)
Animal Control	1,853	1,808	(45)	(2.4%)
Vancouver Emergency Program	1,459	1,514	55	3.8%
Total Protection to Persons and Property	308,699	326,227	17,528	5.7%

	2008 budget	2009 Estimate	\$ change	% change
	(\$000s)	(\$000s)		
Public Works				
Administration and General	12,382	10,528	(1,854)	(15.0%)
On Street Parking Program	10,511	10,211	(301)	(2.9%)
Traffic Planning and Control	10,982	10,315	(667)	(6.1%)
Street Lighting and Communications	5,206	5,868	662	12.7%
Street Cleaning	8,954	9,043	89	1.0%
Streets, Bridges and Walkways	17,071	17,931	860	5.09%
Total Public Works	65,106	63,895	(1,211)	(1.9%)
Utilities - Waterworks				
Operating Costs	9,196	11,498	2,302	25.0%
Water Purchase	49,444	55,733	6,289	12.7%
City Debt Charges	21,313	18,945	-2,368	(11.1%)
Transfer to/(from) Reserve	-4,052	-5,304	-1,252	30.9%
Total Utilities - Waterworks	75,901	80,872	4,971	6.5%
Utilities - Solid Waste				
Operating Costs	30,496	33,239	2,743	9.0%
Transfer to/(from) Reserve	1,212	3,212	2,000	165.0%
Total Utilities - Solid Waste	31,708	36,451	4,743	15.0%
Utilities - Sewer				
City Operating Costs	7,289	7,932	644	8.8%
City Debt Charges	22,302	21,471	(831)	(3.7%)
Regional Sewerage Levy	42,672	44,157	1,485	3.5%
Transfer to/(from) Reserve	681	(992)	(1,673)	(245.5%)
Total Utilities - Sewer	72,944	72,569	(375)	(0.5%)

	2008 budget (\$000s)	2009 Estimate (\$000s)	\$ change	% change
Recreation and Community Services				
Parks and Recreation	97,847	101,988	4,141	4.2%
Britannia Service Centre	2,960	3,087	127	4.3%
Social Planning	1,856	1,989	133	7.2%
Housing Programs	1,832	2,069	237	12.9%
Office of Cultural Affairs	1,497	1,354	(144)	(9.6%)
Carnegie Centre	3,308	3,428	120	3.6%
Downtown South Gathering Place	2,222	2,023	(199)	(9.0%)
Vancouver Public Library	37,611	37,973	362	1.0%
Civic Theatres	7,045	7,385	340	4.8%
Archives	1,445	1,551	106	7.4%
Cemetery	820	817	(3)	(0.4%)
Total Recreation and Community Services	158,443	165,749	7,306	4.6%
Civic Grant Program	15,705	15,766	61	0.4%
Contingency Reserve	3,100	4,000	900	29.0%
Total before Capital Program and Transfers	817,145	847,372	30,227	3.7%

	2008 budget (\$000s)	2009 Estimate (\$000s)	\$ change	% change
Capital Program				
General Debt Charges	49,032	47,765	(1,267)	(2.6%)
Capital From Revenue	19,700	20,900	1,200	6.1%
Local Improvements	3,113	2,710	(404)	(13.0%)
Debt Repayment Reserve	0	0	0	
Total Capital Program	71,845	71,374	(471)	(0.7%)
Transfers to Reserves/Funds				
Other Transfers	5,495	3,747	(1,749)	(31.8%)
Total Transfers to Reserves/Funds	5,495	3,747	(1,749)	(31.8%)
Total Expenditures	894,485	922,493	28,008	3.1%
<hr/>				
Tax Increase Used to Balance Budget		1.23%	5.74%	

Appendix 2: Budget Adjustment Summary

	Departmental Adjustments	Projects, Contracts & Carry Forwards	Hiring Freeze	Total Adjustments by Department
City Clerk's	(146)	0	(106)	(252)
City Manager	(19)	(5)	(117)	(142)
EEO	0	0	(31)	(31)
Civic Theatres	(11)	(20)	0	(31)
CSG	(259)	(1,862)	(2,259)	(4,381)
Finc. Services	(47)	(68)	(231)	(346)
HR	(10)	(48)	0	(58)
Legal Services	0	0	(222)	(222)
Fire	(20)	0	(171)	(191)
VPD	(270)	0	(99)	(369)
Library	(45)	0	(157)	(201)
Park's Board	(200)	0	(1,179)	(1,379)
Bus. Planning	(221)	(52)	(475)	(748)
Engineering	(204)	(152)	(1,815)	(2,171)
	(1,452)	(2,208)	(6,863)	(10,524)

Appendix 3: Recommendations - Funding Requests

The following is a summary of all the non-police funding requests included in the recommendations starting on the next page.

	Gross Adjustment (\$000)	Net Adjustment (\$000)	Tax Impact %
Funding Requests (Recommendations 1 - 16)			
1 Crime Free Multi-Housing Program	110	-	-
Council Requested Report Back	110	-	-
2 Mental Health Advocate, Childcare Support, Green Grants Fund, External Audit	700	400	0.08
Priorities Identified by the Finance Chair	700	400	0.08%
3 Community Services Group - Planning - Extension of Temp Planner I position in the BIA area	65	65	0.01
4 Community Services Group - Social Development - Increase Security staffing at Evelyne Saller Centre	11	11	-
5 Business Planning - Staffing Resources for Non-Profit Capital Asset Portfolio	83	83	0.02
6 Britannia Services Centre - Communications Coordinator	21	21	-
Funding Requests Requiring New Funding	180	180	0.03%
7 Engineering Services - Parking Enforcement - Expanded hours	580	(120)	-
8 Engineering Services - Utilities Management - Street Utilities Bylaw	62	-	-
9 Engineering Services - Streets Design, Sewer Design and Water Design - Road Ahead Coordinator	73	-	-
10 City Clerk's Department - Corporate Communications	70	-	-
11 Community Services Group - Support Services	78	-	-
12 Community Services Group - Social Development - New Assistant Director of Social Infrastructure	120	-	-
13 Financial Services - SAP Business Support	75	-	-
14 Business Planning - Information Technology - Enterprise Data/Applications Architecture	110	-	-
15 Business Planning - Information Technology - IT Security	200	-	-
16 Vancouver Police Department - Granville Entertainment District	253	-	-
Funding Requests Requiring New Funding	1,621	(120)	(0.02)%
Total Funding Requests	2,611	460	0.09%

Appendix 4 - Council Recommendations - Funding Requests

RECOMMENDATION 1: Council Requested Report Back

1. THAT Council approve one-time funding of \$110,000 for the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program to continue with the work program in 2009, offset by a contribution from the Social Responsibility Fund with no net budget impact subject to staff reporting back on the terms of reference for the Social Responsibility Fund prior to March 24, 2009.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Priorities Identified by the Finance Chair

2. THAT Council approve the funding for priorities identified by the Finance Chair - a Mental Health Advocate (\$150K), enhanced Childcare Support (\$150K), creation of a Green Grants Fund (\$100K), and the retention of an external auditor (\$300K) - at an annual cost of \$700,000, offset by one-time funding from the 2008 Operating Budget surplus (\$300,000), with a net amount of \$400,000 as an increase to the 2009 Operating Budget, increasing the 2009 property taxes by 0.08% and that staff will report back on each program for final approval.

RECOMMENDATION 3 - 6: Funding Requests Requiring New Funding

3. THAT Council approve the extension of the temporary Planner I position within the Community Services Group Planning division for the BIA program, at an annual cost of \$86,200 (2009 pro-rated cost - \$64,700), including benefits, as an increase to the 2009 Operating Budget, increasing the 2009 property taxes by 0.01%.
4. THAT Council approve the establishment of a Regular Part Time Security Attendant position within the Community Services Group - Evelyne Saller Centre, at an annual gross cost of \$22,400 (with partial offset of \$11,200 by the existing agreement with BC Housing), as an increase of \$11,200 to the 2009 Operating Budget, increasing the 2009 property taxes by 0.002%.
5. THAT Council approve the establishment of a Regular Full Time position within the Business Planning Real Estate division, and another in the Business Planning Building Management division, at an annual cost of \$165,000 (2009 pro-rated cost - \$82,500), including benefits, as an increase to the 2009 Operating Budget, increasing the 2009 property taxes by 0.02%.

6. THAT Council approve the conversion of an existing Regular Full Time Clerk II position within Britannia Services Centre, to a Regular Full Time Communications Coordinator position at an incremental annual cost of \$21,400, including benefits, as an increase to the 2009 Operating Budget, increasing the 2009 property taxes by 0.004%.

RECOMMENDATION 7 - 16: Funding Requests with No Net Budget Impact

7. THAT Council approve the establishment of eight Regular Full Time Parking Enforcement Officers and two Regular Full Time Superintendents for expanded late night parking enforcement within Engineering Parking Enforcement division, at an annual cost of \$580,000, including benefits, offset by increased parking revenues of \$700,000, as a decrease to the 2009 Operating Budget, decreasing the 2009 property taxes by 0.02%.
8. THAT Council approve the regularization of an existing Temporary Full Time Engineering Assistant III within the Engineering Utilities Management division at an annual cost of \$62,000, with benefits, offset by fees from the utility companies with no net budget impact.
9. THAT Council approve the regularization of an existing Temporary Full Time Communications Officer for the Road Ahead program within Engineering Streets Design Branch at an annual cost of \$73,000, including benefits, offset by a contribution from Capital with no net budget impact.
10. THAT Council approve the establishment of a Regular Full Time Office Manager within City Clerk's Corporate Communications division at an annual cost of \$70,000, including benefits, offset by the deletion of one Regular Part Time Clerk III position and one Regular Part Time Clerk IV position with no net budget impact.
11. THAT Council approve the conversion of an existing Regular Full Time Account Clerk position with the Community Services Group Support Services division, to a Regular Full Time Financial Analyst position at an annual cost of \$78,000, including benefits, offset by the existing salaries budget with no net budget impact.
12. THAT Council approve the establishment of a Regular Full Time Assistant Director of Social Infrastructure position within the Community Services Group Social Development division at an annual cost of \$120,000, including benefits, offset by the savings within Community Services Group operating budget with no net budget impact.
13. THAT Council approve the regularization of an existing Temporary Full Time position within the Financial Services SAP Business Support Team at an annual cost of \$75,000, including benefits, offset by a reduction in the existing Temporary Help Budget with no net budget impact.

14. THAT Council approve the establishment of a Regular Full Time Enterprise Data/Applications Architecture position within Business Support Information Technology division at an annual cost of \$110,000, including benefits, offset by a contribution from Capital with no net budget impact.
15. THAT Council approve the establishment of two Regular Full Time IT Security positions within Business Support Information Technology division at an annual cost of \$200,000 without offset, including benefits, to begin in early 2010, with no net 2009 budget impact.
16. THAT Council approve the continued deployment of the Vancouver Police Department's LIMA squad in the Granville Entertainment District at an annual cost of \$253,000 offset by one-time funding from the 2008 Operating Budget surplus with no 2009 net budget impact and that staff report back in mid 2009 on options to increase liquor licence fees in 2010.

Appendix 5: 311 Departmental Adjustments

#	Department	Program	Description	FTE Impact		\$ Amount	Impact Statement
				Total FTE ¹	Net FTE ²		
1	City Clerks	Administrative Services	Transfer Information Clerical Services (2 RFT positions) from the City Hall Front Kiosk to 311	2	0	84,000	Minimal impact as service will be provided by the 311 centre. Employees received jobs at 311 Contact Centre.
Total City Clerks				2	0	\$84,000	
2	Financial Services	Revenue Services	Transfer customer services support positions to 311 (1 RFT & 2 TFT positions)	3	0	51,000	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 call centre. No full time employee impacted as 2 positions are vacant and 1 filled by temporary employee.
3	Financial Services	Accounting Services	Eliminate vacant RFT Clerk III position	1	0	53,000	Accounting services has identified process improvements in the area of purchase orders, goods receipts, construction progress payments, supplier invoices and time entry that allows for an elimination of a clerical position without impact on services. The position is currently vacant.
4	Financial Services	Misc. Adjustments		0	0	16,330	Miscellaneous adjustments throughout Financial Services that have no impact on staffing or services.
Total Financial Services				4	0	\$120,330	

#	Department	Program	Description	FTE Impact		\$ Amount	Impact Statement
				Total FTE ¹	Net FTE ²		
5	Community Services	Planning	Eliminate RFT Clerk Typist II position	1	0	48,541	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 contact centre. No full time employee impacted as employee received job at 311 Contact Centre.
6	Community Services	Non Market Operations	Eliminate RFT Landscape Technician position	1	1	72,976	Minimal service impact as position no longer required. Staff impact.
7	Community Services	Development Services	Eliminate RFT Clerk II position	1	0	48,541	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 contact centre. Position currently filled by temporary staff.
8	Community Services	Licenses & Inspections	Eliminate RFT Permit & License Clerk position	1	1	52,596	Service will be provided by the 311 centre, one RFT staff impact.
Total Community Services				4	2	222,654	
9	Engineering	Parking Management	Eliminate TFT Engineering Assistant I position	1	0	44,000	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 contact centre. Position currently filled by temporary staff.
10	Engineering	Engineering Call Centre	Eliminate two RFT Permit & License Clerk positions	2	0	97,085	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 contact centre. Positions currently filled by temporary staff.
11	Engineering	Parking Enforcement	Eliminate two Parking Enforcement Officers positions (mid-year)	2	0	50,471	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 contact centre. Positions currently vacant.
12	Engineering	Local Improvements	Reduce Temp help budget	0.5	0	22,500	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 contact centre.

