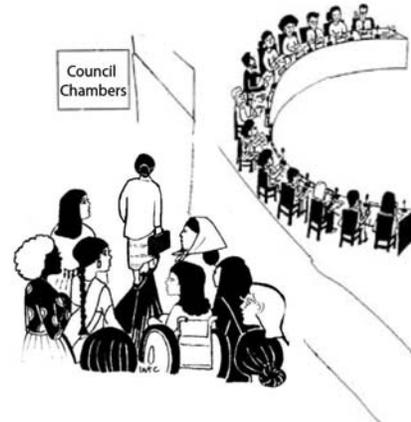


Women's Eyes on City Budget 2008

When the draft city budget was released, the City for All Women Initiative brought women together from across the city to consider its impact on women, our families, our diverse communities and places of work.

Women raised their concerns with City Council through letters and budget consultations. And then joined with other community groups to observe how City Council responded to our concerns.



Were your concerns heard? What will the results mean for our city in 2008?

Women said:	The result:
<p>Provide opportunities for residents to give informed input on the budget.</p>	<p>Good News! Council increased the number of consultations. City web-site provided accessible information.</p> <p>Bad News! The draft budget was released only one day before consultations began making it nearly impossible for the community to have informed questions. Council presented motions in their deliberations without providing copies to the public, making it difficult to follow discussions.</p>
<p>Don't cut city services and funding for community services; they are vital for the health of our communities.</p>	<p>Good News! Nearly all city services were maintained, including 2% inflationary increase to community agencies, francophone childcare spaces, and the increase to Ottawa Community Public Housing.</p>
<p>Don't cut bus routes or reduce weekend and evening hours. Many women, especially immigrant and Aboriginal women, rely on them to get to work or school at irregular hours.</p>	<p>Good News! Bus routes and services were maintained.</p>
<p>Don't raise bus fares, as they become less affordable and contribute to social isolation for people in our communities.</p>	<p>Bad News! City Council went beyond the proposed 5% increase, to raise fares by 7.5%. Cash fares remain the same, tickets increase by 10 cents but adult bus passes increase by 10%-11%, making them unaffordable for many of our families.</p> <p>Good News! Student Pass and Community Pass for people on ODSP will rise only slightly.</p>

Women said:	The result:
<p>Don't raise recreation fees as affordable recreation is important for the development of our youth and health of our communities.</p>	<p>Bad News! Recreation fees were increased including public skating and swimming; and adult recreation.</p> <p>Keep watching: In the spring, Community and Protective Services Committee will approve a Recreation Master Plan with policies on user fees.</p> <p>Ask your Councillor if there will be opportunity for meaningful input on this important issue.</p>
<p>We don't have a spending problem; but a revenue problem. Ontario is the only province where cities fund social services from the property taxes. We want to work with a Council that will provide strong leadership in calling on the Federal and Provincial governments to provide more money for cities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good News! Members of City Council led a march to Parliament Hill to ask the Federal Government for 1% of the GST. Click here to learn more and sign city sponsored petition. • The budget assumes the Province will provide \$22 million for public health costs that used to be paid by the province. Join with Council to let your MPP know you want the province to pay. <p>Keep watching: Let your Councillor and the Mayor know you want to work with him or her on this issue.</p>
<p>It is important to keep finding more efficient ways to manage the city, but don't cut internal spending and city staff where it will affect the quality of services and jobs.</p>	<p>Keep watching: February to March, City staff will conduct an internal review of city administration to try to reduce spending by \$25 million. Will cuts to staff and programs affect the city's ability to give quality service? Will staff cuts occur predominately in areas where women are employed?</p>
<p>Do not approve the Ottawa Police Services budget with an 8.8% increase; as we cannot afford the same increase for the services that prevent crime.</p>	<p>Bad News! Even though many Councillors raised questions about such a large increase, Council approved the police budget as directed by the Police Services Board.</p>
<p>Keeping tax increase to 0% is impossible; our own personal budgets go up with inflation, why not the city's? Raise property taxes as needed to ensure that service are adequately funded.</p>	<p>Good News! City Council approved a 4.9% tax increase...for now.</p> <p>Keep watching: Council decided to have a two-phased budget process. The tax rate will be reconsidered in April depending upon the savings and revenues that are found between now and then.</p>
<p>For more information, visit City of Ottawa ; People for a Better Ottawa</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Our Views Matter! - Notre point de vue compte!</p> <p>Produced by: City for All Women Initiative (CAWI) Initiative: une ville pour toutes les femmes (IVTF) www.cawi-ivtf.org</p>	