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**For Immediate Release****Service Review Shaves \$5.4 Million from Proposed Budget**

Cambridge, Ontario. January 14, 2011...Months of service review activities by City staff have shaved \$5.4 million off the City of Cambridge budget which presents a significantly better starting point for the Budget Task Force when talks begin next week.

Task Force Chair and City Councillor Gary Price says Cambridge is at a good starting point because of the belt tightening leading up to the budget process. "Council asked staff to perform a service review to look at cost reductions and efficiencies to help us get to a better starting point for the budget process."

The service review began in late 2009 to help council build a four-year financial strategy. In phase one, staff reduced expenses by some \$2.4 million and shaved three full time (currently vacant) jobs from the payroll. In 2010, the second phase saw a further \$3.3 million in reductions and 16.08 full time jobs were eliminated mostly through attrition. In total, the review reduced expenses by \$5.4 million and staffing levels declined by 19.08 people.

"The significant ground work accomplished means the draft budget opens with a proposed 4.26 percent tax increase which equates to \$42.87 per household with a market value of \$225,000," says Price. This lean capital and operating budget approach includes no growth items, no new staff and basically flat-lining or reducing expenditures for 2011.

Despite the significant positive support the City received from other levels of government, some \$33 million in stimulus funding alone, Cambridge is still facing a deficit of \$153 million over the next ten years to address the gap for infrastructure.

"There are aging infrastructure requirements that need attention and the days are gone where a municipality can pay for things like roads, sewers and community growth simply through property taxes," says Jim King, the Chief Administrative Officer. While the bare bones budget approach and multi-government partnerships have helped compensate for factors like lower tax assessment, shortfalls in investment income, depleting reserves and a general decline in the economy, more needs to be done he contends. King says he will provide a report to the Budget Task Force to initiate a third phase in the service review that will try to address the gap in the capital budget program.

This year more than \$34 million worth of capital projects are planned, only \$18.9 million are tax supported. These include over \$1 million for road rehabilitation and \$2.7 million for upgrades to facilities such as Public Works.

The annual plan also includes money for sports field development, bikeways, streetlighting, fire station and equipment upgrades, and libraries.

Budget Task Force meetings begin with delegation night on Monday, January 17th at 7:00 pm at Cambridge Historic City Hall. Subsequent budget day public meetings are slated for Friday, January 21st and Thursday, January 27th at 9:00 am - 4:00pm. Thursday, February 3rd at 9:00 am - 4:00 pm is also scheduled for Budget Task Force deliberations should an additional day be required. Cambridge City Council will approve the 2011 Operating Budget and the 2011-2020 Capital Budget plans on Monday, March 7<sup>th</sup>.

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The draft budget is now online at:

[http://www.cambridge.ca/corporate\\_services/accounting\\_and\\_finance](http://www.cambridge.ca/corporate_services/accounting_and_finance)

**Contacts:**

Gary Price

Chair, Budget Task Force

[priceg@cambridge.ca](mailto:priceg@cambridge.ca)

Steven Fairweather,

Commissioner of Corporate Services and Treasurer

[fairweathers@cambridge.ca](mailto:fairweathers@cambridge.ca)

**About Cambridge**

The City of Cambridge is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. It is strategically located astride highway 401 in Southwestern Ontario, part of Canada's Technology Triangle. In 2010, the population reached over 130,000 people. With a multicultural mix and a strong foundation of support services, Cambridge has a diverse economic base with leading industries in advanced manufacturing, automotive, high technology, pharmaceutical, business and financial services and hospitality/retail. The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is an employer with a progressive work environment that offers the opportunity to provide service to the community through creativity and innovation, and with opportunities for career growth and advancement.

**About the Corporation of the City of Cambridge**

The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is a dynamic organization filled with dedicated people who deliver vital municipal services to you. Services that residents, businesses, visitors and people like your family and friends enjoy. We're a comprehensive team of professionals: engineers, financial specialists, skilled trades, administrative experts, customer service, communications - and the list goes on.

We're proud to be part of the systems that bring you the array of services that citizens in Cambridge need:

- Parks and recreation
- Activities and programs like pools, seniors' centres, community centres, arenas and other facilities
- Sports programs and all the needs related to playing fields, like indoor soccer, baseball diamonds and other amenities
- Events
- Farmers' Market
- Cemetery services
- Road programs
- Leaf pick up services
- Winter maintenance services
- Water and sewer services
- Fire, emergency and related services
- By-laws and enforcement
- Tax administration
- Licensing for businesses, lotteries, marriage, dogs, and other services like applications for birth, death and marriage certificates, notarizing or commissioning of documents
- Archival research
- Economic Development and business support programs
- Tourism support to share opportunities to showcase the festivals and help bring visitors in to support retail and other elements of the economy
- Administration of committees, steering groups and advisory groups
- Planning and development services
- Traffic and parking services
- Ensuring the best security, police, transit, garbage, water processing service, utilities, animal control are in place.
- Libraries and galleries
- Centre for the arts
- Accessibility matters
- Council services including things like supporting the up coming needs of our residents for the Oct 2010 municipal elections

It's a multitude of services and we continue to refine and review them to ensure we deliver the services in the most effective, efficient, and proactive ways. In 2009 the corporation began the service review process. This is a further check and balance system seeking improvements - like better technologies to simplify processes or realigning how the organization operates. The comprehensive review will help address the 2011 budget.

The City of Cambridge press room is located at [www.cambridge.ca/pressroom](http://www.cambridge.ca/pressroom)

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