#	Department	Program	Description	FTE Impact		\$ Amount	Impact Statement
				Total FTE ¹	Net FTE ²		
13	Engineering	Yards	Eliminate RFT Clerk III position (mid-year)	1	1	28,177	Minimal impact as service will be provided by 311 contact centre.
14	Engineering	Traffic & Electrical	Miscellaneous adjustments	0	0	50,000	Miscellaneous adjustments that have no impact on staffing or services
15	Engineering	Sanitation	Eliminate two RFT Clerk II positions (mid-year) and one RFT Clerk II position full year	3	1	102,550	Service will be provided by 311 contact centre. One RFT position is vacant, one filled with temporary staff, and one RFT staff impact.
16	Engineering	Landfill	Reduce Landfill Ditch Maintenance Program	0	0	3,600	No impact on service or employees
17	Engineering	Waterworks Operations	Reduce Water Service maintenance	0	0	28,000	No impact on service or employees
18	Engineering	Sewer Operations	Reduce Street Drainage maintenance and cleaning program	0	0	24,408	No impact on service or employees
Total Engineering				9.5	2	450,790	
19	Fire & Rescue Services	Prevention	Misc. Adjustments	0	0	7,000	Miscellaneous adjustments that have no impact on staffing or services
Total Fire & Rescue Services				0	0	7,000	
20	Human Resource Services	Administration	Misc. Adjustments	0	0	7,769	Miscellaneous adjustments that have no impact on staffing or services
Total Human Resource Services				0	0	7,769	

#	Department	Program	Description	FTE Impact		\$ Amount	Impact Statement
				Total FTE ¹	Net FTE ²		
21	Parks & Recreation	Bloedel Conservatory	Reduce auxiliary budget	0.3	0	13,650	Reduction in auxiliary staff budget. Minimal impact as service will be provided by the 311 centre.
22	Parks & Recreation	Administration	Eliminate RFT Clerk Typist III (mid-year)	1	1	19,665	Service will be provided by the 311 centre, one RFT staff impact.
23	Parks & Recreation	Administration	Misc. Adjustments	0	0	7,804	Adjustment of administrative support functions.
24	Parks & Recreation	Aboriculture	Mid-year elimination Clerk Typist III	1	1	34,311	Service will be provided by the 311 centre, one RFT staff impact.
Total Parks & Recreation				2.3	2	75,430	
25	Police Department	Administration	Eliminate two telephone operator positions	2	1	93,200	Service will be provided by 311 centre, potential staff impact. Some remaining duties will be reallocated to other positions. One position RFT, one filled by temporary staff.
26	Police Department	Unallocated		0	0	31,720	To be absorbed by savings within budget and will have minimal impact to department
Total Police Department				2	1	124,920	
Total City-wide				23.8	7	1,092,893	

¹ FTE refers to temporary and regular positions

² Net FTE excludes vacant and temporary position to identify any Human Resource implications

Appendix 6 - Positions to Be Delimited by Council Approval

Department	Position Number and Description
Positions Related to 311 Implementation	
City Clerk	50006754 Information Clerk
City Clerk	50006756 Information Clerk
Community Services	50003200 Clerk Typist II
Community Services	50002457 Landscape Architectural Technician
Community Services	50003402 Clerk II
Community Services	50003419 Permit & License Clerk
Financial Services	50005870 Clerk III
Financial Services	50004990 Clerk Typist III
Engineering – Public Works	50004650 Permit & License Clerk
Engineering – Public Works	50004688 Permit & License Clerk
Engineering – Public Works	50005241 Parking Enforcement Officer
Engineering – Public Works	50025023 Parking Enforcement Officer
Engineering – Public Works	50005454 Clerk III
Engineering – Public Works	50000602 Clerk II
Engineering – Public Works	50004492 Clerk II
Engineering – Public Works	50004509 Clerk II
Park Board	50007814 Clerk Typist III
Park Board	50007816 Telephone Operator/Clerk Typist II
Vancouver Police Department	50012457 Telephone Operator I
Positions Related to Funding Requests	
City Clerk's – Corporate Communications (Rec. 10)	50027019 0.5 Clerk III
City Clerk's – Corporate Communications (Rec. 10)	50012293 0.5 Clerk IV
Community Services (Rec. 3)	50002696 Accounting Clerk
Britannia Services Centre (Rec.5)	Clerk Typist II in Cost Centre 7010

Appendix 7: Parking Meter Rate Increase

The following provides recommendations for selected parking meter rate changes to better reflect market conditions, the expansion of the metered zones, and the purchase and installation of new and replacement parking meter equipment

RECOMMENDATION: PARKING METER RATES

- A. THAT Council approve the following actions in order to provide a net increase to Parking Meter and Pay by Phone revenue of \$3.125 annually with an increase of \$1,700,000 expected in 2009, as reflected in the 2009 Budget Estimates:
- i. Parking meter rate changes for the balance of 2009 as detailed in Appendix 7(A);
 - ii. Expansion of the metered zones for future potential meter installations as detailed in Appendix 7(B) ;
 - iii. The purchase and installation of new parking meter equipment at an estimated Capital Cost of \$210,000 in 2009 to be funded by increased meter revenues;
 - iv. An increase to the meter maintenance funding of \$30,000 in 2009 and an annual increase of \$60,000 starting in 2010; and
 - v. An increase in the annual provision for parking meter equipment replacement of \$10,000 in 2009, and an annual increase of \$15,000 starting in 2010.

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services bring forward the necessary amendments to the Parking Meter By-law generally in accordance with Appendices 7(A) and 7(B).

FURTHER THAT Council approve the purchase of replacement parking meter equipment at an estimated cost of \$300,000 in 2009, with funds provided from the Parking Meter Replacement Fund.

COUNCIL POLICY

Council Policy is to use parking pricing in order to improve turnover of street parking for short-term use and to set meter rates to reflect market demand.

PARKING METER RATES

Council policy is that parking meter rates reflect market demand, and that they be set to provide short term parking for area visitors. To determine market rates, staff reviews street use and prevailing off-street parking rates. In order to provide the appropriate balance between use of street space and use of off-street space, meter prices are usually set higher than the rates in off-street lots or parkades. This reduces the long-term parking usage of the meters, typically by employees, and reduces the traffic congestion created by drivers circulating around the block looking for parking spaces.

Parking rates are reviewed on a regular basis and Appendix 7(A) details the proposed changes. The changes proposed for the balance of 2009 are predominately in areas which have high occupancy rates (greater than 85% of spots are full) combined with low or below market pricing. The recommended changes raise annual average meter rates by about 7.5% in 2009 from \$1.91 to \$2.06 per hour for an annual gross revenue increase of \$2.0 million with an increase of \$1.2 million expected in 2009. This increase will apply to the total revenue gained in 2008 from coins plus the pay-by-phone system.

PARKING METER ZONES

Parking meters are only installed in parking meter zones approved by Council. The areas approved are generally in commercial areas where there is a relatively high demand for short term on-street parking. Appendix 7(B) identifies 2 expansions of existing zones, one that needs to be formalized subsequent to a trial period (Point Grey) and the other as an expansion of the existing Commercial Street zone.

NEW METER INSTALLATIONS AND EQUIPMENT PURCHASE

The parking meter program is a large City business unit and attention is needed to ensure it provides good service and value for the general public and business community. Revenues have increased in recent years due to expansion of metered zones and approved rate changes. It is recommended that additional meter equipment be purchased at this time in order to install meters in new areas and to replace some older meters which are at the end of their life.

CONSULTATIONS

Business groups were consulted about the proposed meter rate increases. No concerns were expressed as many understood that they generally reflect fair market rates in the surrounding area as per Council policy. Most also understood that the proposed meter rate increases would improve the parking turnover in areas of high demand. This turnover would make it more convenient for customers to find short-term parking and should not result in any negative impact to businesses.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The parking meter program provides significant revenues to the City, totalling approximately \$28.0 million in 2008 net of GST.

It is estimated that approximately 320 new meters will be installed at a total cost of \$210,000. This will be funded from the increased revenues derived from these new meters. With the purchase and installation of new equipment, there is a need to increase the annual budget for maintaining the meters and to the provision for future parking meter replacement. The cost of maintenance will increase by \$30,000 in 2009 and an additional \$30,000 in 2010 for a total ongoing increase of \$60,000 per year. The provision for future replacement of the meters will increase by \$10,000 in 2009 for an eventual ongoing increase of \$15,000 per year, starting in 2010.

In 2009 the proposed parking meter rate increase is expected to generate an additional \$1.2 million, and the new meters should generate an additional \$0.75 million for a total of \$1.95 million. Because these revenue increases are being implemented part way through 2009, there will be an additional increase to revenues in 2010 to account for a full year of rate increases and new meters. These revenue increases, together with the increases in equipment and operating costs, will result in a net revenue increase of \$1.7 million in 2009 and an ongoing net revenue increase thereafter of \$3.125 million. However, this annual increase will not be met in 2010 due to parking restrictions during the Olympics. These increases are applied to 2008 revenues and will be an increase to the total revenue gained from a combination of coin collection and the pay-by-phone system. A summary of the financial impact on the operating budget is summarized in Table 1 below. These revenues are included in the 2009 Budget Estimates in Appendix 1.

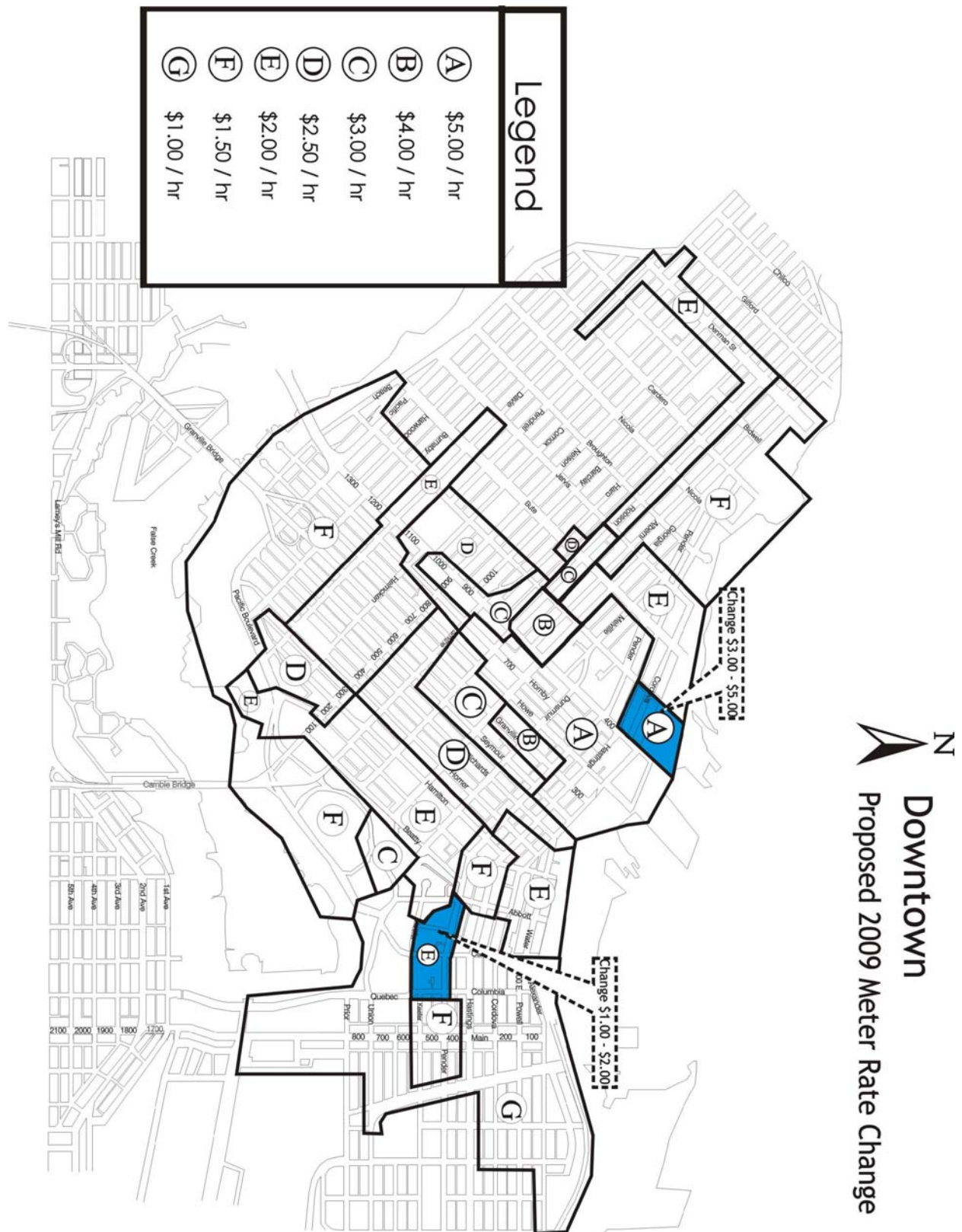
Table 1 - Financial Impact on the Operating Budget from New Meter Installations

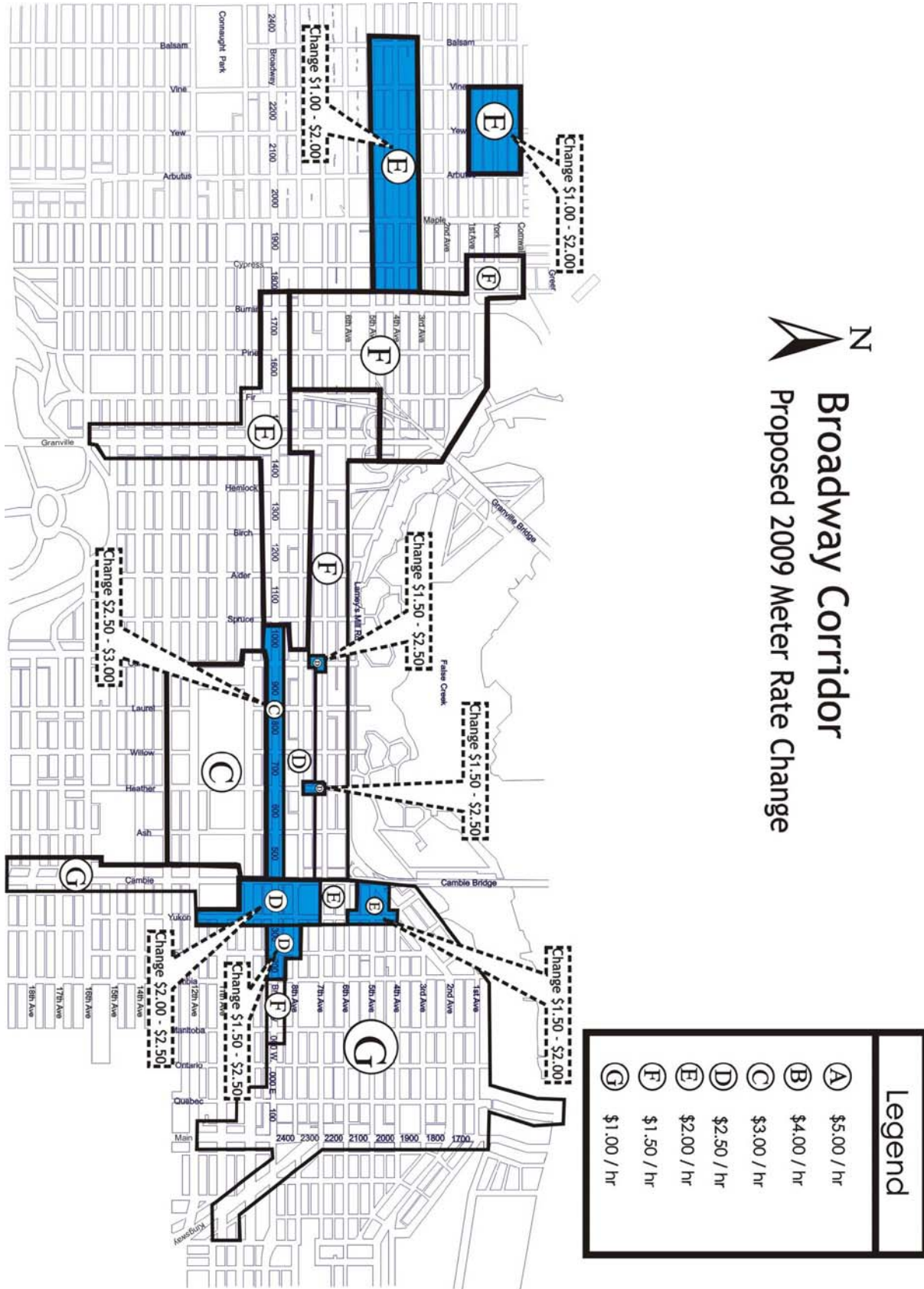
	2009	Annual Impact
Revenue from Rate Increases	\$1,200,000	\$2,000,000
Revenue from New Installations	\$750,000	\$1,200,000
Maintenance Cost	(\$30,000)	(\$60,000)
Provision for Future Meter Replacement*	(\$10,000)	(\$15,000)
Meter Cost	(\$210,000)	-
Net Revenue Increase	\$1,700,000	\$3,125,000

