

How does Regina's property taxes compare to other Canadian cities?

According to the City of Edmonton's *Residential Property Taxes and Utility Charges Survey* for 2006, Regina ranked 9th out of the 24 cities surveyed for municipal and other taxes (excluding school taxes). As well, Regina's municipal property tax increases have been generally less than those seen in other major western Canadian cities:

City	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total Municipal Mill Rate (including 2007 proposed increase)
Regina	1.1%	0%	4%	0%	Proposed 3.9%	9.0%
Saskatoon	2.7%	3.78%	3.4%	1.89%	Proposed 3.5%-7.5%	15.27%-19.27%
Calgary	3.9%	5%	3.5%	4.4%	4%	20.8%
Edmonton	4.9%	5.3%	5.4%	6.25%	6.5%	28.35%
Red Deer	6.2%	12%	0%	1.6%	13.5%	33.30%

Other factors affecting the amount of property taxes you pay

Although the proposed municipal mill rate increase is 3.9%, your total property tax bill this year may be higher or lower due to:

Provincial property tax credits

For the past two years, the Province provided an educational property tax credit of 8%. The Province announced a 10% educational property tax credit for 2007/2008, subject to the approval of the Federal Budget.

2007 Budgets for the School Boards and Library Board

Any increase to the approved budget of either School Board or the Library Board could increase the amount of property taxes you will pay in 2007.

Past Tax Policy Decisions

In 2005, City Council adopted a tax policy to create a single residential mill rate for all single-family homes, residential condominiums and multi-family residential properties by 2010.

Due to this tax policy, single family property owners and residential condominium property owners will see their municipal mill rate increase an additional 0.8% in 2007 while multi-family residential property owners will see their taxes decrease 6%.

Still more work to be done...

Regina must continue working with the other orders of government to identify additional revenue sources to address the challenges below; challenges which forced the City to propose a 3.9% municipal mill rate increase for 2007:

- Tax growth from Regina's new developments is not sufficient to keep pace with rising costs. New developments only increased Regina's property taxes level by \$1 million or about 0.5% of the City's total operating budget.
- The cost of supplies used by the City is increasing faster than inflation, like fuel (30%), asphalt (15%), electricity (6%) and construction and engineering services (15%+ in specialized disciplines).
- The amount Regina received from the Province's Revenue Sharing Program in 2007 is still less than the amount received in 1986.
- With over a billion dollars in infrastructure assets, the City's shortfall in capital funding is between \$40 - \$50 million each year. This gap will increase as buildings and infrastructure deteriorate with age.
- Changing community interests, regulatory requirements, and fiscal pressures from local groups and organizations will require review and changes to the City's community investment programs.

Increases to fees and permits in 2007

Service	2006	2007
Transit and paratransit fares	\$2.10	\$2.10
Landfill fees – private vehicle	\$5	\$5
Cemetery fees	5% increase in 2007 for all products and services excluding the Prairie Rose Columbarium	
Various building division reports, plans, approvals, temporary building permits, etc	3% increase in 2007 for various items excluding building permit fee schedule	
Water daily base charge	35¢/day	37¢/day
Sewer daily base charge	27¢/day	28¢/day
Drainage daily base charge	23¢/day	25¢/day
Water consumption rate	85¢/m ³	88¢/m ³
Sewer consumption rate	75¢/m ³	78¢/m ³
Youth general admission fee to leisure facility	\$3.60	\$3.90
Adult general admission fee to leisure facility	\$4.80	\$5.20
Family Swim (Sandra Schmirler)	\$10.70	\$11.60
Youth 3 month leisure pass	\$87	\$94
Adult 3 month leisure pass	\$116	\$125
Arena ice time (adult/tournament)	\$126.80/hr	\$130.60/hr
Arena ice time youth/tournament)	\$79.90/hr	\$84.90/hr
Adult weekday green fees	\$32.25	\$34.25
Murray & Tor Hill Golf Courses		

Get involved

The proposed 2007 Operating Budget, 2007-2011 Capital Program, and 2007 Water Sewer Utility Budget will be reviewed by City Council at a special budget meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 17 at 5:30 p.m. in Henry Baker Hall, City Hall.

