

From: [Dynamic](#)
To: [Budget Committee](#)
Cc: [Councillor Morley](#)
Subject: Toronto 2023 Budget Consultation Submission
Date: January 16, 2023 9:36:22 PM

Hi there, I am a resident of Ward 3 Etobicoke-Lakeshore and would like to make a submission to the 2023 budget consultation. Note that I have copied in my local representative, Councillor Morley, for awareness of this submission, but do not require a response from her office.

- I am glad to finally see a property tax increase on the table. However, we're facing major shortfalls this year, and our services are already under-funded. I agree with Councillor Holyday's comments at tonight's town hall that property tax is the most streamlined way to collect revenue, and as such, **I would like to see a substantially larger property tax rate increase**. I would also like to suggest a **progressive property tax**, with rates increasing at higher valuations in the same way income taxes do. There is a good explainer here.
- Also on revenue: I used to work as an analyst for the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board back in the United States, where I handled municipal bond regulation. Municipal bonds are a powerful revenue tool for cities in the US. I recognize that Canadian cities have much tighter constraints on municipal bond issues - however, I think there may be an opening for Toronto to raise additional funds for capex with specialty bond issues direct to residents. Toronto is already doing this with the Green Debenture program. An analogous program for targeted capex spending - e.g. for affordable, non-profit, and co-op housing starts - would give residents another way to invest in the city's future and target their funding decisions appropriate to their values and interests while expanding the city's revenue options.
- It's clear that the ongoing pandemic has created several budgetary challenges and continues to do so. Reducing the spread of viral infections, particularly COVID - cases of which are now at the highest point since the Omicron surge and higher than at every previous peak - would have an immediate budgetary impact. In the short term, I would like to see **Toronto instate mask requirements for high-traffic, high-priority settings such as transit, grocery stores, and healthcare facilities** until COVID cases are brought to manageable levels, and automatically re-applied when cases pass a certain threshold. Longer term, I would like to see **improved building codes that account for air quality and mandate appropriate filtration rates** in all public spaces.
- I am glad to see Toronto is focused on delivering on our climate crisis objectives and am keen to see additional efforts on that front. I think there are additional cost *and* carbon savings to be found in expanding digital technology usage, encouraging remote work and increasing access to city services digitally, and would love to know more about the city's efforts to increase digital service provision.
- I would like to see the city work with local residents associations on community watch and mutual aid programs in lieu of expanding the police budget. Policing is the single largest line item in Toronto's budget, and while I recognize the need for an effective police force, I think we can do a lot more with a lot less. I know that my local residents association would be interested in this idea.

Thank you to all of the Councillors on the budget committee and for all of the staffers who have been working on this document, which is no small task.

In solidarity,

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Tim Ellis (he/him)

Board - Mimico Residents Association

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