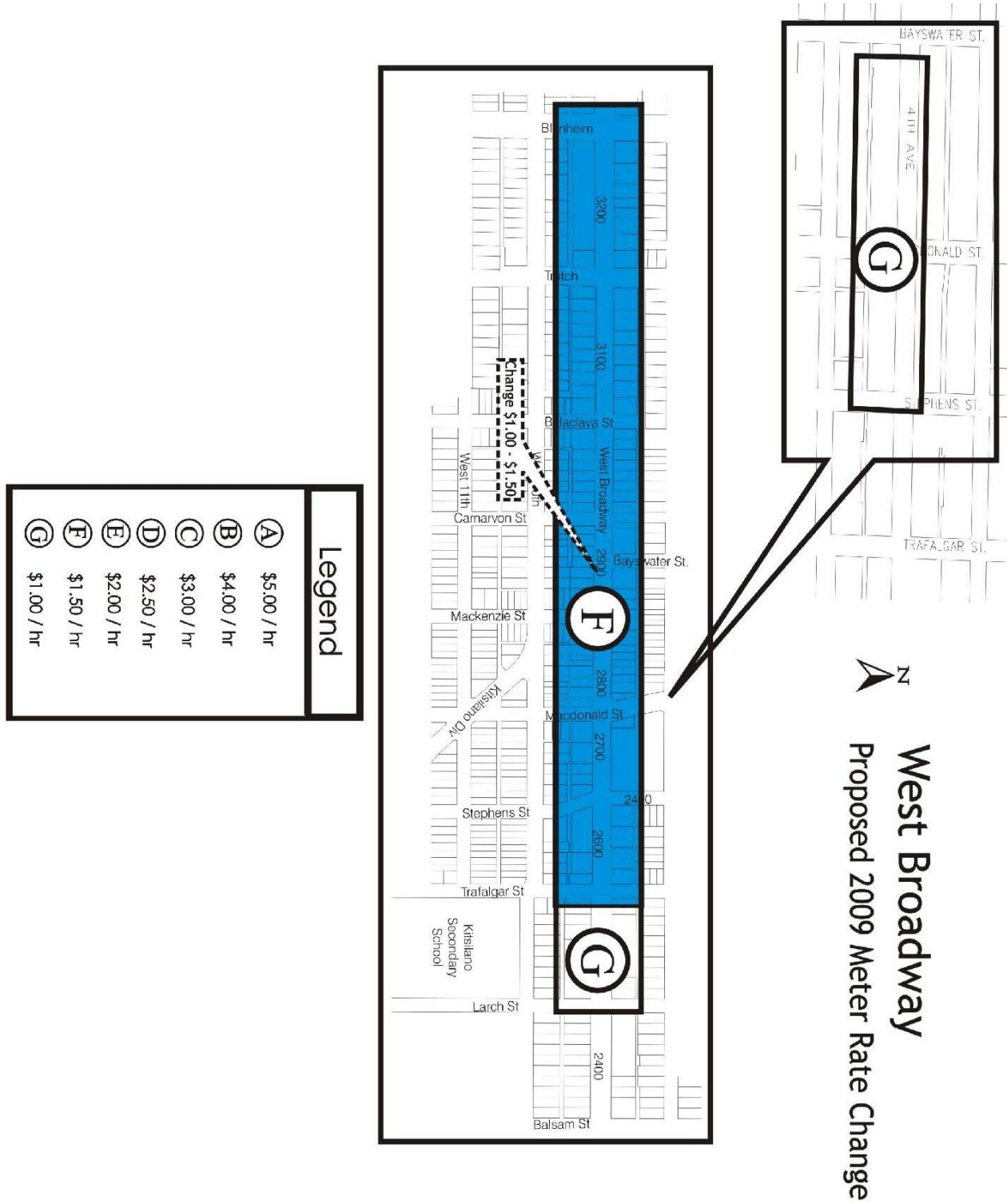
*This provision ensures that there is a contribution to the Parking Meter Replacement Fund such that the new parking meters can be replaced at the end of their service life.

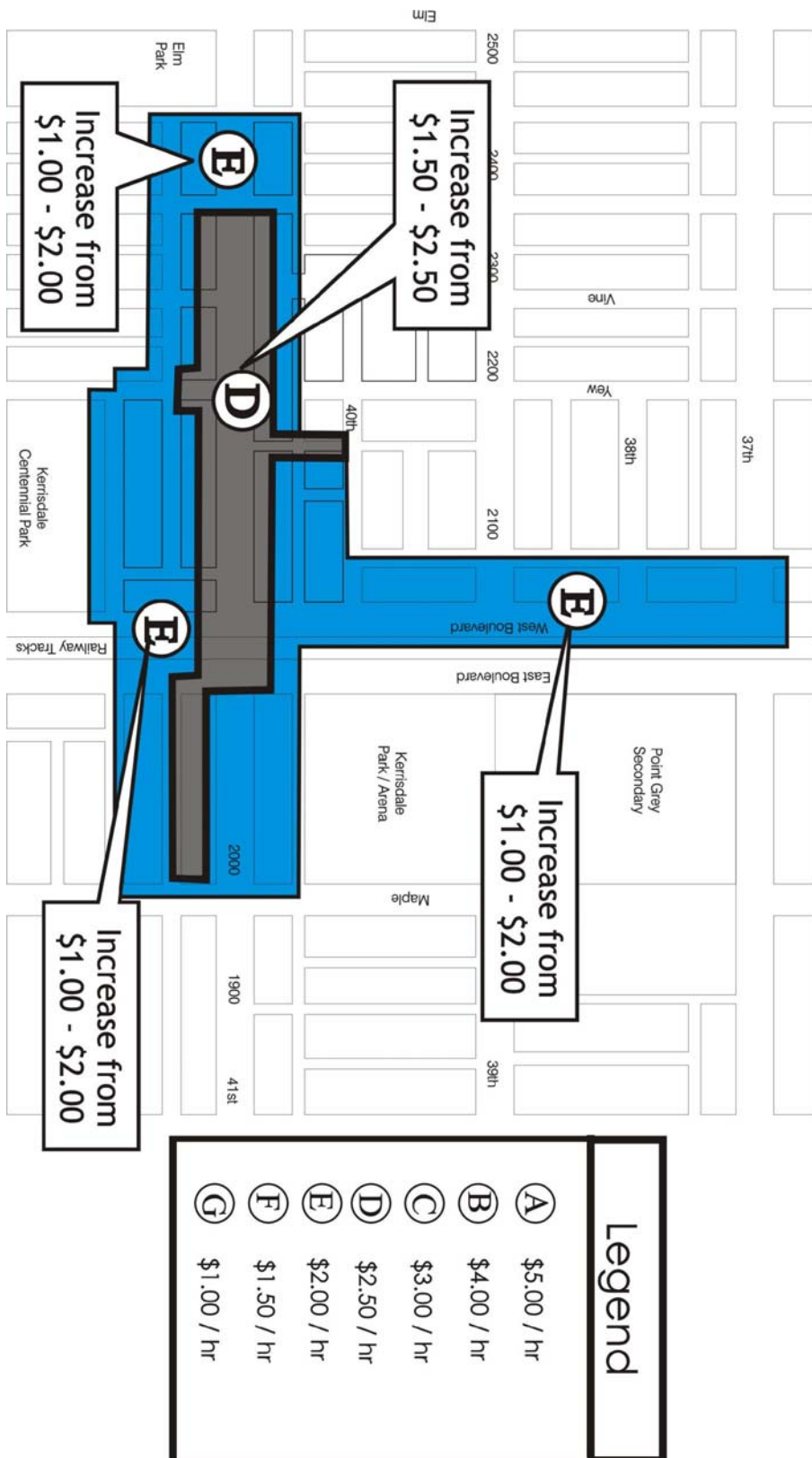
New parking meter equipment is also required to replace old equipment. In the next year, \$300,000 worth of equipment needs to be replaced. Funds for this purchase are available from the Parking Meter Replacement Fund.

		Existing Rate	Proposed Rate	Last increase
Downtown				
	Central Core CBD	\$2.00	no change	2007
		\$3.00	1000 Cordova \$3.00 to \$5.00	2004
		\$4.00	no change	2007
		\$5.00	no change	2007
	Downtown South	\$1.50/\$2.00/\$2.50	no change	2007
	Downtown Stadium	\$2.00	no change	2007
	Robson Street	\$2.00	no change	2005
	Coal Harbour	\$1.50	no change	2002
	Denman Street	\$2.00	no change	2005
	Davie Street	\$2.00	no change	2005
	Gastown	\$2.00	no change	2005
	Chinatown	\$1.00/1.50/2.00	\$2.00	2004 [↓\$1.50- \$1.00 Columbia St], 2008
	Yaletown	\$2.50	no change	
Central Broadway				
	Broadway Mt Pleasant	\$1.50	\$2.50	2005
	VGH	\$2.50	\$3.00	2005
	West Broadway/Kits	\$1.00	\$1.50	2004
	South Granville	\$1.50	no change	2008
	Burrard Slopes	\$1.00	no change	2008
Main Street				
	Uptown/King Ed	\$1.00	no change	2004
	1 Kingsway	\$1.00	no change	2004
Cambie Street				
	Crossroads	\$2.00	\$2.50	2005
	Cambie Village	\$1.00	no change	2001
Kerrisdale				
	West 41st/Blvd	\$1.00/\$1.50	\$2.00/\$2.50	1999
Kitsilano				
	1st Ave	\$1.50	no change	2006
	West 4th Ave	\$1.00	\$2.00	1999
	Yew/Cornwall Street	\$1.00	\$2.00	2006
Commercial Dr				
		\$1.00	\$2.00	1999