If you wish, you can comment on the proposed budgets before Thursday, April 12 by:

- Phone: 777-7000
- E-mail: cityhelp@regina.ca
- In-person: You can appear as a delegation at the special City Council budget meeting, scheduled for April 17 at 5:30 p.m. in Henry Baker Hall, City Hall. To do so, submit a written brief that contains the full text of your presentation to the City Clerk's Office (15th Floor, City Hall) by 1 p.m. on Thursday, April 12. For more information, call the City Clerk's Office at 777-7262.



3.9% mill rate increase proposed

When developing the proposed 2007 Operating Budget and 2007-2011 Capital Budget, the City of Regina was guided by two objectives:

- to ensure the budget would meet the majority of residents' desire to maintain or improve current service levels; and
- to ensure the City's strategic priorities would be met for the year.

From this work, the City of Regina proposes a 3.9% municipal mill rate increase for 2007. The impact of the proposed municipal mill rate increase would add about \$4 a month or \$49 a year on the property tax bill for an average Regina home or residential condominium with a fair value of 98,810. This amount does not include mill rate increases as a result of budgets approved by either School Board or the Library Board or as a result of any tax policies approved by City Council.

Core Services Review implemented

Building on the work of the 2004 Core Service Review, the City has been able to save \$3.1 million (\$1.9 million in 2006 and an additional \$1.2 million from the initial 2007 budget) by reallocating existing resources and funds while still meeting strategic priorities.

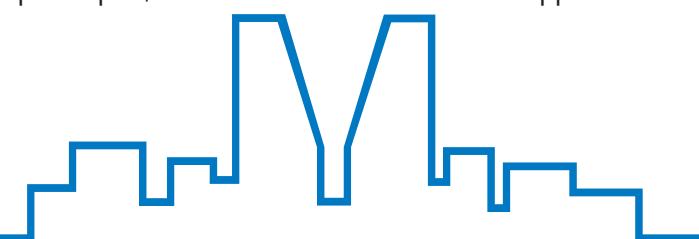
To reach the proposed 3.9% municipal mill rate increase, departments have been instructed to reduce costs by an additional \$1.2 million throughout 2007 without reducing service levels.

Any further reductions to the proposed mill rate would negatively affect customer service levels, a situation the majority of residents participating in the 2007 Omnibus Survey indicated they did not want to occur.

Heading in the right direction...

Municipalities across Canada - including Regina - made progress by presenting the needs of municipalities to the other orders of government. Recent announcements from the 2007 Federal and Provincial budgets will help Regina address its growing infrastructure needs:

- A total of \$10.4 million to fund transit capital projects over three years from the Federal Public Transit Trust
- A total of \$4.4 million in 2007 from the Federal Gas Tax Program for municipal infrastructure projects (a \$1.1 million increase from last year)
- A total of \$15.7 million in 2007 for ongoing funding from the Province's Revenue Sharing Program. (The City is investing all of the \$2.7 million increase for 2007 in its general capital program.)
- Previously, Regina received about \$12 less per capita than most other Saskatchewan cities. The 2007 Provincial Revenue Sharing program will be distributed to all cities based on \$87.85 per capita, which is a fair and balanced approach.



The City of Regina's corporate strategy

Three years ago, the City of Regina conducted a Core Services Review. The report from this review included several recommendations, one of which was the development of a Regina Strategic Plan. Using information about strategic planning from the Core Services Review, City Council and the Senior Management Team identified six themes that will drive the organization's strategic choices:

Customer Service

The City of Regina is committed to the delivery of municipal services that meet the needs and expectations of its customers.

Contemporary Employer

The City of Regina recognizes that its people are its most key and valuable resource. Human Resources strategies work to achieve outcomes that best serve the organization and the community.

Asset Management

The City of Regina strategically and effectively manages assets within program areas to provide for economic, social and environmental sustainability.

