

CUPE Local 30

Presentation on 2006 Budget



Our work makes our City work!





Local 30

#101 - 10654 - 101 Street,
Edmonton, Alberta T5H 2S1
Tel: (780) 426-6050
Fax: (780) 425-7753

Presentation to City of Edmonton Pre-budget Public Forum by CUPE Local 30 November 24, 2005

Presented by Alex Grimaldi, President

Members of Council, Mayor Mandel, thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation regarding the 2006 Proposed Budget. We would like to address the opportunities and challenges from the view point of CUPE members who live in this community and work daily providing essential public services.

Challenges - Funding Infrastructure and Service Delivery

Access to new infrastructure funding is clearly critical to municipalities across the country in their efforts to rebuild aging infrastructure and respond to the requirements of continued growth.

While new sources of infrastructure funding are welcome – including the GST rebate, the Alberta Infrastructure Program and the Federal gas tax, the funding available only begins to address the most urgent needs.

With respect to the Federal Budget initiatives, the allocations are significantly less than what our cities need. A massive re-investment estimated at approximately \$60 billion, including “tens of billions” for water treatment, is needed from all levels of government.

At the provincial government level, CUPE members share with Albertans serious concerns about a budget process that year after year, fails to build in long-term commitment and plans for full infrastructure renewal – despite surpluses that are considered to be phenomenal and unprecedented.

Federal and Alberta government budgets that radically underestimate budget surpluses short change all communities in their efforts to access the levels of funding needed to rebuild and expand infrastructure and services essential to maintaining and improving life in our communities.

In the absence of adequate infrastructure funding, the risk is greatly increased that the funds available will be used as seed money for privatization and P3's – which would result in serious erosion of public accountability and control.

New infrastructure investment is only one side of the coin. The other side is ensuring stable funding to operate the required expansion of public services.

This should come as no surprise, but it is a major challenge when the ratio of City staff to citizens has declined from 15.6 FTE's per 1,000 population in 1993 to 14.2 FTE's in 2005, a decline of 9%.¹

We can only expect efficiencies to cover off a certain amount of that decline, the fact still remains that there are more streets to clean, more grass to cut and more garbage to pickup.

Our City requires more full-time equivalencies (FTE's) to insure that services are provided adequately throughout. This Budget is a start in addressing the short-fall.

The proposed budget includes new investment in waste management, roads and drainage services. The importance of these allocations, and future needs are evident to CUPE members working in these, and a number of other areas of City services.

¹ [2006 Context Report – Presentation to City Council May 17, 2005 \(attachment 1\) Pg.9.](#)

The City has the opportunity to ensure that all City workers are treated fairly and equitably. The City currently employs increasing numbers of workers in provisional positions². Many of these workers have been employed in consecutive provisional and 10 month positions for more than 10 years but without credit towards pension or access to the benefits available for other City workers. This issue is a priority concern both for negotiations and for budget planning to ensure fair treatment of all City employees.

The work of CUPE members is key to the quality of services provided – as such, good working conditions, appropriate staffing levels and effective workplace communication are critical to ensuring that Edmonton is a great city in which to live and work.

CUPE will continue to work actively in Edmonton, across Alberta and in Canada to defend and advance high quality, accountable, public services for our communities. As City workers and community members, we are committed to building a strong and vibrant future for the services we provide.

Thank you for the opportunity to make this presentation.

² Between June 2002 and June 2005 the number of provisional (summer) employees increased from 404 to 446 (an increase of 11%). Between December 2002 and December 2005 the number of (winter) provisional employees increased from 235 to 250 (an increase of 6%).