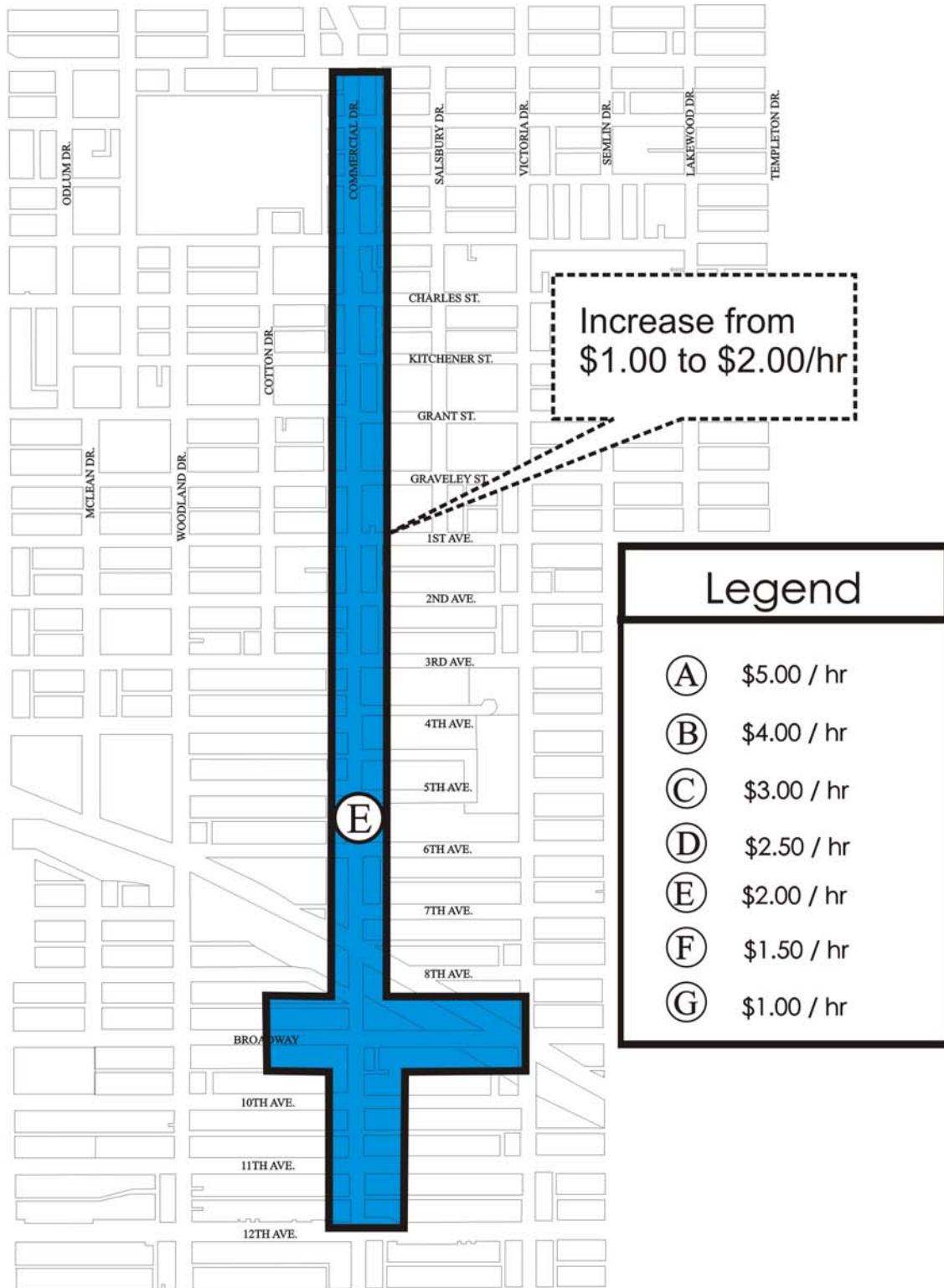


Kerrisdale
 Proposed 2009 Meter Rate Change



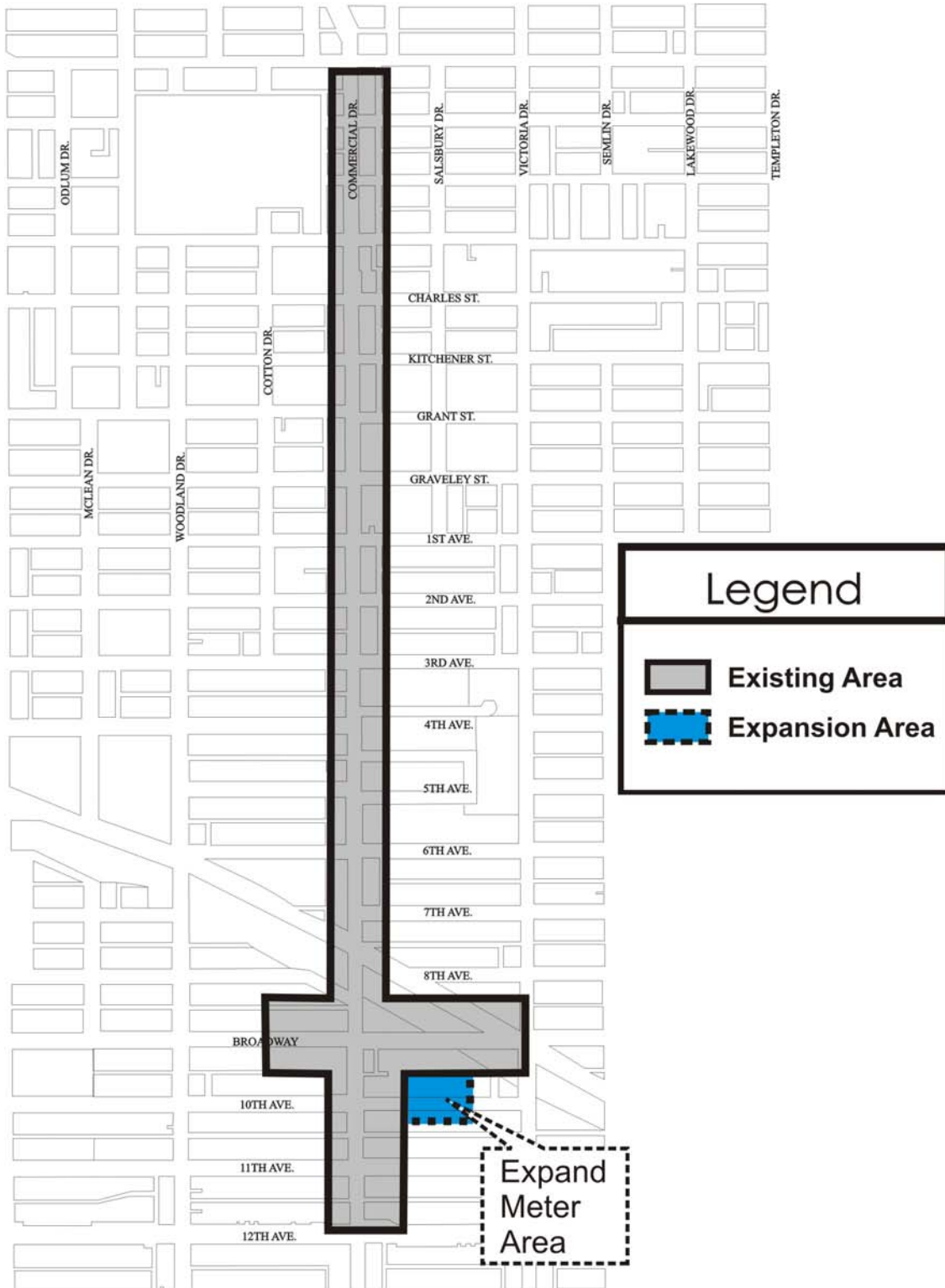
Commercial Drive

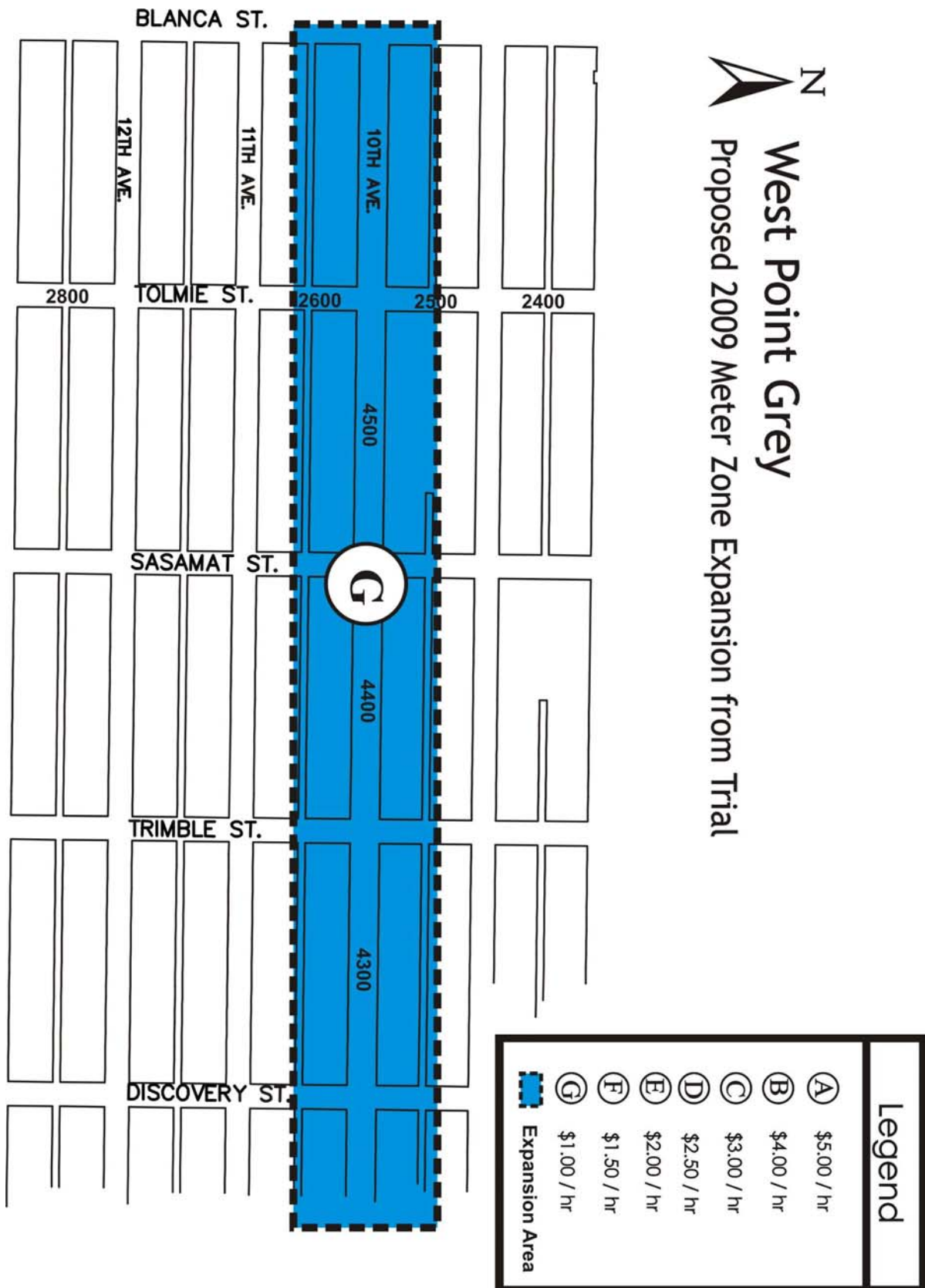
Proposed 2009 Meter Rate Change





Proposed 2009 Meter Zone Expansion





Appendix 8: Parking By-Law Fines

The following provides recommendations to increase a select number of Parking By-Law Fines providing an additional \$0.75M in revenues to the 2009 Operating Budget.

RECOMMENDATION

A. THAT Council approve:

- i. a \$10 increase (from \$60 to \$70) for fines in Parking Meter By-law No. 2952;
- ii. a \$10 increase for \$60 fines (from \$60 to \$70) in Street and Traffic By-law No. 2849; and
- iii. a \$10 increase for \$90 fines (from \$90 to \$100) in Street and Traffic By-law No. 2849

All as detailed in Appendix 8(A) and to be effective May 1st, to generate an estimated \$1.2 million annually with an increase of \$0.75 million expected in 2009, as reflected in the 2009 Budget Estimates.

FURTHER THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to prepare the necessary amendments to the Street and Traffic By-law and Parking Meter By-law, generally in accordance with Appendix 8(A).

There are 3 increases proposed for fines related to parking violations. The increase in the \$60 fine will be applied to vehicles ticketed for contravening any requirement of the Parking Meter bylaw (i.e. staying beyond the paid time or not paying at all) or for vehicles parking on a street longer than the time permitted. In the case of the parking meter offences, this is covered in By-law 2952, the Parking Meter By-law, while the fine for parking longer than the posted limit is covered in By-law 2849, the Street and Traffic By-Law. Also from the Street and Traffic By-law is the fine that is proposed to be increased from \$90 to \$100. This fine is applied to vehicles who park in a manner which impedes traffic, compromises safety or is regulated by parking permits. Examples of this include, parking too close to a fire hydrant or a driveway, parking in a No Stopping Zone or parking in a residential permit zone. In all cases, these increases apply to the minimum fine as it is not proposed to increase the maximum fines in either of the by-laws.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These fines were last increased in 2006. An increase as proposed would increase parking fine revenue by \$1.2 million annually with an increase of \$0.75 million expected in 2009, as reflected in the 2009 Budget Estimates. The increase in 2009 is less than the annual increase expected as the new fines will be implemented for only a portion of 2009. With this increase is the risk that the higher value fine will increase court challenges and result in lower than projected revenues, as we have seen with other fine increases.

Name	By-Law Number	Section	Current Minimum Fine	Proposed Minimum Fine
Street & Traffic	2849	17.6(e), 17.6(f), 65	\$60.00	\$70.00
Street & Traffic	2849	17.1 to 17.5 inclusive, 17.6(a), 17.6(b), 17.6(c), 17.6(d), 17.6(g), 17.6A, 17.7, 18, 19.1, 21.1 to 21.7 inclusive, 22.1, 22.4, 23.1, 23.1A, 23.3, 30(2)	\$90.00	\$100.00
Parking Meter	2952	All sections	\$60.00	\$70.00



Consultation Summary Report 2009 Operating Budget

MARCH 16, 2009





Consultation Summary Report 2009 Operating Budget

MARCH 16, 2009



Executive summary

A. BACKGROUND

On February 3, 2009 the City of Vancouver initiated a public consultation program on the City's proposed 2009 Operating Budget. The consultation program included the following:

1. Community Focus Groups
2. Mayor's Forum
3. Public Meeting
4. Written submissions
5. E-mail, phone and fax
6. On-line Forum
7. On-line Feedback Form
8. Consultation Background Document
9. A notice to all taxpayers (Green Card)
10. Telephone Survey of residents and businesses
11. GVTV Public Service Ads
12. Advertisements in community papers and on radio

The intent of the consultation program was to gather public input to assist Vancouver City Council in finalizing the 2009 Operating Budget.

The consultation was conducted in February 2009.

B. 2009 CONSULTATION PROGRAM

More than 171,000 residents and community organizations were contacted by an information card, e-mail or telephone calls to notify them of the opportunity to participate in consultation meetings or to provide input through the City's website (www.vancouver.ca) or by mail, fax and e-mail. In addition, 12 advertisements were run in community papers and 45 advertisements were aired on local radio stations.

About 1,540 residents and businesses participated in the consultation including through the telephone survey (900), feedback forms (536), community focus groups (53), e-mail (18), public meeting (16), on-line discussion forum (16) and the Mayor's Forum (70). A submission was received from the East Side Family Place.



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C. CONSULTATION RESULTS

The following summarizes the consultation input received through community focus groups, a Mayor's Forum, a public meeting, e-mail, written submission and on-line discussion forum submissions.

Input received through the telephone survey and feedback forms is summarized in separate reports.

The following provides a summary of these key themes followed by examples of participant comments.

1. Service Reductions

Participants, whether business or resident, said that they would prefer the City did not reduce City services at this time. For most, there was a concern that those facing economic hardship would need services such as recreation centers, libraries and other City services even more than at other times.

"So I don't think we need or want service cuts. We just want good services that look after the City infrastructure."
– Participant in On-line Forum

Specifically for stakeholders attending the Mayor's Forum, service reductions were not an acceptable option. These groups said they already face financial reductions from the Province and would find it hard to continue services to residents if the City also cut grants and services.

"City government is close to the people and cutting services is not good for individuals. I am a taxpayer and I support sustaining the services at the community level particularly for women that rely on the services." – Participant at Mayor's Forum

Many participants said that the City needed to avoid collateral damage that would result from reducing service levels to residents. This included such things as reducing services in Community Centers and Libraries at a time when they might be most needed.

2. Tax Increase

For most residents, a tax increase in the 8% range seemed reasonable with many saying they would accept a 10-11% increase. Those commenting said that they did not see a significant tax increase as onerous especially when compared to a possible reduction of service.

"I guess on your \$783,000 home, that 10%, that's \$150 per household per year, which is \$3 per week. Even if it's two people, that is \$1.50 a week per person. That's not going to hurt a lot of people."
– Participant at Community Focus Group

“The property tax increase – it seems significant, but it’s really only \$10/12 a month for residential taxpayers.”

– Participant at Community Focus Group.

“Property taxes be damned. 4% - 6% increases are not exorbitant taxes. My municipal tax bill is not my greatest concern.”

– Participant at Mayor’s Forum

Business participants were more concerned about a tax increase as they said they were already experiencing significant financial issues as a result of the economic downturn and a large tax increase would only add to this.

“I am a small business owner and am the Co-Chair of the Fair Tax Coalition and I am responsible for educating the City on the tax fairness... I think that there should be a zero percentage (increase) in the budget because if ever there was a time this is the year and next year the same zero increase.” – Participant at Mayor’s Forum

“Raising taxes will only decrease competitiveness. I have a business here and a home too, it’s hard to do business here, and it’s easy to jump the river and go to Richmond.” – Participant at Public Meeting

Those responding by e-mail or on the on-line forum, generally, did not support a tax increase.

“We definitely should not be raising taxes! With these economic times, my family is spending less than previous years as our incomes decrease. My family is cutting back the amount of times we go to restaurants, travel, entertainment etc. its called compensating. It should be no different whether it’s a city budget or a household budget”.

– Participant in On-line Forum

3. Reduce Costs

There was agreement from all sources that the City should find ways of reducing costs other than through efficiencies. Participants said that specific programs should be cancelled while others suggested rotating closure of public facilities.

“I suggest as cost cutting measures; reduce garbage collection to twice a month, eliminate the project civil city initiative and the Downtown Ambassadors and defer the 311 hotline.”

– Participant at Mayor’s Forum

“I support the idea of closures, delayed openings – if it’s staggered, it would be an excellent way to skim off the top.”

– Participant at Community Focus Group



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“What you have to do is go back to the basics – to do what I have to do to keep my business operational. Any luxury item, you should cut it out of your budget.” – Participant at Business Focus Group

“The primary reason for my feedback relates to the \$23 million for collective agreement increases, ... In the current extraordinary economic climate, I am surprised that these increases are being treated as a foregone conclusion rather than receiving appropriate scrutiny.”
– Participant through E-mail

4. Seek Higher Efficiency

Whether business resident or stakeholder group, participants felt that the City should conduct a review of how efficiently it works. For some, this was a first step before considering tax increases or service cuts while others, particularly in the business community, felt that sufficient gains could be made through an efficiency review that service reductions and /or tax increases would not be necessary.

“If inefficiencies get eliminated, then you can look at other pieces – there are lot of inefficiencies that can be eliminated through consolidation or volunteering – you could find retirees to volunteer.”
– Participant in Community Focus Group

“Why are the only choices increasing taxes or decreased service? How about increased efficiency and leave the taxes as they are and improve services with less \$. Seems private industry can get behind this concept but governments can’t.” – Participant in On-line Forum

5. Generate Additional Revenues

Participants suggested that the City should seek to generate additional revenues, within the Provincial legislation. Some suggestions included:

“There is potential revenue from those who want to do that (people use the library for their own revenue, like tutoring, and they make money).” – Participant at Community Focus Group

“These things should be on a user-pay basis – we’d be less eager to ask for lots of things if we were paying for what we use.”
– Participant at Community Focus Group

“Raise money from sponsors – like calling something “Johnson & Johnson St. Paul’s Hospital.” – Participant at Community Focus Group

6. Volunteers and Mental Health Advocate

Several participants suggested that the City look at developing a volunteers program to address budget shortfalls. Participants understood that using volunteers would have to be sensitive to existing workers.

