

December 2, 2016

Dear Mayor Guthrie and Councillors,

Here are my comments on Guelph's 2017 Budget which I trust you will support at your Dec 7 meeting:

- 1) **Infrastructure Levy** – This levy should not be approved unless staff has provided a sustainable framework in which they, council and the public can assess infrastructure projects. If they have not created a framework founded on evidence-based economic, environmental, social and technical factors, council will continue to invest money in unnecessary projects (like the ones listed in #2 below) putting us further in the infrastructure deficit hole. Road pricing and parking technology¹ must be included as infrastructure projects to gain efficiencies in how the city delivers transportation services and negate the need for more hard infrastructure (see #3 below). Funds generated by the levy should be moved off of the tax supported budget and into a user fee budget (as has been done with the stormwater-management fee).
- 2) **Capital Projects** – Reject approval of \$25+ million funding for these projects currently in the 2017-2026 plan:
 - Emma-Earl Bridge² – instead put funds into higher priority trail project(s) identified in 2017 Trails Master Plan review.
 - New Niska Bridge³ – instead use funds to rehabilitate existing bridge or remove it entirely.
 - Speedvale widening⁴ (including Speedvale/Delhi intersection expansion) – instead invest funds into separated multi-use path on Speedvale, transit service and TDM program.
 - Wilson Street Parking Lot⁵ (and any other publicly owned parking structure proposals) – instead put funds into downtown TDM program, sidewalk improvement program, bike security and transit service.
- 3) **Reports** – With the province and City of Toronto moving forward with road pricing and automated vehicle projects, funds must be set aside in 2017 for staff to report on how accommodating these technologies will make Guelph a better place. In 2018, road pricing should be piloted in Guelph for huge savings to our road infrastructure and environment. Revenues can be earmarked to transit and active transportation infrastructure.

¹ <http://www.transportfutures.ca/tdm-road-pricing>

² <http://www.martincollier.ca/assets/Emma-Earl%20EA%20Comments%20-%20Nov%2015%202016.pdf>

³ <http://www.martincollier.ca/assets/Niska%20Presentation%20to%20Guelph%20Council%20-%20Dec%203%202015.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.martincollier.ca/assets/speedvale-ppt-deputation---martin-collier---july-20-2015.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.martincollier.ca/assets/Wilson%20Street%20Parking%20Lot%20-%20July%2028%202016.pdf>

Acting on comment #1 and #2 would allow council to pay for truly sustainable infrastructure and save Guelph citizens significant property tax increases in the next decade. Acting on comment #1 and #3 will get council, staff and the public thinking about 2017 to 2026 instead of being stuck in the 1950s.

A couple of other quick comments:

- **Stormwater-management Fee** (residential component) – I agree with this fee but not as a flat fee for residents. Council should provide the funds necessary for staff to implement a system that sees residents pay according to the amount of impervious surface they own (as is being done with business properties). Small homes/properties (usually located downtown) should not be subsidizing the monstrosities in the suburbs.
- **South End Recreation Centre (SERC)** – In order to save tax dollars and get this built quickly, the SERC should be built as a P3 in same way that several hospitals are being built in Ontario (i.e. design-build-operate-maintain).

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Martin

Martin Collier, MES (PI.)