

2023 Budget Comments

**Comments have been included as submitted and have not been altered. Individual names have been removed for privacy. Survey and Email comments have been categorized based on topics.*

Beaches/waterfront/tourism

- Access to waterfront for all not just private communities. Embellish our town. We want to be proud of it.
- I would like to see more improvements at beaches and parks to make it more accessible for those with disabilities
- Consider having a food stand at local beaches during the peak summer days. This is a great way to help make money and create jobs in town. It'll also help prevent folks from bringing outside food and not listening to our rules (no bbq etc)
- We need beaches for residents only you want crazy tax money and we can't enjoy anything. Raise parking for none residents and ticket them for illegal parking not just warnings
- Residents beach (you can restrict parking at Holmes point to residents only, giving us a beach that can be enjoyed by the people who pay ridiculously high property tax to maintain these beaches) -increased recreation services at the roc -increase in availability of town run children's programs (fall programs filled within 24 hours of opening...this is not acceptable)

Business/economic development/industry/building

- Lake Simcoe access & parks need updating. As well, all we hear about Georgina is red tape on building and improvements. Need to make it "easy to do business"
- I would like to be able to pay for and access information regarding statuses of building permits published online like the city of Toronto does.
- Need to slow down on development. Fix what we have and ensure maintenance is done in parks and on buildings.
- Economic development is so vital to Georgina, keep up the momentum, hire more staff, let's make Georgina A great area with lots of growth and success!
- Increased emphasis on economic development and waterfront expansion
- Put fake flowers in flowers boxes and hangers around town, make it easier to start a business, bring in more industry
- We need a winners or a Costco.
- I would love to see more jobs locally so that people didn't have to travel so far to gain employment & the hill on Glennwoods west of The Queensway is horrid. There is a dip at the top from work that makes you so down to less than 2 k unless you want your car to bottom out. Can't afford any more repairs. Smoothing it out would be wonderful for everyone.
- Invest in more homes built to attract young families. Make the building permit process simpler for contractors.

- Prioritize service to residents, cut red tape for building and business, and create incentives for businesses to move into the municipality.
- Attract more businesses and professionals to bring more prosperity to the region and offset taxes from homeowners to businesses.
- North of Keswick is very dilapidated and depressing, with very little to actually do in town. No bookstores? How sad.

Civic Centre

- stop increasing salaries and stop new civic center building
- Stop building new infrastructure. Look after what we have first. Upgrade the existing civic centre instead of building a new one.

Impact of COVID-19 pandemic

- Many families in Georgina are already struggling post pandemic and many can't or won't ask for help. Please remember these quiet people when increasing taxes and other fees
- After 2 years of COVID cutbacks and reduced service, the town looks tired. It needs more attention to detail, additional hanging baskets, weeds pulled between the cracks in the sidewalks, the ditches mowed more than once a season, etc. All this work seems like an after thought and not part of a plan. I would also like to see the dead trees along Civic Centre Road removed and replaced. Once again, it appears to be overlooked. Consideration should also be given to the dead trees along many of the main roads that are extremely close to the power lines. Many appear to be on town property, hydro property or private property. Often the dead trees may be found in clumps. For example drive along Black River Road between Park Road and Hadden Road. Another example is Metro Road west of Kennedy all the way to Woodbine. I don't believe it should be the responsibility of the Georgina taxpayer to pay to remove them, neither should it fall on Ontario Hydro or the private landowner. Somehow the Provincial Government should be contributing in lieu of sitting on the sidelines. It is also time to plant trees and install benches at the ROC. There is nowhere to find shade or a place to rest.

Mayor and Council salary increase

- Reverse the raise 331/3 % for mayor and council Nobody in the real world gets this inflated increase
- You shouldn't have voted yourself a 33% pay
- raise. Also for almost zero community services there is no reason we should be paying one of the highest property tax rates in GTA.
- Town council has done nothing to warrant a 33% increase in wages. They have a lot of work to do before they deserve that.
- 0% tax increase. Prioritize needs and delay wants when we can afford them and cut the Town fat /waste. Revisit Councils 33% pay increase and minimize it PLUS change Councilor's job description status to full time required (not part time).
- Ummm, as an RN, STOP/HOLD your raises. It's insulting and wrong.

