

News Media Release

Councillor Van Meerbergen's prosperity plan calls for \$104.6 million in spending, taxation and borrowing cuts to the city budget, as he sets a goal of reducing property taxes by \$1000 per household by 2006.

Jan. 6, 2005

Today, Ward 7 Councillor Paul Van Meerbergen called for a reduction in the 2005 city budget of \$104.6 million in spending, taxation and borrowing.

If pursued by City Council, this prosperity plan will mean a reduction of 24% in property taxes, or about \$650 for the average London household.

Van Meerbergen said today: "We emphatically cannot afford piling up these massive tax increases year in and year out. In fact, the rollback must begin immediately if Londoners are to survive their own local government."

In addition, Van Meerbergen set of a goal to reduce property taxation by an average \$1000 per household by 2006. Londoners currently pay on average \$3100 in combined municipal taxation each year (including the water tax, sewer surtax tax and education taxes on property).

He said today: "The tax and spend era at city hall must turn into a new era of prosperity through reduced taxation. No more baby steps. We need a great leap forward if the city is not to fall into bankruptcy in the next few years, and I am talking about bankrupt seniors and working people!"

Councillor Van Meerbergen presented the following prosperity plan for this year's city budget:

- 1) \$39.228 million in reductions to the operating budget;
- 2) \$33.054 million in reduced current-year tax contributions to "non-obligatory" operating and capital reserve funds, and
- 3) \$32.317 million in reductions to the capital budget, while preserving the most important fire, police, economic development, sanitary and roads expenditures.

For specifics see attachments.

For more information, contact Mr. Van Meerbergen at 641-6515, or email him at pvanmeer@london.ca.