“Volunteerism is alive and well – it’s a double-edged sword, because if you take a job that was somebody’s livelihood, putting them out of work, that’s not right.” – Participant at Community Focus Group

Many participants supported the idea of hiring a mental health advocate for the City. Support for this idea came from those who saw police costs higher because they had to deal with mental health issues to the fundamental need to address issues in the downtown eastside.

“You mentioned that we were going to have a mental health advocate but that person isn’t in a position to do anything yet, they haven’t been hired. Personally, I feel its essential.”
– Participant at Community Focus Group



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City of Vancouver 2009 Operating Budget Consultation Summary Report

1. CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

On February 3, 2009 the City of Vancouver initiated a public consultation program on the City's proposed 2009 Operating Budget. The consultation program included the following:

1. Community Focus Groups
2. Mayor's Forum
3. Public Meeting
4. Written submissions
5. E-mail, phone and fax
6. On-line Forum
7. On-line Feedback Form
8. Consultation Background Document
9. A notice to all taxpayers (Green Card)
10. Telephone Survey of residents and businesses
11. GVTV 15 Public Service Ads
12. Advertisements in community papers and on radio

The intent of the consultation program was to gather public input to assist Vancouver City Council in finalizing the 2009 Operating Budget. Specifically, we sought feedback on:

- Options from the public on how to address the financial challenges facing the City on 2009
- Perceptions of City Services
- Fiscal Management Options
- Mixing Service Cuts and Property Tax Increases
- Approach to Service Cuts
- Attitudes to User Fees
- Acceptability of Different Levels of Property Tax Increases
- Priorities for City Services
- Feedback on the Consultation Process

The consultation was conducted from February 3-23, 2009.



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2. CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

The City of Vancouver Consultation on the 2009 operating Budget created a wide-range of opportunities for residents and business owners to provide their input to council. These opportunities included:

2.1 Community Focus Groups – February 10-13 and February 16, 2009 (53 participants)

Residential - Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Business - Wednesday, February 11, 2009

Residential - Thursday, February 12, 2009

Residential - Friday, February 13, 2009

Residential - Monday, February 16, 2009

The intent of the focus groups was to recruit residents and business owners who might not normally participate in a consultation and who would not have the same level of knowledge or interest as many of the stakeholder groups.

An independent survey firm, e^{nrg} Research Group, was contracted to randomly select 12-14 residents for four 2-hour consultation meetings that were held at City Hall. A fifth focus group was identified from businesses operating in the City.

The community focus groups started with a presentation on the challenges of the 2009 Operating Budget by Director of Budget Services. This was followed by a facilitated question and answer session and comments from participants about the 2009 Operating Budget. Notes were taken of this meeting.

At the end of the sessions participants were asked to complete a paper feedback form, which were forwarded to e^{nrg} Research Group for tabulation. In addition, participants were asked to contact their friends and colleagues and ask them to participate in the consultation and, specifically to complete the on-line feedback form.

2.2 Mayor's Forum – February 18, 2009 (70 participants)

In past consultations a series of Public meetings have been held in various parts of the city. The City completed an analysis of these types of events and found that very few people participated and many of those participating were representatives of community and business stakeholder groups.

This year the City decided to hold one larger stakeholder group meeting at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue. A list was developed from City of Vancouver lists and focused on the key service areas of the City. The intent was to invite one senior representative from each of these groups.

Mayor Robertson chaired the meeting and welcomed participants. This was followed by a presentation on the 2009 Operating Budget by the Director of Budget Services. The City Manager spoke about the challenges faced by the City this year.

A facilitated dialogue among participants followed the presentations.

The Mayor's Forum was web cast for residents and others who could not attend the forum.

2.3 Public Meeting – February 21, 2009 (16 participants)

To ensure all residents had an opportunity to participate, a public meeting was held at the Vancouver Technical Secondary School. The Director of Budget Services made a short presentation on the 2009 Operating Budget. This was followed by an open discussion of the budget challenges and questions and comments from the public.

Notes were taken. Participants were given the option to either complete a paper feedback form at the end of the meeting, or visit the City's website to complete an online survey. The paper feedback were forwarded to Enrg Research Group who tabulated the results.

2.4 Written Submissions (1)

Participants were able to provide written submissions.

2.5 E-mail, Phone and Fax (18)

A separate e-mail address and telephone line was established (budgetconsultation@vancouver.ca) and monitored. Comments were gathered and are available as an appendix to this report.

An information line was established to allow the public to leave their comments or ask questions. Phone calls received were to ask questions about the consultation process in general. No specific comments on the budget were provided via phone call.

The public was able to fax their comments or feedback forms to the City. No one chose to send submissions by fax.

2.6 On-line Forum (16 participants)

An on-line forum was available on the City of Vancouver web site. Participants could log in and provide their comments about the 2009 Operating Budget.

This forum was moderated and, where appropriate, answers to specific questions were provided by the moderator or appropriate City staff. Comments were gathered and are available as an appendix to this report.



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2.7 On-line and Paper Feedback Form (536)

An online survey mirroring that of the telephone survey was made available on the City of Vancouver's website. Enrg Research Group hosted the online survey and tabulated the results, which are available in a separate report.

2.8 Consultation Background Document

A consultation background document was developed that reviewed the current financial position of the City and the options for addressing any budget shortfall.

2.9 Notice to Taxpayers (Green Card)

A notice was sent to all taxpayers, through their 2009 tax notice, informing them about the consultation and asking them to go to the City's website and register for information on the consultation.

2.10 Telephone Survey – February 5-20, 2009 (600 residents and 300 businesses)

For the 2009 Budget Allocation study, random telephone interviews were completed with a total of 300 businesses located in the City of Vancouver and a total of 600 City residents aged 18 years of age and over. Interviewing was completed February 5th to 20th, 2009.

Detailed results of this telephone survey are available under a separate report.

2.11 GVTV Public Service Ads

Arrangements were made with GVTV to run a series of public service ads that invited viewers to participate in the consultation process.

2.12 Advertisements in community papers and on radio

Advertisements were run in community papers and on two radio stations advising the public of their ability to participate in the consultation.

3. Participant Recruitment

The consultation conducted an extensive program to inform residents and businesses about the consultation and to encourage them to participate. This program included:

3.1 Distribution of over 170,300 information cards to the following:

The objective of the information card was to inform taxpayers of the consultation process and to ask them to sign up on the budget consultation listserv so that the City could send them information. Over 650 residents signed up to the listserv

Operating Budget “Together” Card Distribution List

Property Tax Notice	Sent out with property tax notices in mid-December 2008	150,000
VPL	Main Branch others (21x200)	500 4,200
VFD	Fire Halls (20x25)	500
VPD	Community policing offices (9x25)	225
SUCCESS		50
CARNEGIE		50
Park Board	District Offices (28x100)	2,800
City Hall Precinct	Rotunda East Wing Display Rack VanCity lobby Other Reception Areas (9x25)	250 100 250 225
Other:	Mayor & Councillors (11x25) Comm. Dir VPB Comm. Dir VPD Comm. Dir VPL Comm. Dir VFD Corporate Communications GTV BIA's (19x100) BIA - Peter Vaisbord	275 25 25 25 25 50 5 1,900 25
Additional Requests:	VPL BIA West End	8,300 500
	Total	170,305



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3.2 Advertisements in community papers and on radio:

Advertising		
PRINT	Courier (City-wide)	Feb 6 & 13
	24HRS	Feb 4, 6, 11 & 13
	XTRA West	Feb 12
	Ming Pao	Feb 12, 14
	Sing Tao	Feb 12, 14
	Carnegie newsletter	Feb 16
RADIO	94.5 The Beat	25 spots, Feb 16 - 20
	RedFM	25 spots, Feb 16 - 20

3.3 E-mail and Telephone Contact

To encourage participation in the Mayor’s Forum and other consultation methods a list of over 600 community and business stakeholder groups were identified by the City and these groups were sent an e-mail to inform them of the consultation and to ask them to attend the Mayor’s Forum. In addition, these e-mails were followed up by over 900 telephone calls to further encourage participation in the Mayor’s Forum.

CITY OF VANCOUVER

let's do this
together
register online today at vancouver.ca

Each year, the City of Vancouver consults residents and businesses about the city's future. This year, you have the opportunity to participate in the 2009 Operating Budget consultation, please visit the city of Vancouver website. Any private information you provide will ONLY be used for contact purposes.

Let's do this together... register online today on the vancouver.ca homepage and click on the 'together' icon to access the registration page.

let's do this together

Vancouver's 2009 Operating Budget Consultation

The City of Vancouver is consulting with residents and businesses about the challenges facing the 2009 Operating Budget and options for addressing these challenges.

Have your say:

- 1. Attend** a public meeting to be held Saturday February 21, 10 am - 12:30 pm
Vancouver Technical Secondary
School Theatre, 2600 East Broadway
- 2. Go on-line** vancouver.ca, complete a survey
- 3. Phone** 604.829.2009
- 4. Write** Budget Office, 453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4
- 5. Fax** 604.873.7107
- 6. Email** budget.consultation@vancouver.ca



Let's do this together!



register online today
at vancouver.ca



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4. Participation

In addition to the 300 businesses and 600 residents that participated in the telephone survey, 656 residents and business owners participated in other consultation methods, including:

Community Focus Groups	53
Mayors' Forum	70 ²
Public Meeting	16
Forms analyzed by eNrg Research Group	536
E-mail	18
On-line Forum	15
Written Submission	1

5. Summary of Input

The following summarizes the input received through the various consultation methods. Detailed notes from each focus group meeting, the Mayor's Forum and the public meeting are available upon request

5.1 Summary of Discussion at the Community Focus Groups

Four community focus groups and a business focus group were held and notes were taken. The following provides a key theme summary of the meetings followed by examples of comments made in each focus group.

Key Themes of Focus Groups

- Most participants said that a property tax increase of \$90-100 was acceptable, while others said that a 10-11% increase was acceptable.
- Many participants said the City should not cut services at this time. Those expressing this opinion said, among other reasons, that many people might need these services at a time of high unemployment.
- Some participants who said they did not want services cuts said that a reduction in hours or rotating closures would be acceptable as long as not all services were closed at the same time.
- Participants supported the City reviewing its services to see where efficiencies could be identified.

² To avoid double counting, we have excluded the focus groups in the tally as they also provided a feedback form that is included in the 536 analyzed by eNrg Research Group

- Some participants said the City should develop a volunteer program to support areas where services needed to be reduced.
- Some participants suggested the City look at where it might generate additional revenues.
- Participants suggested that the City negotiate with higher levels of government about areas where the City currently provides service that are the responsibility of higher levels of government.

Comments by Focus Group

Residential Focus Group #1:

Reduce Costs

The following suggestions were offered as ways to reduce costs:

- The City should consider job sharing.
- The City should close libraries an hour earlier.
- The City should avoid overtime, maybe having other people to do the work but not paid the overtime rate.
- The City should use closures of City Hall and other facilities and delayed openings to save money– if it's staggered, it would be an excellent way to skim off the top.
- The City should examine how many committees it has and reduce the number to save money.

Increase Revenues

- The City should find new ways of raising tax income and, if necessary, ask the Province to change the laws with respect to municipalities raising taxes.
- The City should raise money from sponsorships such as selling the names of buildings.
- The City should ask for help from the Province.
- The City should have more casinos, larger ones, better ones to generate more revenue.
- The City should ask the Province to change the law that allows developers to reduce their taxes by using vacant land for temporary public gardens.

Tax Increase

- Property tax increase should be limited to the cost of living.





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Other Comments

- Rent freezes (to assist residents who can't pay more taxes).
- The City should not adjust taxes between commercial and residential rates.
- New spending should be looked at for the homeless situation. If the City said specifically that an increase was going to solve the homelessness problem, people would be all for it.
- I think we should maintain spending on the parks.
- The City should charge for health inspections for buildings.
- The City should not reduce services as they are all essential to somebody.
- The City should put in water meters and charge residents based on usage – people don't pay for water other than a flat fee.

Residential Focus Group #2:

Reduce Costs

- I think that wage increases are excessive and I would look seriously at ways of curbing those increases.
- We don't need as many people in the planning department since there is less planning being done.
- I don't see any budgetary savings happening unless you reduce service.
- Have the Province inject more money into a provincial health program (to reduce the City's expenditure on homelessness and health issues).
- I support having the efficiency consultant come in and look at the City's operations.
- There are lot of inefficiencies that can be eliminated through consolidation or volunteering.
- Hire additional staff so there would not be so much overtime.

Increase Revenues

- The City should have more user-pay for services.

Tax Increase

- I would pay \$10 a month more for these services.

- I don't mind a tax increase of hundred dollars – if it goes to helping the homeless and to libraries.
- I am willing to pay more tax to address public safety issues.
- I think that \$90 more is not a lot to pay.
- I'd be prepared to pay the additional taxes to get us through this period - a 9% or 10% increase – this is fine.
- I'd pay up to \$300 more (in user fees) if I knew what I was getting for the money.

Other

- I feel the mental health advocate essential.
- There could be volunteers working in libraries, parks, assisting with services in the downtown east side.
- I don't want to see services cut.

Residential Focus Group #3:

Reduce Costs

- I see there should be an analysis of spending on the library.
- Instead of planting annuals, the Parks Board should plant things like perennials, plants that are low maintenance.
- Leave the police to deal with direct crime and others to deal with mental illness and homelessness. This will save costs.
- I'm thinking that the single largest chunk of the budget is collective agreements – unions should reduce the negotiated settlement.
- Tell departments - you've got 5% less this year than last year, deal with it.
- Someone suggested rotating closures of library facilities. So some would be open on Sunday and some not.
- We should go on a ten-day cycle for garbage collection.

Increase Revenues

- There is potential revenue from those who want to use the library for their own revenue, like tutoring, and they make money.
- I wouldn't be averse to adding a room tax for those renting out homes during the Olympics.
- Somehow we've got to maintain services – we will have an increase.





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Tax Increase

- 6% takes a great chunk of my income that I have to work more hours to pay for. I just can't believe we would look at that, frankly.
- I believe in zero-based budgeting, and you have to have a baseline.

Other

- Don't cut parks and libraries.
- I think the City should engage in a volunteerism program.

Residential Focus Group #4:

Reduce Costs

- The City should provide incentives/bonuses (to staff) for cost savings.
- The City should consolidate services.
- The City should make sure your spending is wise.
- The City should shut bars at 2 a.m. This will save policing costs.

Increase Revenues

- To save the services, I'd be willing to pay the extra 10% or 11% tax increase is acceptable.
- The City should move more to user-pay.
- The City should ask the Province to allow the City to consider running a deficit on a case-by-case basis.

Tax Increase

- I agree with an increase in the taxes.
- I'll pay an increase for what we have already.

Other

- I think that funding police is mandatory.
- If there had to be some cuts, you have a way to fill those gaps with volunteers.
- I oppose any money going to the Olympics.

Business Focus Group:

Reduce Costs

- Contract out inspection functions like electrical inspection.
- Staff with a cadre of permanent employees and then control the ebb and flow with contract employees.