The City chose the first three themes as key priorities for 2007, which were confirmed with City Council last November.

Service Delivery Methodologies

The City of Regina makes service delivery decisions that ensure the most effective and efficient service exists.

Mandate

The City of Regina strategically determines which services the City provides, the level of service, service goals and objectives for its programs.

Revenue Generation

The City of Regina is committed to Corporate Revenue Strategy development and makes revenue generation decisions based on clear guiding principles.

Highlights from the proposed 2007 Budget

Customer Service

In the 2006 Omnibus Survey, residents indicated that customer service is a top priority for them. Steps proposed in 2007 to improve customer service include:

- An additional \$1.6 million for Winter Road Maintenance, bringing the total budget from \$3 million to \$4.6 million
- \$100,000 for phase one of the Customer Service Strategy
- \$200,000 for the Recreation Facility Strategy to 2020 to ensure that future operations and upgrades to recreation facilities are carried out in light of evolving program needs of the City's customers
- \$52,000 for extended transit services for Food Bank customers, as approved by City Council in 2006
- \$27,100 for solid waste expansion and \$67,200 for additional open space and irrigation requirements due to Regina's growth
- \$30,000 for additional costs for the contracted services provided by Atoskata for Bylaw Enforcement
- \$322,000 to fund added net costs for the Regina Police Service, including funds to hire 14 new officers

Contemporary Employer

City services are delivered largely by City employees. However, the City of Regina faces tough competition in attracting and retaining employees in today's red-hot economy in Western Canada. It's vital the City implement best practice techniques to:

- recruit potential employees
- retain current employees
- lead, direct, and motivate its workforce

To help achieve these best practices, the proposed budget includes funding for:

- \$3.5 million for estimated wage and benefit packages for employees
- \$250,000 for transition costs related to the implementation of the new organization structure
- \$99,100 for increased training and development resources
- \$50,000 for the annual Employee Survey, as a follow up to the first one done in 2006
- \$40,000 for initial implementation of a Workforce Diversity Strategy
- \$25,000 for the return to work and safety programs
- \$10,800 for trustee education for administration of the pension plans

Asset Management

Regina faces challenges to maintain its infrastructure - like buildings, roads, streets, sidewalks, traffic signals/signs, vehicles, equipment, parks, open spaces, trees and athletic fields. In fact, the City of Regina's infrastructure (not including water and sewer) is worth over \$1 billion.

It's critical that infrastructure funding in the City's budget, along with the federal and provincial grants, be spent effectively by:

- implementing effective asset management techniques such as life cycle costing and preventative maintenance programs
- exploring community partnerships - with both public and private organizations - to provide the infrastructure to support the services Regina's citizens require
- promoting rationalization of facilities and infrastructure, which could include multi-use or consolidated facilities

The 2007 budget includes funding for the following items under asset management:

- \$2.7 million more for capital projects
- \$200,000 for the Recreation Facility Strategy to 2020
- \$200,000 for the Waste Minimization Strategy
- \$100,400 for further implementation of the asset management system
- \$80,000 for the Bridge Management Program
- \$41,200 in ongoing funding for infrastructure planning and management in Engineering and Works
- \$33,000 for improvements to the fleet preventative maintenance program

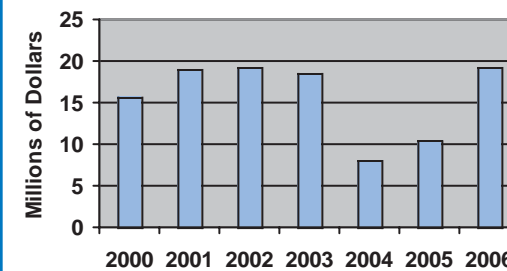
Regina's General Fund Reserve

At the end of 2006, Regina's General Fund Reserve was at \$19.2 million.

Over the years, the Fund has been used to leverage other funding for projects such as the deepening Wascana Lake and the Credit Union Eventplex.

