



## Councillor Gary Crawford

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Communication – In response to the letter of direction from Mayor Tory – 2016 Budget

### **Re: 2016 Budget – Work Plan**

Thank you, Mayor Tory, for your Guidance letter on the development of the 2016 Budget.

During the course of the 2015 Budget process, the Budget Committee, Council members and City staff, along with you and your office, worked diligently to address a number of significant budgetary challenges noted in your letter of direction.

The Budget Committee has begun planning for the 2016 Budget process. With a lens on a multi-year process, the Committee is creating a work plan to ensure that we budget responsibly and accurately, invest in established priorities, and use our resources effectively to the benefit of families across the city.

The Budget Co-Chair and I have met with each of the Budget Committee members to begin a process of how to achieve identified goals.

We will continue to work closely with your office, the City Manager, Chief Financial Officer and Committee Chairs to look at best practices, to enhance transparency and accuracy in budget forecasting.

Moving forward, the Budget Committee members have identified specific areas to focus on for general review. These specialized reviews will allow the Budget Committee to carry out more in-depth analysis to identify areas that can be improved upon. Active, ongoing conversations with stakeholders are key to the work plan.

Areas of review are identified as, but not limited to:

- Staffing – consisting of: gapping and the delivery of services; lateral compensation; workforce, succession and vacancy planning and management
- Operations – best practices and performance metrics from start to finish
- Revenue and the integrity of our forecasts and estimates including our reserve planning

- Legislation – legislative opportunities, support the review of COTA and other statutory frameworks for potential amendments where they are identified as vehicles for income, savings or benefits to the City
- Real Estate – Investment portfolios, capital planning, revenue opportunities for reallocation of "freed up" monies to ensure inclusion of priorities such as affordable housing
- Energy and Environment – review to identify implementation issues, particularly where financial and other benefits are not being fully realized.

Specialized, detailed reviews are an ongoing process for the Budget Committee. They will commence immediately and complement the informal reviews in the Fall 2016 Budget Cycle.

We look forward to your input as we navigate this new work plan.

Sincerely,

Councillor Gary Crawford

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Crawford', written in a cursive style.

Budget Chair