- Maybe you can expand by-law enforcement to take some police tasks off their books.
- Take on what you can afford to take on, that you absolutely have to deliver, and anything else, you have to wait.
- You don't do things if the money is not there.
- Cut back [closing hours in the Granville entertainment district] to 1 am rather than 4 am.
- We need to pay for only what's essential, and cut taxes, not raise them.
- The City should sell off assets.
- The City should stimulate development.

Increase Revenues

- The City should market profitable areas, or offer a discount to generate more business.
- The City should charge for a back alley to be paved and streetlights – that could be a revenue source from homeowners for ten years.
- More City services should be on a user-pay basis.

Other

- Find a way to streamline City processes, to make City react more quickly to situations like this.
- We need a greater volunteer force.

5.2 Key Theme Summary of Mayor's Forum¹

The following provides a key theme summary of the Mayor's Forum followed by examples of comments made by participants:

- ❖ Participants suggested that the City needed to approach higher levels of government and in particular the Provincial government and ask them to fund services that are provincial jurisdiction such as homelessness.
- ❖ Most, if not all, participants said that service reductions should be avoided. Some participants said this could be avoided by increasing taxes while others said that it could be avoided by finding efficiencies.

¹ A list of participants at the Mayor's Forum is appended





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- ❖ Some participants said the City should restrain expenses and seek efficiencies before you raise taxes.
- ❖ Many participants said that the City needed to avoid collateral damage that would result from reducing service levels to residents. This included such things as reducing services in community centers and libraries at a time when they might be most needed.

Comments

Reduce Costs

- The City should practice restraint and City Council needs to take bold action.
- The City should cut the Ambassador's program.
- The City should undertake a social service audit.
- I am convinced there is \$31 M in programs that no longer work and that there are redundancies in administration. Tell the staff they have to find efficiencies.
- Streamline (City) processes and there is a need to work smarter.
- Reduce garbage collection to twice a month.
- Eliminate the project Civil City Initiative and the Downtown Ambassadors and defer the 311-hotline.

Increase Revenues

- I think you should increase the amount of parking fees and thus increase revenues for the City.
- I suggest selling street names, public spaces and public buildings - sell place for names.
- Implement a congestion tax for people like me that come in and use the services of the City but that don't pay taxes.
- Is there a way to look at the bylaws on the books and get more revenue from them?

Tax Increase

- I think that a 4% - 6% increase is not an excessive tax increase. My municipal tax bill is not my greatest concern.
- I think that there should be a zero percentage (increase) in the budget.
- I am a taxpayer and I support sustaining the services at the community level.

- Creating affordable housing creates jobs. I would support higher taxes.

Other

- The City should put the money in the community.
- It is really important not to create collateral damage (by service reductions) in terms of artist centers and artist studios.
- It is important to retain the community centers for the cultural side and not shortchange them.
- Why not spend 35% on community services and see if that makes a difference.
- Invest in infrastructure and security and hire someone at the City to manage the food supply at the City.
- We could do a lot more if we partnered with the City and could lobby together to the provincial and federal government to provide services.
- We need to create equity and get into an advisory committee format to avoid duplication of services, allow for the collaboration of services and stretch our tax dollar.
- We need that mental health advocate.

5.3 Key Theme Summary of Public Meeting

The following provides a key theme summary of the public meeting:

- Participants did not want to cut services to Libraries, Community Centres, etc., as they are more needed now because of a downturn in the economy.
- Participants indicated that the City should look hard to find efficiencies in the current system, including job-sharing and ways to make parking pay more, and make it easier for residents to pay fines.

The following provides a summary of comments at the public meeting:

- The City should eliminate the feel-good social programs.
- The City should eliminate jobs that are redundant or underutilized.
- The City should go to work sharing, or have people working part time.
- The City should review each and every department for savings.





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- Since revenues have dropped in many areas, the City should cut back on employees.
- The City should find a cheaper alternative to the police in dealing with mental illness.
- The City should use empty lots in the downtown – even if you lease it out, you get money.
- Raising taxes will make it more difficult to stay in Vancouver.
- The City should charge more user fees for parking.
- People need support so we shouldn't tear down support structures when people need them.
- You should pay a surtax if your home is worth more than \$1 million.
- If it's the difference between cutting library funding or funds for community centres, or keeping everything strong and healthy – charge me \$180.
- I think it's offensive that we are shifting the burden off of businesses to residential.
- I'm still in favour for shifting the burden to homeowners.
- Please support the library.

5.4 Key Themes From On-line Forum (16)

The following summarizes the on-line forum:

- The City should look at efficiencies before it increases taxes including looking at the efficiency of workers such as management of service through the Parks Board.
- Many participants suggested cutting taxes and reducing services.
- Some participants suggested that a modest tax increase is acceptable; however, they suggested the City look at the accumulation of tax increases over the past few years as this might be a serious problem for taxpayers.
- Some participants suggested contracting out as a way of reducing costs. Others suggested that increasing competition for the City's work would also reduce costs.
- Participants said the City needed to look at what basic services are required and, at this time, drop any other activities such as the 2009 funding requests presented in the budget background document.

5.5 Key Themes from Email (18)

The comments from e-mails received focused on two issues:

- The City should not assume that labour contracts negotiated prior to the recession should automatically go forward.
- To reduce costs the City should contract out services such as the bindery, reduce staffing levels especially at the senior management levels and centralize services.
- Participants said that the Province should fund the programs for which they are responsible, such as mental health, drug addiction, homelessness and crime, not the City.
- The e-mails said that the City should not increase taxes at this time and should cut City costs to “the bone”.
- Some suggestions for reducing costs included:
 - Reduce the police force
 - Reduce the shelter programs and the street cleanings of the downtown eastside
 - Eliminate the traffic-calming program
 - Cut staff, even by attrition
 - We can live without some of this art on the bike paths.

5.6 Summary of Feedback Forms (completed by enrg Research Group)

The following summarizes the input from the City’s feedback form. Business responses are italicized.

Residents

- Residents place the highest priority on social issues such as homelessness and poverty and a lack of affordable housing (61%). For residents, rounding out the top four priority areas and the last areas to cut are fire protection, sewage/drainage maintenance and garbage collection/recycling.
- For all homeowners, their acceptance for various tax increases is broadly in line with the general population. Acceptance levels range from a low of 55% at an 8% tax increase to a high of 86% with a 2% tax increase.
- Renters are as willing as the general population of renters to pay an extra \$4 per month in rent in order to maintain current levels of service.





- The top preferred method of providing input on the City's annual budget according to these feedback form participants by far is via the City website survey. The other two survey methods, random telephone and direct mail, are preferred less by this group of residents than those who completed the telephone survey.
- The City's website pages about the 2009 Budget and the green "Together" card are the two most recalled pieces of information by feedback form participants.

Business

- Business participants placed taxation and transportation equally as the top priorities, followed closely by social issues and crime. This group placed more emphasis on these than Vancouver businesses as a whole.
- Among businesses, 50% would accept a 4% tax increase, but there was no gain in acceptance levels when the tax increase dropped to 2%. Among all Vancouver businesses, the level of acceptance increased by 25 points to 61% when the tax increase shifted from 4% to 2%.

Residents and Businesses

- Business and resident participants both rank policing as a top priority and the last area to make cuts, which matches the opinions of residents and businesses in general.
- For residents and businesses, the top priority and last area to make cuts continues to be policing, followed by fire protection.
- Businesses and residents concur that the two lowest priority areas, that is, the first areas to make cuts, are arts and cultural organizations and community centers/pool/ice rinks. Similar to last year, businesses place libraries next while residents place parks and beaches as the next area to cut.

5.7 Summary of Telephone Survey

(600 resident and 300 business 900 completed by enrg Research Group)

The following summarizes the input from the telephone survey.

Residents

- Topping the list of local issues for both residents and businesses is social issues such as homelessness and poverty as well as a lack of affordable housing.
- Rounding out the top four concerns are transportation issues, crime and taxation. Among residents, while the importance they place on transportation and crime issues are similar to previous years, mentions of taxation have increased by almost three-fold since last year (from 7% to 19%).

- For all homeowners combined, it appears that tolerance for tax increases in order to maintain the same level of City services has decreased somewhat. The various acceptance levels are:
- With an 8% increase, just over one-half of homeowners support this (53%)
- At 6%, similar to last year, 62% of homeowners support this level of increase
- A 4% increase draws support from 74% of homeowners, which is 6-points lower than last year, but more in line with acceptance levels from 2004-2007
- Support for a 2% tax increase is also down this year, by 10-points, to 82% which puts it among the lowest levels of support, 2nd only to the 81% registered in 1999.
- The majority of home renters (76%) continue to support paying an extra \$4 per month in rent in order to maintain current service levels; although even this support is at the lowest level to be recorded.
- The vast majority of residents (81%) feel it is important for them to provide input on the City's annual Budget.
- The top three preferred methods of providing input on the City's annual budget continues to be via the City website survey, a random telephone survey and a direct mail survey. 44%-49% of residents and 38%-47% of businesses prefers each of these methods.

Business

- Among businesses, crime and taxation have slightly higher importance than transportation issues.
- Businesses continue to be much more sensitive than residents to property tax increases. This year, only 2% and 4% tax increases were tested due to the 2% tax redistribution from business to residential taxpayers. Willingness to pay a 4% tax increase is down marginally (36% from 46%) while willingness to pay a 2% increase is down significantly. At best, 61% of businesses are willing to accept a 2% tax increase, the lowest level since 1997.
- Businesses that rent their premises, however, are not as inclined to accept a rent increase. Just 45% of these business renters are willing to pay a rent increase.
- Among businesses, however, the importance of providing input on the City's annual Budget has decreased significantly since last year (67% compared to 87% in 2008).





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Resident and Business

- Businesses and residents concur that the two lowest priority areas, that is, the first areas to make cuts, are arts and cultural organizations and community centers/pool/ice rinks. Similar to last year, businesses place libraries next while residents place parks and beaches as the next area to cut.
- For both residents and businesses, the top priority and last area to make cuts continues to be policing, followed by fire protection.

Appendix I: List of Participants at the Mayor's Forum

- AIDS Vancouver
- Alliance for Arts and Culture
- BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
- BC Sustainable Energy Association (Vancouver Chapter)
- Britannia Community Services Society
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Canadian Music Centre
- Central City Mission Society
- Commercial Drive Business Society
- Dance House
- Developmental Disabilities Association
- Dolly Hopkins
- Downtown Eastside Women's Centre
- Dunbar Residents Association
- Early Music Vancouver
- Eastside Culture Crawl Society (2)
- Eastside Family Place
- Ending Violence Association of British Columbia
- Fair Tax Coalition
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver
- Friends of the Public Library
- Gastown BIA
- Gastown BIA
- Granville CPC (Granville @ Davie)
- GVHBA (Gr. Vanc. Homebuilders' Association)
- Hastings Community Centre Association
- Hastings Waterfront Business Association
- Hastings-Sunrise CPC (2)
- Hastings-Sunrise Vision Implementation Committee
- HIM (Health Initiative for Men)
- Japanese Community Volunteers' Association
- Jewish Community Centre
- Kerrisdale BIA
- Kits-Arbutus Residents Association
- Kitsilano Community Centre
- Langara College Students Union
- Little Mountain Neighbourhood House
- Lookout Emergency Aid Society
- Marpole Oakridge Family Place
- Mount Pleasant BIA
- Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association
- Multicultural Helping House
- O'Day Productions
- Pacific Baroque Orchestra
- Renters at Risk
- Riley Park Community Association
- Shaughnessy Heights Property Owners' Association
- South Granville BIA
- The Centre/PFAME
- ThinkCity
- United We Can (S.O.L.E. Society)
- United We Can (S.O.L.E. Society)
- Vancouver Active Communities Network
- Vancouver Board of Trade
- Vancouver Boys and Girls Club
- Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival
- Vancouver Economic Development Commission (2)
- Vancouver Economic Development Commission
- Vancouver Farmers Market
- Vancouver Women's Health Collective
- West End Residents' Association
- West Side Family Place
- YMCA of Greater Vancouver
- Pat Horn
- Lee Grant-Roberd
- There were 4 unregistered participants



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Executive summary

A. BACKGROUND

On February 3, 2009 the City of Vancouver initiated a public consultation program on the City's proposed 2009 Operating Budget. The consultation program included the following:

1. Community Focus Groups
2. Mayor's Forum
3. Public Meeting
4. Written submissions
5. E-mail, phone and fax
6. On-line Forum
7. On-line Feedback Form
8. Consultation Background Document
9. A notice to all taxpayers (Green Card)
10. Telephone Survey of residents and businesses
11. GVTV Public Service Ads
12. Advertisements in community papers and on radio

The intent of the consultation program was to gather public input to assist Vancouver City Council in finalizing the 2009 Operating Budget.

The consultation was conducted in February 2009.

B. 2009 CONSULTATION PROGRAM

More than 171,000 residents and community organizations were contacted by an information card, e-mail or telephone calls to notify them of the opportunity to participate in consultation meetings or to provide input through the City's website (www.vancouver.ca) or by mail, fax and e-mail. In addition, 12 advertisements were run in community papers and 45 advertisements were aired on local radio stations.

About 1,540 residents and businesses participated in the consultation including through the telephone survey (900), feedback forms (536), community focus groups (53), e-mail (18), public meeting (16), on-line discussion forum (16) and the Mayor's Forum (70). A submission was received from the East Side Family Place.



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C. CONSULTATION RESULTS

The following summarizes the consultation input received through community focus groups, a Mayor's Forum, a public meeting, e-mail, written submission and on-line discussion forum submissions.

Input received through the telephone survey and feedback forms is summarized in separate reports.

The following provides a summary of these key themes followed by examples of participant comments.

1. Service Reductions

Participants, whether business or resident, said that they would prefer the City did not reduce City services at this time. For most, there was a concern that those facing economic hardship would need services such as recreation centers, libraries and other City services even more than at other times.

"So I don't think we need or want service cuts. We just want good services that look after the City infrastructure."
– Participant in On-line Forum

Specifically for stakeholders attending the Mayor's Forum, service reductions were not an acceptable option. These groups said they already face financial reductions from the Province and would find it hard to continue services to residents if the City also cut grants and services.

"City government is close to the people and cutting services is not good for individuals. I am a taxpayer and I support sustaining the services at the community level particularly for women that rely on the services." – Participant at Mayor's Forum

Many participants said that the City needed to avoid collateral damage that would result from reducing service levels to residents. This included such things as reducing services in Community Centers and Libraries at a time when they might be most needed.

2. Tax Increase

For most residents, a tax increase in the 8% range seemed reasonable with many saying they would accept a 10-11% increase. Those commenting said that they did not see a significant tax increase as onerous especially when compared to a possible reduction of service.

"I guess on your \$783,000 home, that 10%, that's \$150 per household per year, which is \$3 per week. Even if it's two people, that is \$1.50 a week per person. That's not going to hurt a lot of people."
– Participant at Community Focus Group

“The property tax increase – it seems significant, but it’s really only \$10/12 a month for residential taxpayers.”

– Participant at Community Focus Group.

“Property taxes be damned. 4% - 6% increases are not exorbitant taxes. My municipal tax bill is not my greatest concern.”

