

**CITY OF NORTH BATTELFORD
2015 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

The 2015 budget was crafted taking into account the changes implemented under the Customer Service Organizational Review completed in May, 2014 as well as being based upon:

- Focusing Departments into main lines of business
- Teamwork, efficiency, effectiveness
- NB the BEST
- Identification and justification of all expenditures
- Providing a reasonable level of service as compared to an exceptional level of service in areas such as street sweeping and snow removal
- Partnering with the private sector to address issues where the City does not have the required equipment or labour.
- Equipment replacement that will enhance effectiveness such as back alley maintenance and pothole patching

GENERAL FUND

The 2015 budget maintains the current levels of service provided to North Battleford residents and starts or continues the following new Initiatives:

FUNCTION	DESCRIPTION
Protective	Community Safety Co-ordinator Contract extended
Protective	Continue to co-ordinate with RCMP and explore ways to divert Officer time to more serious crimes through Service Level Agreement (SLA)
Protective	Continue with the Community Safety Officers
Protective	Promote 2 temporary full time Firefighters to permanent full time firefighters
Protective	Graffiti Control Assistance Program
Planning	Killdeer Subdivision – 42 residential lots
Planning	Downtown Master Plan
Planning	Transportation Master Plan
Planning	Complete Regional Opportunity Plan
Planning	Implement in-house Engineering estimated net cost savings of \$ 469,000
Finance	Implement Central Purchasing estimated net cost savings \$ 50,000
Human Resources	Succession Planning, employee recruitment and retention.
Operations	Equipment required to start repairing potholes earlier in the season
Operations	Back Alley Grader to be able to maintain alleys more effectively, reduce complaints and insurance claims
Operations	Central Repair Shops implemented
Operations	Increased efficiency in dispatch and movement of staff and equipment
Leisure	Capital Strategy Invest in Civic Centre Arena and Don Ross Arena, start planning for new Civic Centre Facility.
Leisure	Central Booking and enhanced Community Programming including low cost opportunities such as roller skating, free public skating and toonie swims.

Leisure	Increased Programming, leagues, activities & Special Events at Battlefords Co-op Aquatic Centre and NationsWEST Fieldhouse
Leisure	Enhanced Community Engagement and partnerships in the Community
Leisure	Upgrade Chapel Gallery and create revenue generation opportunities
Leisure	Continue with pathway rehabilitation and parking lot pavement
Leisure	Rebranding to Leisure Services, enhanced internal teamwork

Your 2015 Tax dollars are spent:

Percent	Function
11 %	General Government
16 %	Policing
9 %	Fire & Protective Services
17 %	Operations – Public Works, Water & Sewer Maintenance, Parks, Cemeteries, Forestry
6 %	Waste Management
7 %	Planning & Development
16 %	Leisure
5 %	3rd Party Grants such as Libraries, Transit, Decker Centre, Community Safety Groups
6 %	Long Term Debt
7 %	Capital

Due to upwards pressure on costs to the City of North Battleford, this requires a 4.5 per cent increase in the amount of money generated from property taxes.

Since 2015 Assessments have not yet been finalized, it is not yet possible to determine with certainty the exact property tax increase which will be needed to generate this additional revenue, however it is expected the **average house** in North Battleford will see an increase in the property tax charged of about **\$7/month**.

UTILITY FUND

The current level of production of water and disposal of sewage is being maintained in 2015 and starts and/or continues new initiatives in 2015:

FUNCTION	DESCRIPTION
Planning	Water Distribution Study
Planning	Sewer Disposal System Study
Planning	Water & Wastewater System Assessments
Sewer	Complete expansion and create revenue stream from bio-solids fertilizer
Water	Update Remote Control System (SCADA)
Water	New Supply Well and decommission old wells
Water	Underground Pipe Replacement

Your 2015 Utility fees are spent:

Percent	Function
37%	Sanitary Sewer
41%	Water
8%	Long Term Debt
13%	Capital

Capital projects to upgrade the system will be undertaken in 2015 and so the utility fund (utility rates) will see an increase of five per cent on the base water rates and three per cent on the base sanitary sewer rates.

It is expected that the average residential customer will see an increase of about **\$ 2/month**.

UNDERGROUND PIPES AND ASPHALT REPLACEMENT (UPAR) SPECIAL TAX

The City of North Battleford will also do more to improve its aging infrastructure and upgrade underground pipes and the asphalt on city streets in 2015.

There are 17 kilometers of underground pipes and asphalt in need of replacement in North Battleford but at the current replacement level of 0.5 km per year and the age of the remaining pipe, in a decade the City will have only fallen further behind. In 10 years, it is projected that number of kilometres of underground pipe needing to be replaced will have risen to 40 km. These aged lines are subjects to breaks and this affects the quality of the service. This also requires spending increasingly larger amounts of money just to repair the system because, as the system gets older, it costs more to maintain.

The replacement program has to be accelerated and it does not seem that there will be much assistance from the federal or provincial governments, although we will make every effort to obtain whatever funds are available. The current method is funded partly from property taxes and partly from utility rates and a large portion of the work that is done in front of individual properties is funded through Local Improvement Taxes.

This current method would result in large Local Improvement tax bills to every property owner in the City over time as the problem is corrected as the average lifespan of asphalt is 20 years.

In essence, the best way to correct this issue and lessen the impact on property owners is to change the funding philosophy so that the cost to replace underground pipes and asphalt is shared throughout the city as a whole based on the size of individual properties through this special tax. Compared to the large bills associated with Local Improvement Taxes, this will mean smaller bills per year and believed easier for property owners to manage.

This is the 1st year of the Special Tax and it is believed that it will increase over time as there is a 10 to 15 year window to focus on this major issue before any new major facilities have to be constructed. The multiple studies being completed in 2015 will provide further guidance and allow the City to establish a long term (30 year) capital program.

The UPAR Special Tax will be held in a separate savings account and in 2015 will be used to **complete 100th Street from 14th Avenue to 20th Avenue.**

The new Underground Pipe and Asphalt Replacement (UPAR) Special Tax of \$ 3/foot of frontage will help raise the necessary funds to undertake this important work. For an average house in North Battleford this will mean an additional **\$ 12.50/month.**