- First and foremost, stop giving yourselves massive salary increases. Also, keep in mind that when you state that due to the current rise in inflation, property taxes and I assume other related entities may go up that, our income does not. We are all climbing up the down escalator in Canada and we will all eventually be destitute.
- Don't raise taxes! Don't give yourselves a 33,000 raise either as not much gets done around here!
- get rid of the 33 percent raise you all gave yourselves and put that money back in to the town
- No raise for the mayor
- I would not like to have our taxes raised as we do not have water or sewer services so its a 0%increase. As well i don't think the mayor or counselors should get a 33% increase. Absolutely a waste of our tax dollars . Cost of living has gone up and most residents have not received an increase in their pays and they will struggle to pay for tax hikes
- Stop with the increase to the salary of the Georgina council of 33%. It's disgusting that we pay incredibly high property taxes and you think it's acceptable that you ask us if it's appropriate to increase property taxes by 7%. Salaries are not going up by the that rate. The Julia Munroe park doesn't have a proper bathroom and instead has smelly portable toilets. The MURC is now expected to cost \$110m instead of \$77m and is closer to Aurora than Pefferlaw. There have been no updates on the proposed improvements to be de la salle beach. Shame on you!
- Time for a property tax freeze and cancel 33%raise to you that is absolutely ridicules
- Eliminate the raises given to city council and reinvest that money back into the town.
- Raising taxes after giving yourselves a 30% increase in salary is disgusting and unacceptable. Stop using tax dollars to enrich your personal life.
- Scrap the pay increase for council.

Multi-use Recreation Complex (MURC)

- Looking forward to the opening of the MURC. This council has done a great job of managing new capital projects while enhancing existing services throughout a difficult economic time. Thank you for your dedication to Georgina!
- New library will be expensive, maybe we should wait..

Parks/recreation

- Our parks are very basic compared to other communities, we should be prioritizing attracting young families with interesting parks and revamped waterfront
- Keep parks & rec program fees affordable and accessible by all. Don't want to see an increase in fees when the MURC opens, would be disappointing for the community as a whole to not be able to make full use of it.
- More programs for youth ages 6-12
- Please invest in our recreation amenities and outdoor parks - west park redevelopment specifically

- Lower user fees for leagues & rec services. Due to the increase in living expenses for families. Many may not be able to afford high cost of sports
- The kids in Georgina need more facilities and things to do. We are constantly driving to newmarket to use their facilities and my money is not staying within this community
- Kids need a park with a playground at the Scotia Road/Prosser Crescent development in Sutton. Currently, the water catch basin is a draw for kids and it's not a safe playground.
- I would like to see some money focused on improving the grass infield baseball diamond at the Roc. It is in bad condition. Don Mcknight Field in Newmarket will give you a great example of how it should look

Pefferlaw

- I don't believe that it's fair that we live in Pefferlaw and have to have our taxes raised by very much since we don't even have basic water supply. And the water station you have in Sutton isn't kept up. The door is never locked or managed properly. Another thing to consider is the highway and how to make the commute shorter adding different extensions so it can be accessible to all. I know I'm not the only one that commutes out of town for work on a daily basis. I love living in the Town of Georgina and in Pefferlaw we have a great community please consider our water problem *. when thinking about the budget. Thanks for listening
- I want to make sure ward 5 gets the funding it deserves equal to the other parts of the community..
- Equitable road maintenance to all areas of Pefferlaw
- Yes more focus on development in pefferlaw, more ammenies
- I feel like Pefferlaw (and probably the other smaller communities other than Sutton and Keswick) are afterthoughts when it comes to "nice things" . Very few businesses operate here, likely because of the lack of water and sewage but we are on Hwy 48 where we could capture tourists travelling through to their cottages and local residents would love not to have to travel 20 to 30 minutes to shop for necessities or even non-necessities.

Pefferlaw Dam

- Focus on finding ways to save money. Do NOT spend money on fixing the dam in Pefferlaw. It should be left as is and not operated anymore, since it's not an actual flood control structure. This community has more important things to prioritize than a few residents wanting a pond every summer. A river is meant to flow, not stagnate!
- Ensure the Pefferlaw Dam remains a priority

Property Taxes

- Transparency. Just a percentage brake down on where the money goes. If people saw how the money is helping the community, the property tax or business tax, they could understand how they are contributing.
- Lower property taxes

