

From: [Douro Locals](#)
To: [Martina Chait-Hartwig](#)
Cc: [Heather Watson](#); [Harold Nelson](#); [Tom Watt](#); [Adam Vervoort](#); [Ray Johnston](#)
Subject: 2025 Budget Deliberations
Date: Friday, February 14, 2025 12:59:56 PM

Hi Martina, Mayor and Councillors:

We have reviewed the 2025 budget and would like to enter into correspondence the following concerns, questions and revisions to be addressed in the next public budget meeting by Council (February 18th, 2025).

1) Please clarify the increase in funding to ORCA. With the changes to the Planning Act and the subsequent decrease in powers of the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority locally, we fully expected that the amount of tax dollars being sent to the organization should have decreased significantly – but instead they are increasing? We would like to see a full breakdown of services provided by ORCA so that this partnership can be re-evaluated to provide the best return on investment for our tax dollars. A large portion of our money being sent to ORCA could and should be diverted to our infrastructure needs. No approval of funding to ORCA should be confirmed until this is thoroughly and publicly addressed and re-evaluated.

2) We do not want to fund more staff at the constituency office. We would like to see this municipality take strong austerity measures in 2025 and future budgeting proposals, to lower taxation unless there is a strong correlation with an observable increase in services, which we have not seen. This would involve cutting costs on bureaucratic bloat. Our Government should not be permitted to create the inflation we are facing, and then make decisions to increase our taxes “because of inflation”. Cost savings need to be found within the structure of the organization rather than on the backs of the taxpayer.

With the Municipal Planner retiring from her position, we would also argue that it is not in the best interest of our community to continue this position while Peterborough County is still our planning authority. This is a redundancy that can be terminated before an employee is hired, and will go towards lowering our taxes, especially since the jobs being posted are being paid at rates higher than our municipal single-family incomes.

4) We agree, the microphones in the Chamber do need to be replaced, but please confirm when the existing microphones were installed so we can understand the cost breakdown of this investment?

5) We do not feel that any tax dollars should be proposed to increase Council’s “professional development” budget. Taxpayers elect council members to represent them, address their concerns and make decisions that best represent the community as a whole: not boost their personal resumes while in office. We would like to see “Professional Development” removed completely from the Council's budget, a good step in showing that our elected officials are also willing to personally contribute to budgeting and cost cutting for less financial waste of our hard-earned tax dollars, and take on their own personal Professional Development expenses going forward, as we all do.

Looking forward to some robust debate in the consideration of this review,

Douro-Dummer Local Taxpayers