– Participant at Mayor’s Forum

Business participants were more concerned about a tax increase as they said they were already experiencing significant financial issues as a result of the economic downturn and a large tax increase would only add to this.

“I am a small business owner and am the Co-Chair of the Fair Tax Coalition and I am responsible for educating the City on the tax fairness... I think that there should be a zero percentage (increase) in the budget because if ever there was a time this is the year and next year the same zero increase.” – Participant at Mayor’s Forum

“Raising taxes will only decrease competitiveness. I have a business here and a home too, it’s hard to do business here, and it’s easy to jump the river and go to Richmond.” – Participant at Public Meeting

Those responding by e-mail or on the on-line forum, generally, did not support a tax increase.

“We definitely should not be raising taxes! With these economic times, my family is spending less than previous years as our incomes decrease. My family is cutting back the amount of times we go to restaurants, travel, entertainment etc. its called compensating. It should be no different whether it’s a city budget or a household budget”.

– Participant in On-line Forum

3. Reduce Costs

There was agreement from all sources that the City should find ways of reducing costs other than through efficiencies. Participants said that specific programs should be cancelled while others suggested rotating closure of public facilities.

“I suggest as cost cutting measures; reduce garbage collection to twice a month, eliminate the project civil city initiative and the Downtown Ambassadors and defer the 311 hotline.”

– Participant at Mayor’s Forum

“I support the idea of closures, delayed openings – if it’s staggered, it would be an excellent way to skim off the top.”

– Participant at Community Focus Group





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“What you have to do is go back to the basics – to do what I have to do to keep my business operational. Any luxury item, you should cut it out of your budget.” – Participant at Business Focus Group

“The primary reason for my feedback relates to the \$23 million for collective agreement increases, ... In the current extraordinary economic climate, I am surprised that these increases are being treated as a foregone conclusion rather than receiving appropriate scrutiny.”
– Participant through E-mail

4. Seek Higher Efficiency

Whether business resident or stakeholder group, participants felt that the City should conduct a review of how efficiently it works. For some, this was a first step before considering tax increases or service cuts while others, particularly in the business community, felt that sufficient gains could be made through an efficiency review that service reductions and /or tax increases would not be necessary.

“If inefficiencies get eliminated, then you can look at other pieces – there are lot of inefficiencies that can be eliminated through consolidation or volunteering – you could find retirees to volunteer.”
– Participant in Community Focus Group

“Why are the only choices increasing taxes or decreased service? How about increased efficiency and leave the taxes as they are and improve services with less \$. Seems private industry can get behind this concept but governments can’t.” – Participant in On-line Forum

5. Generate Additional Revenues

Participants suggested that the City should seek to generate additional revenues, within the Provincial legislation. Some suggestions included:

“There is potential revenue from those who want to do that (people use the library for their own revenue, like tutoring, and they make money).” – Participant at Community Focus Group

“These things should be on a user-pay basis – we’d be less eager to ask for lots of things if we were paying for what we use.”
– Participant at Community Focus Group

“Raise money from sponsors – like calling something “Johnson & Johnson St. Paul’s Hospital.” – Participant at Community Focus Group

6. Volunteers and Mental Health Advocate

Several participants suggested that the City look at developing a volunteers program to address budget shortfalls. Participants understood that using volunteers would have to be sensitive to existing workers.

“Volunteerism is alive and well – it’s a double-edged sword, because if you take a job that was somebody’s livelihood, putting them out of work, that’s not right.” – Participant at Community Focus Group

Many participants supported the idea of hiring a mental health advocate for the City. Support for this idea came from those who saw police costs higher because they had to deal with mental health issues to the fundamental need to address issues in the downtown eastside.

“You mentioned that we were going to have a mental health advocate but that person isn’t in a position to do anything yet, they haven’t been hired. Personally, I feel its essential.”
– Participant at Community Focus Group



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City of Vancouver 2009 Operating Budget Consultation Summary Report

1. CONSULTATION OVERVIEW

On February 3, 2009 the City of Vancouver initiated a public consultation program on the City's proposed 2009 Operating Budget. The consultation program included the following:

1. Community Focus Groups
2. Mayor's Forum
3. Public Meeting
4. Written submissions
5. E-mail, phone and fax
6. On-line Forum
7. On-line Feedback Form
8. Consultation Background Document
9. A notice to all taxpayers (Green Card)
10. Telephone Survey of residents and businesses
11. GVTV 15 Public Service Ads
12. Advertisements in community papers and on radio

The intent of the consultation program was to gather public input to assist Vancouver City Council in finalizing the 2009 Operating Budget. Specifically, we sought feedback on:

- Options from the public on how to address the financial challenges facing the City on 2009
- Perceptions of City Services
- Fiscal Management Options
- Mixing Service Cuts and Property Tax Increases
- Approach to Service Cuts
- Attitudes to User Fees
- Acceptability of Different Levels of Property Tax Increases
- Priorities for City Services
- Feedback on the Consultation Process

The consultation was conducted from February 3-23, 2009.



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2. CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

The City of Vancouver Consultation on the 2009 operating Budget created a wide-range of opportunities for residents and business owners to provide their input to council. These opportunities included:

2.1 Community Focus Groups – February 10-13 and February 16, 2009 (53 participants)

- Residential - Tuesday, February 10, 2009
- Business - Wednesday, February 11, 2009
- Residential - Thursday, February 12, 2009
- Residential - Friday, February 13, 2009
- Residential - Monday, February 16, 2009

The intent of the focus groups was to recruit residents and business owners who might not normally participate in a consultation and who would not have the same level of knowledge or interest as many of the stakeholder groups.

An independent survey firm, e^{nrg} Research Group, was contracted to randomly select 12-14 residents for four 2-hour consultation meetings that were held at City Hall. A fifth focus group was identified from businesses operating in the City.

The community focus groups started with a presentation on the challenges of the 2009 Operating Budget by Director of Budget Services. This was followed by a facilitated question and answer session and comments from participants about the 2009 Operating Budget. Notes were taken of this meeting.

At the end of the sessions participants were asked to complete a paper feedback form, which were forwarded to e^{nrg} Research Group for tabulation. In addition, participants were asked to contact their friends and colleagues and ask them to participate in the consultation and, specifically to complete the on-line feedback form.

2.2 Mayor's Forum – February 18, 2009 (70 participants)

In past consultations a series of Public meetings have been held in various parts of the city. The City completed an analysis of these types of events and found that very few people participated and many of those participating were representatives of community and business stakeholder groups.

This year the City decided to hold one larger stakeholder group meeting at the Wosk Centre for Dialogue. A list was developed from City of Vancouver lists and focused on the key service areas of the City. The intent was to invite one senior representative from each of these groups.

Mayor Robertson chaired the meeting and welcomed participants. This was followed by a presentation on the 2009 Operating Budget by the Director of Budget Services. The City Manager spoke about the challenges faced by the City this year.

A facilitated dialogue among participants followed the presentations.

The Mayor's Forum was web cast for residents and others who could not attend the forum.

2.3 Public Meeting – February 21, 2009 (16 participants)

To ensure all residents had an opportunity to participate, a public meeting was held at the Vancouver Technical Secondary School. The Director of Budget Services made a short presentation on the 2009 Operating Budget. This was followed by an open discussion of the budget challenges and questions and comments from the public.

Notes were taken. Participants were given the option to either complete a paper feedback form at the end of the meeting, or visit the City's website to complete an online survey. The paper feedback were forwarded to Enrg Research Group who tabulated the results.

2.4 Written Submissions (1)

Participants were able to provide written submissions.

2.5 E-mail, Phone and Fax (18)

A separate e-mail address and telephone line was established (budgetconsultation@vancouver.ca) and monitored. Comments were gathered and are available as an appendix to this report.

An information line was established to allow the public to leave their comments or ask questions. Phone calls received were to ask questions about the consultation process in general. No specific comments on the budget were provided via phone call.

The public was able to fax their comments or feedback forms to the City. No one chose to send submissions by fax.

2.6 On-line Forum (16 participants)

An on-line forum was available on the City of Vancouver web site. Participants could log in and provide their comments about the 2009 Operating Budget.

This forum was moderated and, where appropriate, answers to specific questions were provided by the moderator or appropriate City staff. Comments were gathered and are available as an appendix to this report.



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2.7 On-line and Paper Feedback Form (536)

An online survey mirroring that of the telephone survey was made available on the City of Vancouver's website. Enrg Research Group hosted the online survey and tabulated the results, which are available in a separate report.

2.8 Consultation Background Document

A consultation background document was developed that reviewed the current financial position of the City and the options for addressing any budget shortfall.

2.9 Notice to Taxpayers (Green Card)

A notice was sent to all taxpayers, through their 2009 tax notice, informing them about the consultation and asking them to go to the City's website and register for information on the consultation.

2.10 Telephone Survey – February 5-20, 2009 (600 residents and 300 businesses)

For the 2009 Budget Allocation study, random telephone interviews were completed with a total of 300 businesses located in the City of Vancouver and a total of 600 City residents aged 18 years of age and over. Interviewing was completed February 5th to 20th, 2009.

Detailed results of this telephone survey are available under a separate report.

2.11 GVTV Public Service Ads

Arrangements were made with GVTV to run a series of public service ads that invited viewers to participate in the consultation process.

2.12 Advertisements in community papers and on radio

Advertisements were run in community papers and on two radio stations advising the public of their ability to participate in the consultation.

3. Participant Recruitment

The consultation conducted an extensive program to inform residents and businesses about the consultation and to encourage them to participate. This program included:

3.1 Distribution of over 170,300 information cards to the following:

The objective of the information card was to inform taxpayers of the consultation process and to ask them to sign up on the budget consultation listserv so that the City could send them information. Over 650 residents signed up to the listserv

Operating Budget “Together” Card Distribution List

Property Tax Notice	Sent out with property tax notices in mid-December 2008	150,000
VPL	Main Branch others (21x200)	500 4,200
VFD	Fire Halls (20x25)	500
VPD	Community policing offices (9x25)	225
SUCCESS		50
CARNEGIE		50
Park Board	District Offices (28x100)	2,800
City Hall Precinct	Rotunda East Wing Display Rack VanCity lobby Other Reception Areas (9x25)	250 100 250 225
Other:	Mayor & Councillors (11x25) Comm. Dir VPB Comm. Dir VPD Comm. Dir VPL Comm. Dir VFD Corporate Communications GTV BIA's (19x100) BIA - Peter Vaisbord	275 25 25 25 25 50 5 1,900 25
Additional Requests:	VPL BIA West End	8,300 500
	Total	170,305



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3.2 Advertisements in community papers and on radio:

Advertising		
PRINT	Courier (City-wide)	Feb 6 & 13
	24HRS	Feb 4, 6, 11 & 13
	XTRA West	Feb 12
	Ming Pao	Feb 12, 14
	Sing Tao	Feb 12, 14
	Carnegie newsletter	Feb 16
RADIO	94.5 The Beat	25 spots, Feb 16 - 20
	RedFM	25 spots, Feb 16 - 20

3.3 E-mail and Telephone Contact

To encourage participation in the Mayor’s Forum and other consultation methods a list of over 600 community and business stakeholder groups were identified by the City and these groups were sent an e-mail to inform them of the consultation and to ask them to attend the Mayor’s Forum. In addition, these e-mails were followed up by over 900 telephone calls to further encourage participation in the Mayor’s Forum.

CITY OF VANCOUVER

let's do this
together
register online today at vancouver.ca

Each year, the City of Vancouver consults residents and businesses about the city's future. This year, you have the opportunity to participate in the 2009 Operating Budget consultation, please register on the city of Vancouver website. Any private information you provide will ONLY be used for contact purposes.

Let's do this together... register online today on the vancouver.ca homepage and click on the 'together' icon to access the registration page.

let's do this together

Vancouver's 2009 Operating Budget Consultation

The City of Vancouver is consulting with residents and businesses about the challenges facing the 2009 Operating Budget and options for addressing these challenges.

Have your say:



- 1. Attend** a public meeting to be held Saturday February 21, 10 am - 12:30 pm
Vancouver Technical Secondary
School Theatre, 2600 East Broadway
- 2. Go on-line** vancouver.ca, complete a survey
- 3. Phone** 604.829.2009
- 4. Write** Budget Office, 453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4
- 5. Fax** 604.873.7107
- 6. Email** budget.consultation@vancouver.ca

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4. Participation

In addition to the 300 businesses and 600 residents that participated in the telephone survey, 656 residents and business owners participated in other consultation methods, including:

Community Focus Groups	53
Mayors' Forum	70 ²
Public Meeting	16
Forms analyzed by eNrg Research Group	536
E-mail	18
On-line Forum	15
Written Submission	1

5. Summary of Input

The following summarizes the input received through the various consultation methods. Detailed notes from each focus group meeting, the Mayor's Forum and the public meeting are available upon request

5.1 Summary of Discussion at the Community Focus Groups

Four community focus groups and a business focus group were held and notes were taken. The following provides a key theme summary of the meetings followed by examples of comments made in each focus group.

Key Themes of Focus Groups

- Most participants said that a property tax increase of \$90-100 was acceptable, while others said that a 10-11% increase was acceptable.
- Many participants said the City should not cut services at this time. Those expressing this opinion said, among other reasons, that many people might need these services at a time of high unemployment.
- Some participants who said they did not want services cuts said that a reduction in hours or rotating closures would be acceptable as long as not all services were closed at the same time.
- Participants supported the City reviewing its services to see where efficiencies could be identified.

² To avoid double counting, we have excluded the focus groups in the tally as they also provided a feedback form that is included in the 536 analyzed by eNrg Research Group

- Some participants said the City should develop a volunteer program to support areas where services needed to be reduced.
- Some participants suggested the City look at where it might generate additional revenues.
- Participants suggested that the City negotiate with higher levels of government about areas where the City currently provides service that are the responsibility of higher levels of government.

Comments by Focus Group

Residential Focus Group #1:

Reduce Costs

The following suggestions were offered as ways to reduce costs:

- The City should consider job sharing.
- The City should close libraries an hour earlier.
- The City should avoid overtime, maybe having other people to do the work but not paid the overtime rate.
- The City should use closures of City Hall and other facilities and delayed openings to save money– if it's staggered, it would be an excellent way to skim off the top.
- The City should examine how many committees it has and reduce the number to save money.

Increase Revenues

- The City should find new ways of raising tax income and, if necessary, ask the Province to change the laws with respect to municipalities raising taxes.
- The City should raise money from sponsorships such as selling the names of buildings.
- The City should ask for help from the Province.
- The City should have more casinos, larger ones, better ones to generate more revenue.
- The City should ask the Province to change the law that allows developers to reduce their taxes by using vacant land for temporary public gardens.

Tax Increase

- Property tax increase should be limited to the cost of living.





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Other Comments

- Rent freezes (to assist residents who can't pay more taxes).
- The City should not adjust taxes between commercial and residential rates.
- New spending should be looked at for the homeless situation. If the City said specifically that an increase was going to solve the homelessness problem, people would be all for it.
- I think we should maintain spending on the parks.
- The City should charge for health inspections for buildings.
- The City should not reduce services as they are all essential to somebody.
- The City should put in water meters and charge residents based on usage – people don't pay for water other than a flat fee.