It's important the City builds up its reserves so it can leverage its expenditures for future capital projects. Such projects are necessary for the city's future sustainability since Regina has a current infrastructure gap of \$40 - \$50 million each year. Unless addressed, this gap will continue to grow as the City's infrastructure continues to deteriorate with age. Investment is also required for industrial land development.

General Fund Reserve Totals for 2000-2006



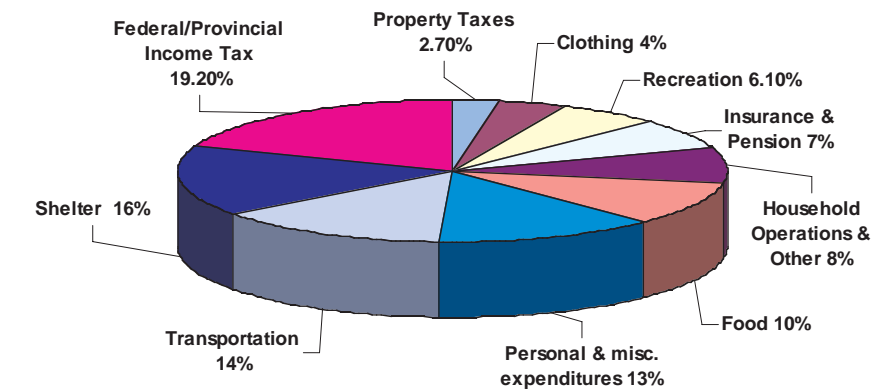
Municipal projects underway in your neighbourhood

- \$11 million in street infrastructure renewal
- 2007 road construction projects include:
 - Courtney Street road construction
Dalglish Drive to Mapleford Gate - east side
 - Intersection improvements
At Quance Street and University Park Drive
- Renewal of the Dewdney Avenue Wascana Creek Bridge
- Continued implementation of the automated front street garbage collection program
- Completing turf replacement at Taylor Field at Mosaic Stadium (costs shared with the Saskatchewan Roughriders)
- Expanding the multi-use pathway system in Les Sherman Park
- Linking the Devonian pathway in A.E. Wilson Park to the North Storm Channel pathway
- Adding additional pathways in Wascana Park
- Investing \$2 million in industrial land development in 2007
- Starting construction of a new fire hall to replace Fire Hall #4 (\$500,000 in 2007. Total cost: \$2.3 million over two years.)
- \$5 million for Transit (4 new transit buses, 4 new Paratransit buses, and electronic fare boxes)

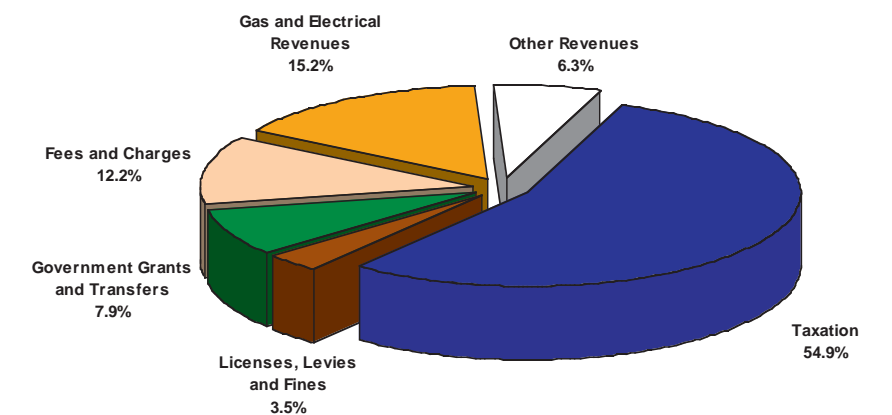
Property taxes and your household budget

According to Statistics Canada's 2005 Survey of Household Spending for the Regina area, only 2.7% of the average household expenses are used to pay property taxes.

The 2.7% is then allocated to the three local taxing authorities in the amounts shown: School Boards (48%), Library (5%) and City of Regina (47%).



Breakdown of the City of Regina's Operating Revenues



Breakdown of the City of Regina's Operating Expenditures