- An increase in property taxes is appropriate but it should come with corresponding improvements to services for the tax payers. Things cost more, we get that, but with large corporations posting massive profits, increases to the cost of "things" just for the sake of inflation is ridiculous. We expect the town to provide better services if they are going to charge us more and justify that increase in taxes without a budget surplus. If you have more money than you can spend you are taking too much from your residents.
- I would like the town council to look at the individual house taxes. They are all over the place and do not reflect the areas within the town equally. What are the outstanding projects and where is the money coming from to complete them?
- Don't raise taxes. Nobody got money
- We pay enough taxes for next to nothing.
- Many areas are paying disproportionately high taxes and should not suffer anymore by having further increases. (No schools, shopping, etc near by to justify)
- 0% tax increase. Prioritize needs and delay wants when we can afford them and cut the Town fat /waste. Revisit Council's 33% pay increase and minimize it PLUS change Councilor's job description status to full time required (not part time).
- Inflation is making everyone struggle. Please don't contribute to that.
- Please be accountable with tax dollars. Community members are stretched thin and an increase in property taxes may really hurt some. Consider if there are existing opportunities to cut costs - for example, is MURC at current scale really necessary? Seems like a duplication of some already existing amenities
- Our property taxes are already so high. Major increases are not necessary
- With increases to businesses and the potential eye sore of the business park, shouldn't property taxes go down? Loved here over 10 years and hear the same promises with no follow through.
- Fiscal prudence is important to us.
- No need to raise taxes higher than they already are. People are struggling with inflation. Taxes are based off of the value of your property, so it should not be raising very high. We pay one of the highest town tax and there is nothing being given to us as residents except the MERC. Build up the water front, make nice parks with tennis, proper walking path for bikes/runners/walkers. Provide better Services
- Can't afford more house taxes. Need large businesses in Keswick to pay and level taxes out for everyone.
- Stop using our tax dollars to over pay the town employees
- There should be no increases in property tax. If council can get raises, don't raise taxes.
- Reduce or freeze tax increases until the economy recovers. Look for internal cost savings
- Stop raising taxes. Maybe take the people of Georgina's input seriously about beach front/ lake drive plans. Georgina is growing at too quick of a rate without the proper amenities or jobs. How much did it cost the town in severance and termination pay to wrongfully eliminate everyone that didn't get vaccinated? And then for everyone to get big fat raises. Why not focus on the people of Georgina and what they really want.
- Just leave people alone. Stop raising taxes and make cuts where needed. The fact that you are bribing us with our own money to fill out a survey says a lot.

- people are having a difficult time with money more taxes are needed the average family is hard pressed to keep a roof or their families and food on the table i could good on but
- Yes no more tax increases we already pay the highest
- Unfair evaluation of property tax. New homes are not paying a fair amount but are overpating to offset the low prices of older homes closer to the waterfront that have ridiculously low taxes considering their current market value and huge property lot size. Creates a bad feeling between residents knowing new residents are subsidizing older residential properties.
- Georgina already pays some of the highest taxes in York Region without the facilities, park amenities, and/or general community aesthetics and municipal customer service that should be supported by such taxes.
- Even though inflation rate has been going up steeply in recent months, since the town has been accumulating budget surplus, I expect that the property tax won't be increased, to allow people get some spare money for their daily life.
- Tax increases continue to go up but we are increasingly losing our rights especially in Virginia we have the basics garbage removal. Minimum street lights, waterfront deteriorating lack of stewardship from Town of Georgina but taxes still increasing nothing but silt unable to experience the water front
- Seniors are struggling don't raise our taxes.
- Think about the cost of living for everyone
- Keep the taxes low.
- Enough with the taxes already.
- I cannot afford more property tax, given the high cost of living now. I would prefer to delay some projects, e.g., Jackson's Point revitalization. I can barely make ends meet.
- Minimal tax increases

Roads/sidewalks

- Roads don't need resurfacing. They need shoulders. Or put a bike lane on one road. It's very difficult meeting a tractor and a biker. Also some signs where tractors are turning or blind driveways.
- The budget should be put towards road safety for pedestrians and cyclists along Lake Dr. such as putting speed bumps and or cutouts in the road (the lowering of the speed limit did nothing to stop speeders and aggressive drivers), access to garbage cans along Lake Dr. as there are many people who walk their dogs, come up to visit , or go ice fishing during the fall and winter months, and the placement of the couple of cans in the park doesn't help as people won't walk through feet of snow or soggy wet that occurs in the park during the fall and winter seasons...make it easier for people to throw their garbage in the cans rather than along the road to end up in the lake, programs for residents such as increased slots for swimming and summer camps, parks infrastructure and cohesive planning for Keswick and Sutton rather than the haphazard thoughtless planning that has been going on for the last two decades, such as having 3 gas stations in Sutton, and no cohesive planning that makes the town look good. Incentives for small business owners and incentives for current small business owners to clean up their storefronts.