Residential Focus Group #2:

Reduce Costs

- I think that wage increases are excessive and I would look seriously at ways of curbing those increases.
- We don't need as many people in the planning department since there is less planning being done.
- I don't see any budgetary savings happening unless you reduce service.
- Have the Province inject more money into a provincial health program (to reduce the City's expenditure on homelessness and health issues).
- I support having the efficiency consultant come in and look at the City's operations.
- There are lot of inefficiencies that can be eliminated through consolidation or volunteering.
- Hire additional staff so there would not be so much overtime.

Increase Revenues

- The City should have more user-pay for services.

Tax Increase

- I would pay \$10 a month more for these services.

- I don't mind a tax increase of hundred dollars – if it goes to helping the homeless and to libraries.
- I am willing to pay more tax to address public safety issues.
- I think that \$90 more is not a lot to pay.
- I'd be prepared to pay the additional taxes to get us through this period - a 9% or 10% increase – this is fine.
- I'd pay up to \$300 more (in user fees) if I knew what I was getting for the money.

Other

- I feel the mental health advocate essential.
- There could be volunteers working in libraries, parks, assisting with services in the downtown east side.
- I don't want to see services cut.

Residential Focus Group #3:

Reduce Costs

- I see there should be an analysis of spending on the library.
- Instead of planting annuals, the Parks Board should plant things like perennials, plants that are low maintenance.
- Leave the police to deal with direct crime and others to deal with mental illness and homelessness. This will save costs.
- I'm thinking that the single largest chunk of the budget is collective agreements – unions should reduce the negotiated settlement.
- Tell departments - you've got 5% less this year than last year, deal with it.
- Someone suggested rotating closures of library facilities. So some would be open on Sunday and some not.
- We should go on a ten-day cycle for garbage collection.

Increase Revenues

- There is potential revenue from those who want to use the library for their own revenue, like tutoring, and they make money.
- I wouldn't be averse to adding a room tax for those renting out homes during the Olympics.
- Somehow we've got to maintain services – we will have an increase.





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Tax Increase

- 6% takes a great chunk of my income that I have to work more hours to pay for. I just can't believe we would look at that, frankly.
- I believe in zero-based budgeting, and you have to have a baseline.

Other

- Don't cut parks and libraries.
- I think the City should engage in a volunteerism program.

Residential Focus Group #4:

Reduce Costs

- The City should provide incentives/bonuses (to staff) for cost savings.
- The City should consolidate services.
- The City should make sure your spending is wise.
- The City should shut bars at 2 a.m. This will save policing costs.

Increase Revenues

- To save the services, I'd be willing to pay the extra 10% or 11% tax increase is acceptable.
- The City should move more to user-pay.
- The City should ask the Province to allow the City to consider running a deficit on a case-by-case basis.

Tax Increase

- I agree with an increase in the taxes.
- I'll pay an increase for what we have already.

Other

- I think that funding police is mandatory.
- If there had to be some cuts, you have a way to fill those gaps with volunteers.
- I oppose any money going to the Olympics.

Business Focus Group:

Reduce Costs

- Contract out inspection functions like electrical inspection.
- Staff with a cadre of permanent employees and then control the ebb and flow with contract employees.

- Maybe you can expand by-law enforcement to take some police tasks off their books.
- Take on what you can afford to take on, that you absolutely have to deliver, and anything else, you have to wait.
- You don't do things if the money is not there.
- Cut back [closing hours in the Granville entertainment district] to 1 am rather than 4 am.
- We need to pay for only what's essential, and cut taxes, not raise them.
- The City should sell off assets.
- The City should stimulate development.

Increase Revenues

- The City should market profitable areas, or offer a discount to generate more business.
- The City should charge for a back alley to be paved and streetlights – that could be a revenue source from homeowners for ten years.
- More City services should be on a user-pay basis.

Other

- Find a way to streamline City processes, to make City react more quickly to situations like this.
- We need a greater volunteer force.

5.2 Key Theme Summary of Mayor's Forum¹

The following provides a key theme summary of the Mayor's Forum followed by examples of comments made by participants:

- ❖ Participants suggested that the City needed to approach higher levels of government and in particular the Provincial government and ask them to fund services that are provincial jurisdiction such as homelessness.
- ❖ Most, if not all, participants said that service reductions should be avoided. Some participants said this could be avoided by increasing taxes while others said that it could be avoided by finding efficiencies.

¹ A list of participants at the Mayor's Forum is appended





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- ❖ Some participants said the City should restrain expenses and seek efficiencies before you raise taxes.
- ❖ Many participants said that the City needed to avoid collateral damage that would result from reducing service levels to residents. This included such things as reducing services in community centers and libraries at a time when they might be most needed.

Comments

Reduce Costs

- The City should practice restraint and City Council needs to take bold action.
- The City should cut the Ambassador's program.
- The City should undertake a social service audit.
- I am convinced there is \$31 M in programs that no longer work and that there are redundancies in administration. Tell the staff they have to find efficiencies.
- Streamline (City) processes and there is a need to work smarter.
- Reduce garbage collection to twice a month.
- Eliminate the project Civil City Initiative and the Downtown Ambassadors and defer the 311-hotline.

Increase Revenues

- I think you should increase the amount of parking fees and thus increase revenues for the City.
- I suggest selling street names, public spaces and public buildings - sell place for names.
- Implement a congestion tax for people like me that come in and use the services of the City but that don't pay taxes.
- Is there a way to look at the bylaws on the books and get more revenue from them?

Tax Increase

- I think that a 4% - 6% increase is not an excessive tax increase. My municipal tax bill is not my greatest concern.
- I think that there should be a zero percentage (increase) in the budget.
- I am a taxpayer and I support sustaining the services at the community level.

- Creating affordable housing creates jobs. I would support higher taxes.

Other

- The City should put the money in the community.
- It is really important not to create collateral damage (by service reductions) in terms of artist centers and artist studios.
- It is important to retain the community centers for the cultural side and not shortchange them.
- Why not spend 35% on community services and see if that makes a difference.
- Invest in infrastructure and security and hire someone at the City to manage the food supply at the City.
- We could do a lot more if we partnered with the City and could lobby together to the provincial and federal government to provide services.
- We need to create equity and get into an advisory committee format to avoid duplication of services, allow for the collaboration of services and stretch our tax dollar.
- We need that mental health advocate.

5.3 Key Theme Summary of Public Meeting

The following provides a key theme summary of the public meeting:

- Participants did not want to cut services to Libraries, Community Centres, etc., as they are more needed now because of a downturn in the economy.
- Participants indicated that the City should look hard to find efficiencies in the current system, including job-sharing and ways to make parking pay more, and make it easier for residents to pay fines.

The following provides a summary of comments at the public meeting:

- The City should eliminate the feel-good social programs.
- The City should eliminate jobs that are redundant or underutilized.
- The City should go to work sharing, or have people working part time.
- The City should review each and every department for savings.





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- Since revenues have dropped in many areas, the City should cut back on employees.
- The City should find a cheaper alternative to the police in dealing with mental illness.
- The City should use empty lots in the downtown – even if you lease it out, you get money.
- Raising taxes will make it more difficult to stay in Vancouver.
- The City should charge more user fees for parking.
- People need support so we shouldn't tear down support structures when people need them.
- You should pay a surtax if your home is worth more than \$1 million.
- If it's the difference between cutting library funding or funds for community centres, or keeping everything strong and healthy – charge me \$180.
- I think it's offensive that we are shifting the burden off of businesses to residential.
- I'm still in favour for shifting the burden to homeowners.
- Please support the library.

5.4 Key Themes From On-line Forum (16)

The following summarizes the on-line forum:

- The City should look at efficiencies before it increases taxes including looking at the efficiency of workers such as management of service through the Parks Board.
- Many participants suggested cutting taxes and reducing services.
- Some participants suggested that a modest tax increase is acceptable; however, they suggested the City look at the accumulation of tax increases over the past few years as this might be a serious problem for taxpayers.
- Some participants suggested contracting out as a way of reducing costs. Others suggested that increasing competition for the City's work would also reduce costs.
- Participants said the City needed to look at what basic services are required and, at this time, drop any other activities such as the 2009 funding requests presented in the budget background document.

5.5 Key Themes from Email (18)

The comments from e-mails received focused on two issues:

- The City should not assume that labour contracts negotiated prior to the recession should automatically go forward.
- To reduce costs the City should contract out services such as the bindery, reduce staffing levels especially at the senior management levels and centralize services.
- Participants said that the Province should fund the programs for which they are responsible, such as mental health, drug addiction, homelessness and crime, not the City.
- The e-mails said that the City should not increase taxes at this time and should cut City costs to “the bone”.
- Some suggestions for reducing costs included:
 - Reduce the police force
 - Reduce the shelter programs and the street cleanings of the downtown eastside
 - Eliminate the traffic-calming program
 - Cut staff, even by attrition
 - We can live without some of this art on the bike paths.

5.6 Summary of Feedback Forms (completed by enrg Research Group)

The following summarizes the input from the City’s feedback form. Business responses are italicized.

Residents

- Residents place the highest priority on social issues such as homelessness and poverty and a lack of affordable housing (61%). For residents, rounding out the top four priority areas and the last areas to cut are fire protection, sewage/drainage maintenance and garbage collection/recycling.
- For all homeowners, their acceptance for various tax increases is broadly in line with the general population. Acceptance levels range from a low of 55% at an 8% tax increase to a high of 86% with a 2% tax increase.
- Renters are as willing as the general population of renters to pay an extra \$4 per month in rent in order to maintain current levels of service.





- The top preferred method of providing input on the City's annual budget according to these feedback form participants by far is via the City website survey. The other two survey methods, random telephone and direct mail, are preferred less by this group of residents than those who completed the telephone survey.
- The City's website pages about the 2009 Budget and the green "Together" card are the two most recalled pieces of information by feedback form participants.

Business

- Business participants placed taxation and transportation equally as the top priorities, followed closely by social issues and crime. This group placed more emphasis on these than Vancouver businesses as a whole.
- Among businesses, 50% would accept a 4% tax increase, but there was no gain in acceptance levels when the tax increase dropped to 2%. Among all Vancouver businesses, the level of acceptance increased by 25 points to 61% when the tax increase shifted from 4% to 2%.

Residents and Businesses

- Business and resident participants both rank policing as a top priority and the last area to make cuts, which matches the opinions of residents and businesses in general.
- For residents and businesses, the top priority and last area to make cuts continues to be policing, followed by fire protection.
- Businesses and residents concur that the two lowest priority areas, that is, the first areas to make cuts, are arts and cultural organizations and community centers/pool/ice rinks. Similar to last year, businesses place libraries next while residents place parks and beaches as the next area to cut.

5.7 Summary of Telephone Survey

(600 resident and 300 business 900 completed by enrg Research Group)

The following summarizes the input from the telephone survey.

Residents

- Topping the list of local issues for both residents and businesses is social issues such as homelessness and poverty as well as a lack of affordable housing.
- Rounding out the top four concerns are transportation issues, crime and taxation. Among residents, while the importance they place on transportation and crime issues are similar to previous years, mentions of taxation have increased by almost three-fold since last year (from 7% to 19%).

- For all homeowners combined, it appears that tolerance for tax increases in order to maintain the same level of City services has decreased somewhat. The various acceptance levels are:
- With an 8% increase, just over one-half of homeowners support this (53%)
- At 6%, similar to last year, 62% of homeowners support this level of increase
- A 4% increase draws support from 74% of homeowners, which is 6-points lower than last year, but more in line with acceptance levels from 2004-2007
- Support for a 2% tax increase is also down this year, by 10-points, to 82% which puts it among the lowest levels of support, 2nd only to the 81% registered in 1999.
- The majority of home renters (76%) continue to support paying an extra \$4 per month in rent in order to maintain current service levels; although even this support is at the lowest level to be recorded.
- The vast majority of residents (81%) feel it is important for them to provide input on the City's annual Budget.
- The top three preferred methods of providing input on the City's annual budget continues to be via the City website survey, a random telephone survey and a direct mail survey. 44%-49% of residents and 38%-47% of businesses prefers each of these methods.

Business

- Among businesses, crime and taxation have slightly higher importance than transportation issues.
- Businesses continue to be much more sensitive than residents to property tax increases. This year, only 2% and 4% tax increases were tested due to the 2% tax redistribution from business to residential taxpayers. Willingness to pay a 4% tax increase is down marginally (36% from 46%) while willingness to pay a 2% increase is down significantly. At best, 61% of businesses are willing to accept a 2% tax increase, the lowest level since 1997.
- Businesses that rent their premises, however, are not as inclined to accept a rent increase. Just 45% of these business renters are willing to pay a rent increase.
- Among businesses, however, the importance of providing input on the City's annual Budget has decreased significantly since last year (67% compared to 87% in 2008).





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Resident and Business

- Businesses and residents concur that the two lowest priority areas, that is, the first areas to make cuts, are arts and cultural organizations and community centers/pool/ice rinks. Similar to last year, businesses place libraries next while residents place parks and beaches as the next area to cut.
- For both residents and businesses, the top priority and last area to make cuts continues to be policing, followed by fire protection.

Appendix I: List of Participants at the Mayor's Forum

- AIDS Vancouver
- Alliance for Arts and Culture
- BC Coalition of People with Disabilities
- BC Sustainable Energy Association (Vancouver Chapter)
- Britannia Community Services Society
- Canadian Federation of Independent Business
- Canadian Music Centre
- Central City Mission Society
- Commercial Drive Business Society
- Dance House
- Developmental Disabilities Association
- Dolly Hopkins
- Downtown Eastside Women's Centre
- Dunbar Residents Association
- Early Music Vancouver
- Eastside Culture Crawl Society (2)
- Eastside Family Place
- Ending Violence Association of British Columbia
- Fair Tax Coalition
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver
- Friends of the Public Library
- Gastown BIA
- Gastown BIA
- Granville CPC (Granville @ Davie)
- GVHBA (Gr. Vanc. Homebuilders' Association)
- Hastings Community Centre Association
- Hastings Waterfront Business Association
- Hastings-Sunrise CPC (2)
- Hastings-Sunrise Vision Implementation Committee
- HIM (Health Initiative for Men)
- Japanese Community Volunteers' Association
- Jewish Community Centre
- Kerrisdale BIA
- Kits-Arbutus Residents Association
- Kitsilano Community Centre
- Langara College Students Union
- Little Mountain Neighbourhood House
- Lookout Emergency Aid Society
- Marpole Oakridge Family Place
- Mount Pleasant BIA
- Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association
- Multicultural Helping House
- O'Day Productions
- Pacific Baroque Orchestra
- Renters at Risk
- Riley Park Community Association
- Shaughnessy Heights Property Owners' Association
- South Granville BIA
- The Centre/PFAME
- ThinkCity
- United We Can (S.O.L.E. Society)
- United We Can (S.O.L.E. Society)
- Vancouver Active Communities Network
- Vancouver Board of Trade
- Vancouver Boys and Girls Club
- Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival
- Vancouver Economic Development Commission (2)
- Vancouver Economic Development Commission
- Vancouver Farmers Market
- Vancouver Women's Health Collective
- West End Residents' Association
- West Side Family Place
- YMCA of Greater Vancouver
- Pat Horn
- Lee Grant-Roberd
- There were 4 unregistered participants



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