VICTORIA, BC – This month, information sessions will be held across the community for taxpayers to learn more about the 2013-2015 budgets and the budget reduction measures proposed to limit the tax increase to 3.25% for the next three years. Public feedback on the budget and the proposed cost reduction strategies is encouraged and input will be collected at information sessions and online.

Public sessions will be led by Mayor Dean Fortin, and have been scheduled as follows:

- **Saturday, January 19, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.**  
  Central Library, Central Meeting Room – 735 Broughton Street

- **Monday, January 21, 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.**  
  City Hall, Antechamber – 1 Centennial Square

- **Saturday, January 26, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.**  
  Crystal Pool, Lower Auditorium – 2275 Quadra Street

- **Monday, January 28, 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**  
  James Bay New Horizons – 234 Menzies Street

- **Monday, January 28, 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.**  
  Vic West Community Centre – 521 Craigflower Road

- **Wednesday, January 30, 10 a.m. – Noon**  
  Fairfield Community Centre – 1335 Thurlow Road

In 2012, City Council decided to hold tax increases to 3.25% or below for 2013, 2014 and 2015. A 3.25% tax increase is the same tax increase applied in 2012 and is lower than previous years since 2000. City Council is considering several strategies to reduce annual operating expenditures in order to achieve 3.25%.

Background materials, surveys and information on proposed budget reductions strategies will be available at each session, and can be found at [www.victoria.ca/budget](http://www.victoria.ca/budget). Feedback will be collected until February 8.

**Backgrounder on proposed budget reduction strategies and 2013 Operating Budget highlights attached.**

**For More Information:**
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Proposed Budget Reduction Strategies

- Limit Mayor and Council salary increase to 0% in 2013
- Change to Council taxable remuneration
- Limit exempt staff salary increases to 0% in 2013
- Limit budget increases for library and police to 2% for 2013, 2014 and 2015
- Transfer 1.25% of 2013 tax increase to capital instead of 1.5% by removing “new” capital work proposed for 2013
- Partial automation of some parkades during slow periods
- Advertising in parkades, on parking machines, etc
- Shift from annuals to perennials in some garden beds
- Reduce City-led seasonal programming in Centennial Square
- Review the organizational structure to identify efficiencies and savings

2013 Operating Budget Highlights

- Focuses investment in priority areas
- $8.3 million towards maintaining Victoria’s 70 parks and green spaces
- $60 million in emergency services; fire and police
- $7.1 million in maintaining 250 km or roads, 30 km of bike lanes and sidewalks
- $1.1 million arts and cultural events and programming
- $250,000 for economic development to grow the local economy
- Introduces webcasting of Council meetings implementation of customer service improvements across the organization
- 16% of the operating budget is allocated to capital spending and reserves (in 2012 this was $25 million)