

# Budget and Ward 3 Updates



**David Pickles**  
Deputy Mayor, Regional Councillor - Ward 3

*After a lot of discussion on the Regional and City budgets, I believe we have struck the right balance between addressing the needs of residents and property taxes. As it stands now, the final average overall increase will be a low 1.8% – which is below the rate of inflation in spite of many community improvements to come this year.*

*We and staff have been working hard towards the approval of the Durham Live development as well as attracting new business, which will also help offset tax increases.*

*We will have further news for you soon.  
Visit [DavidPickles.com](http://DavidPickles.com) for other items of interest in the City.*

**Shaheen Butt**  
City Councillor - Ward 3



*I know we are all looking forward to breathing in the fresh spring air and seeing the flowers in bloom. Spring is a great time to clean our gardens and homes as well as the City parks and roads. Keeping our City clean and safe is very important to me and we have already started planning community clean ups for early spring. Since our last newsletter, Councillor Pickles and I have worked as a team to have the concerns and issues of residents resolved in a timely manner. At the City, we have been busy with many community engagements and welcomed many new residents and businesses to the City of Pickering.*

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## May is Responsible Pet Ownership Month

For the past six years, the City of Pickering has participated in Responsible Pet Ownership Month – an Ontario wide initiative to raise awareness about the need for pet owners to exercise their responsibility and be good pet owners. This coming May, the City of Pickering is hosting a variety of events (listed below) and we would love to see you at all of them!

- Rabies and Microchip Clinic – Saturday, May 5th and 12th
- 7th Annual Petaplooza (Pickering's Outdoor Pet Festival) – Saturday, May 12th
- Your City Event – Saturday, May 26th
- Whiskers & Wags Pet Adoption Day at the Pickering Town Centre – Saturday, June 2nd

## Keeping in Touch with You

We continue to reach out to you to hear your views through hard copy newsletters, eNewsletters, websites, email, attending community events, resident open houses, and coming door-to-door to many of your homes this year. Please feel free to contact us. Details above!



*Councillors Pickles and Butt with Carolyn Evans at the unveiling of the Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson plaque at the community centre in Claremont named in his honour.*

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## City of Pickering 2018 Budget Update

On February 26th, Pickering Council passed the 2018 budget with an increase of 2.49%. This is the lowest increase in 18 years. For the average residential taxpayer, with an assessed property value of \$500,000, the City share of the increase is approximately \$45.34 per year.

The property tax bill consists of three components: Durham Region (55.0%), School Board (14.8%) and Pickering (30.2%). For the average residential taxpayer, the blended overall increase is 1.80%.

The 2018 budget includes many positive initiatives for the City such as:

- Increase to low income seniors/persons with disabilities property tax grant from \$200 to \$300.
- Increase in staffing for firefighting to plan for the new fire hall to serve Seaton and Duffin Heights community.
- Pickering has now converted the large majority of its street lights to LED reducing our energy consumption and translating into savings for the taxpayer.

## Improving Recreation & Parks

We continue to work for residents to ensure that recreation and parks facilities, programs, and services play a vital role in our community and in the lives of our residents. The City has recently completed two important documents:

- The Recreation & Parks Master Plan to guide future City decisions regarding Pickering's recreational facilities, programs and parks service delivery and enhance the City's capacity to better provide, plan, facilitate, and deliver the recreational needs of the community.
- The Skateboard Park Strategy to develop a skateboard park network within the City of Pickering.

Following extensive community consultation and, after a comprehensive review of market demand, participation data, projected population growth and shifts in leisure interests and service delivery options, the Plan and Strategy were endorsed by Council on January 15, 2018. The reports can be found on the City's website at [pickering.ca/recreationandparks](http://pickering.ca/recreationandparks).

## Exciting New Grande Esplanade Project

This year, staff will begin the work to create a concept for development of 2.2 acres of prime land at the heart of our downtown. The vision starts with expansions to both City Hall and the Central Library. Next, The Esplanade South could be closed down to vehicular traffic, becoming a 'Grande Boulevard', exclusive to pedestrians and home to a long awaited arts centre. Next to the arts centre, a new combined Seniors & Youth Centre and a residential tower will rise.

## New Youth & Seniors' Centre

It is envisioned to be approximately 45,650 square feet and will feature multi-purpose activity rooms, seniors game room; computer room and boardroom; youth multimedia and games rooms; full size gymnasium; visitors reception/lounge; and staff offices. Staff will pursue a private project partnership for the construction of this \$26.5 million community centre in the heart of downtown.

## Your Tax Dollars at Work

Here are a few noteworthy examples of the newly approved capital projects in the 2018 City budget:

- Centennial Park – Baseball Diamond/Structures Rebuild
- Duffin Heights Neighbourhood Park Construction (Dersan Street & Tillings Road)
- Seaton Neighbourhood Park Construction
- Old Brock Road – Sidewalk Reconstruction (from Joseph St. to Lane St.)
- Michell Bridge Rehabilitation (Seventh Concession Road)
- Altona Bridge Replacement (Uxbridge-Pickering Town Line)
- Whitevale Master Drainage Plan Implementation (Design)
- Asphalt Resurfacing (Geta Circle & Livingston St.)
- New downtown Seniors & Youth Centre
- Frenchman's Bay West Park Master Plan Implementation
- New Village Green (Usman Road)
- Twyn Rivers Drive (Woodview Avenue & Ashwood Gate)



Mayor Ryan and Councillors Pickles and Butt working on the City's operating and capital budgets.

## Affordable and Seniors' Housing

In 2016, Region of Durham Council established the Affordable and Seniors' Housing Task Force with Councillor Pickles as Vice-Chair to address the need for more affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income households, and to address the need for more housing choices for Durham seniors.

The Task Force identified that the Region, municipalities, and other partners have important roles to play in supporting the creation and maintenance of affordable rental and seniors' housing. The Task Force Report includes 34 recommendations that highlight the need for collective action and was approved in December 2017, noting: "Municipalities are catalysts and facilitators of change. They track and identify community needs and demographic shifts. They are responsible for creating and implementing public policy, and for carrying out land use planning and servicing... [they] make important on-the-ground decisions about implementing innovative planning provisions, including density bonusing, legal second units and inclusionary zoning provisions."

Councillor Pickles, as the Chair of Health and Social Services, and Councillor Butt will be working with residents, Councils, and staff to monitor the ongoing implementation of the recommendations to ensure that we continue to enable, facilitate, and support the creation of affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income households. We also continue to identify opportunities to support the creation of more housing choices for our seniors.

For those who may be interested, you can view the Task Force Report on the Durham of Region website ([durham.ca](http://durham.ca)) under 'Business Resources'.



Councillors Pickles and Butt learn the finer points of racquetball from Susan Philips and Michael Aucoin of Durham Region Racquetball. To learn more about their organization, visit [Facebook.com/durhamregionracquetball](https://www.facebook.com/durhamregionracquetball)

## Where do our Regional tax dollars go?

