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**COMMUNICATION**FAA - NOVEMBER 28/2016ITEM - 1

**DATE:** NOVEMBER 24, 2016

**TO:** MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

**FROM:** LAURA MIRABELLA-SIDDALL, CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER AND CITY TREASURER  
LLOYD NORONHA, DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
FINANCE AND DEPUTY CITY TREASURER  
GARY WILLIAMS, DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

**RE:** FINANCE, ADMINISTRATION AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – November 28, 2016  
DRAFT 2017 BUDGET AND 2018 PLAN

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**Purpose**

The purpose of this Communication is to provide Council with an update regarding public engagement on the 2017 Budget and 2018 Plan.

**Background**

During this year's budget process, a number of tactics were used to reach residents, including:

- Momentum Report distributed to households
- Hard-copy promotional materials
- Newspaper ads
- Digital signs
- Social media
- Enhanced website content.

Residents were encouraged to provide feedback on the services that are important to them through a number of methods, including:

- Email
- Online form
- Dedicated phone-line
- Social media.

During the 2017 budget process, there were twelve responses received via the online form, five emails received with questions and comments, and eight deputations received during budget meetings. It is important to note that this engagement only captures the communications received from residents through these formal channels during a short period of time in October and November. Engagement on the budget actually occurs throughout the year by way of discussions between Councillors and the residents as well as various members of administration and the public. This ongoing dialogue often helps to shape and define the City's priorities, which in turn helps inform the budget process. The City's Strategy Map is an excellent example of this feedback loop. The Budget is fully linked to the Strategy Map, which is meant to be a reflection of both the public's priorities as well as administration's initiatives to ensure organizational readiness to meet these priorities. If the public at large is generally supportive of the Strategy Map, inclusive of the 3% tax rate increase maximum, then it may follow that much of the budget that supports the Map will receive general support. Nevertheless, feedback through online tools and deputations are an important part of the budget process and staff have made an effort to keep these opportunities open for more direct input. Given the small sample size the summary below may not be indicative of the general opinion of the Vaughan population, but it is a summary of the direct input received during the budget process period.

The most common topics among residents' feedback to date have included:

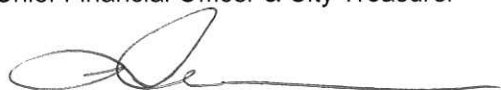
- Keeping taxes low
  - "I like that we are keeping taxes to under 3%. Is that sustainable? How long is it planned for?"
  - "Will our taxes go up past 3% anytime soon and if not what services will be cut?"
- Road maintenance
  - "I'm concerned about our roads. Lots of traffic in Vaughan. How is the budget going to tackle this issue?"
  - "Our roads are important to me. What are we doing/spending on our roads? Some are in real bad shape."
- Snow clearing
  - "Would love to know how much of the budget is geared towards snow clearing. We are supposed to get a lot of snow this year. Are we getting rid of windrow clearing? How much do we spend and is it enough?"
- Public services
  - "Safety is important – fire and hospital – and public services – recreation, libraries, parks and park maintenance."
  - "More dog parks. More affordable housing."
- Taxes/funding in general
  - "When can we pay taxes online?"
  - "How much in reserves do we have year over year and what is that funding for?"

Providing information on the budget in a variety of formats to the City's stakeholders, along with the opportunity to give a deputation at a budget meeting, is an important piece of the budget process. Having engagement with citizens during the budget process as well as throughout the year helps effectively plan for the future of the City. Staff, where possible, have addressed resident feedback through online responses to direct questions.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer



Lloyd Noronha, CPA, CMA  
Director of Financial Planning and Development Finance & Deputy City Treasurer



Gary Williams  
Director, Office of Corporate Communications