- Roads and rejuvenate high st and Dalton rd Ugly dilapidated buildings, not inviting to visitors Looks like a dump
- Stop light needed at metro and old homestead. More sidewalks on metro as Keswick evolves into a full-time community vs cottage/community hybrid.
- Stop stealing money from the roads department for other projects or as a piggy bank, it is showing how bad the roads are over the years of the town's thievery.
- Let's take care of our roads
- You fix a road and the next week rip it up, ie. Black River Rd, waste of tax payers money.
- I would like to see the Station road sidewalk finished. It's has been years and it is terrible. I would also like to see the Pepperlaw dam get the attention it needs to be a thriving habitat for fish and wildlife.
- Thank you for your commitment and dedication to the community! Please reserve funding for short term traffic calming measures on Lake Drive East.

Spending/services/costs

- Hold wages to a 2% wage increase, no more than that.
- stop increasing salaries and stop new civic center building
- Please don't price out young families / professionals. Town is getting expensive all around.
- Please help us young families as much as you can. We don't want to be priced out of living here.
- Try treating the budget like it is your own family budget instead of greasing palms and blundering tax payer contributions
- Cut staff salaries or trim the waste at civic centre and build a trauma centre, something we NEED, not a useless MURC which we apparently WANT.
- Try not to increase our water and sewer we pay the highest in York region now
- Spend wisely. We are suffering already.
- Ensuring money is being put back into the community and not just to salaries for local municipal workers
- Ensure things are cost effective and well planned. Do more with less. Be transparent and good luck because you can't please everyone!!
- We spend on unnecessary things and are not being cost effective.
- Please prioritize fixing what we already have over expanding new services.
- Please stop spending on consultants.
- With gas, food, housing, utilities and building material costs rising astronomically, it's more important than ever to cut non essential spending and stick to basics. A 'no frills' approach might be the best one in our current economic situation.
- More money should be spent on the children in this area
- I have not had a wage increase in 7 ears fiscal responsibility is most important less is more if can not attract business to offset your taxes base do not spend you are not a larger town like newmarket Richmond hill Market you can't not have the same

expectation from your ratepayers if you hand out contracts Service level agreements must be set with penalty be smarter spend less

- Our water and sewer bills are way too high!
- During the economic uncertainty I think any increased spending should be done with careful consideration
- How about fiscal responsibility in these volatile times? Every resident of Georgina has been forced to find ways to make our dollar go further. I'd like to see no tax increase but more fiscal restraint.
- In these difficult economic times we need to look at all costs and choose what is necessary but not what is nice to have. The nice to have should wait until the economy stabilizes - just like we need to do in our own households. Now is the time to tighten the budget and keep raising taxes to the bare minimum
- Do NOT increase employee pay. Put it into the actual roads, waterfront, or help offset costs for people who live here. It's getting to where ordinary people cannot afford to live here.
- Efficiency and cost effectiveness is most important- trim all fat
- Staffing could be reduced. Seems like it takes two people four people for any small maintenance or road job to be completed.
- Making sure that staffing resources are as prioritized as the action items.
- Scale back some expenses to undercut the impacts of inflation rather than contributing to inflation by raising taxes.
- Taxes, water and sewer charges cannot be permitted to rise anymore. We cannot afford any more increases. Development fees need to be increased to hold taxes and service fees at the current level. New development needs to pay their own way, As much as contingency accounts are a good idea in today's economic conditions "money put aside for a rainy day" needs to be suspended or decreased in 2023.. IT'S RAINING !!
- Encourage Staff accountability and productivity in all your departments.
- Look at pay for town employees. Labour is largest expense. Make sacrifice here first
- Spend wisely as your being watched this year.

Other comments

- Please focus on agriculture and food production, which will become major challenges in the future.
- Would like to see guaranteed investment in social programming that benefits our community before we agree to a tax increase. Perhaps funding for the food pantry or pop up breakfast club so kids in our community are not going hungry.
- Interested in how the council is going to preserve the historic buildings and areas in Georgina.
- haven't seen it, how can I comment? Is there a draft budget online? This is not a very comprehensive survey.
- I really appreciate these surveys and having my say!
- Contracts given out should have warranties and time penalties

- Extra funds to beautify our main streets with enhanced festive lighting on holidays and increased flower boxes in summer making it an inviting place to stroll around and shop
- Make responsible decisions based on fact, do not be influenced by the loudest and most persistent voices, UNLESS they are bringing realistic problems and solutions to the table. Make this a community people want to live in and rather than have to live in because it's the only place they can afford to live.
- Affordable housing (not low income housing, there is a difference)
- Continue and enhance support for local charities and non profits. They have been hit even harder than most businesses by covid and high inflation
- the budget is not familiar to me and I plan to obtain a copy to make a fair judgement
- Need more focus on the current residents and bringing whatever community supports that could be helping them.
- Would love to see money invested in pedestrian infrastructure in Udora
- Reduced police spending could free up funds for enhanced social programs
- We can only provide services and programs if staff are in place to run and maintain them. The current staffing level on the frontline is bare minimum and management is top heavy. We need more frontline staff to carry the load.
- Like to see something for seniors in budget
- Less money on litigation lawyers.
- Concentrate on residents not day trippers.
- Dog owners need to pick up after their dogs and keep leash on. There's too many vehicles parked in streets not following winter rules and law not being enforced.
- Providing a better "user experience" in general: facilities, pedestrian walkway maintenance, more access to shoreline, a more walkable town.
- The town does a good job of communicating its services and priorities/events, more communication is always helpful
- Continue to keep us informed.
- Increase your budget for transportation
- Less focus on allocating tax payer funds to external consultants and lawyers.
- Stop wasting tax money on consultants.
- More focus to the outlying areas of Georgina
- Yes pay attention to the seniors in this town & build a new long term care home . Bring in a bank RBC . Also not sure if it's related to the budget but if we are asked to support our town business then lower the prices then we don't have to go to other town& then the revenue stays in our town .
- I would like to see the town leveraging more local resources unless reliance on consultants and external lawyers to make decisions for our residents
- Georgina needs to improve public waterfront access and have more garbage in parks and clean up litter quicker
- Maskinonge river needs money. Weeds, reverse flow revitalization. Beaches should be private to residents.

From: Perry Smith <perrysmith@rogers.com>
Sent: November 4, 2022 10:41 AM
To: Georgina Budget <budget@georgina.ca>
Cc: Maureen Smith <moesmith.ms@gmail.com>
Subject: West Park Sidewalk

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Issue to consider for the upcoming budget:

It's an issue that my wife and I have been concerned about for many years and have reached out to council in the past, but always get some kind of excuse. It's a major safety issue.

Maureen and I live on Canal Street and have 5 grandchildren. There are also lots of new young families with small kids on our street. We often go for a walk to West Park or to Young's Harbour to the playground. Traffic is getting busier and busier with transports on Ravenshoe. More and more people are walking, elderly and small children. Someone is going to get hit and seriously hurt. Recently on Ravenshoe near lake drive they've cleaned out the ditches and the edge of the ditch is very steep and deep and only 24 inches off the pavement. There's no where to go while walking or pushing a stroller if traffic goes by. Also, the lower speed limits on Lake drive and the traffic bollards may slow the traffic a little, but the safety issue still exists and is a real problem.

There's an easy solution. Install a sidewalk at West Park from the east parking lot to the dog park which is all town property. It would meet up with the existing sidewalk on Ravenshoe at the east parking lot. This would be a safe walk then for anyone coming from Simcoe Landing to the dog park or to Young's Harbour and Adaline parks as well as anyone living in South Keswick. I would suggest installing the sidewalk on the northside of the newly planted trees, on the town property, along Ravenshoe and then widen Lake Drive S., from Ravenshoe to the dog park on the East side with the side walk on at the edge of the pavement and the ditch the east of the new sidewalk.

I know that public safety is a priority in this town and we feel this is an important item for your the upcoming budget. From a budget stand point, this project could be done in two stages. 1) Along Ravenshoe the first year and 2) Along Lake Drive South from Ravenshoe to the Dog park the second year. I can tell you first hand, that this safety issue should be addressed sooner than later.

If you have any questions or need anything from us, don't hesitate to reach out. We appreciate your attention and consideration in this matter.

thanks,

Perry and Maureen Smith

11 Canal Street, Keswick.

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