



CITY OF WATERLOO

COMMUNITY
FINANCIAL
REPORT

two thousand and

12

MAYOR'S MESSAGE
WATERLOO CITY COUNCIL
OUR VISION & VALUES
SUSTAINABILITY & OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
HEALTHY & SAFE COMMUNITY
VIBRANT NEIGHBOURHOODS
GETTING AROUND
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2012 FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

CITY OF WATERLOO

**COMMUNITY
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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

“Globalization makes it more important than ever to maintain and enhance our quality of life so we are an attractive place for foreign investment, startups and a place where families are comfortable planting roots and building a future. As we work towards achieving our vision of becoming a dynamic, beautiful and global city, we will continue to ensure we maintain a balanced, fiscally responsible outlook on our growing community.”




A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brenda Halloran". The signature is fluid and cursive.

City of Waterloo Mayor Brenda Halloran




WATERLOO CITY COUNCIL 2010 - 2014




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In 2029, the City of Waterloo has enhanced its friendly feel, welcoming and accommodating a **diversity** of people. Waterloo is a caring community where people support each other; a **green** city with healthy green spaces, land, water and clean air; an economic leader with a strong diverse economy; a community of **vibrant** neighbourhoods; a learning community with strong ties to its schools, universities and college; an exciting city with abundant recreation, leisure, **arts** and cultural **opportunities**; and a city that is accessible to all. Waterloo is a better place to live, work and play than ever.

CITY OF WATERLOO

VISION & VALUES

SERVICE
EXCELLENCE

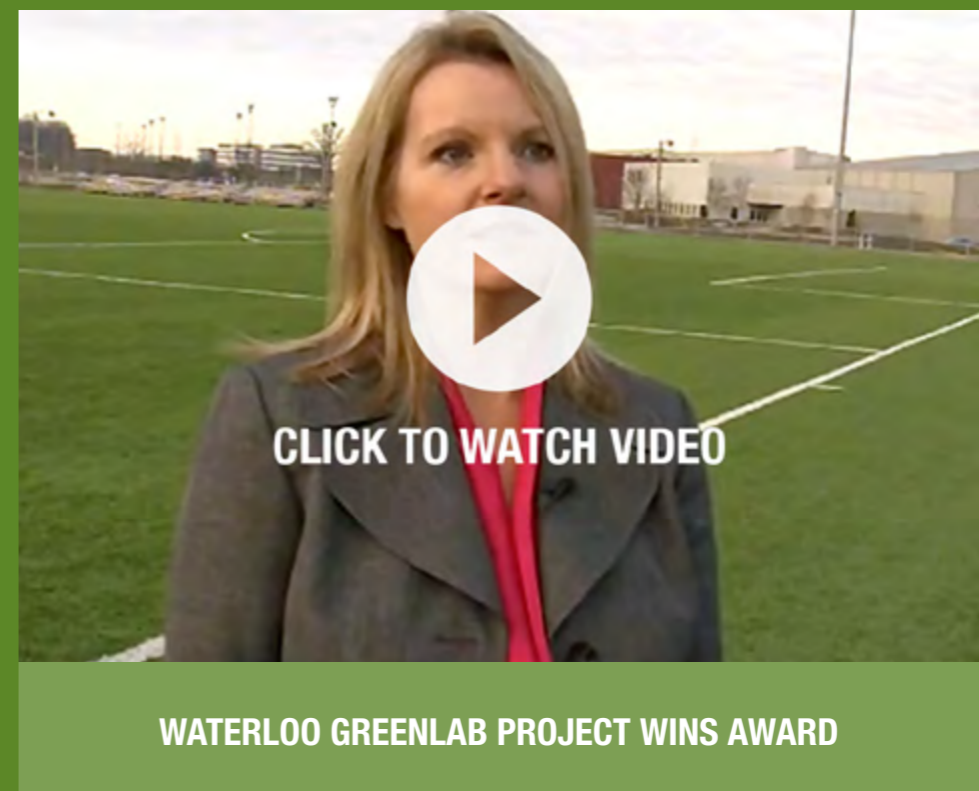
PERSONAL
LEADERSHIP

EFFECTIVE
COMMUNICATION

HEALTHY
WORKPLACE

SUSTAINABILITY & OUR LIVING ENVIRONMENT

We will continue to value our natural surroundings and take the necessary actions to maintain and enhance the quality of our living environment.



[To view the video on our youtube page, please click here.](#)

QUICK FACT LINKS



[STORMWATER](#)



[URBAN DESIGN AWARDS](#)



[ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGY](#)



[CLIMATE ACTION WR](#)



[ENVIRONMENTAL TIPS](#)

Acting today, but considering tomorrow.

Our environment and how we care for it is the most highly regarded characteristic of our city.

That's why we've introduced a number of projects and initiatives to support a sustainable and living environment.

Whether it's a new credit program for property owners to encourage stormwater management practices, building new facilities to energy efficient (LEED) standards, recognizing local developments for their outstanding urban design, or planting thousands of trees with the help of local community groups, we are committed to leaving an environmentally-responsible legacy for future generations.

Green energy

The City of Waterloo's newest recreation facility, the John M. Harper Branch Library & Stork Family YMCA was awarded a silver level certification under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Canada for New Construction.

Thanks to a \$31,290 grant awarded by the Region of Waterloo's Community Environmental Fund, the City of Waterloo undertook a significant environmental enhancement project to protect and enhance 22 acres of land within the Laurel Creek corridor. With the help of different Waterloo community groups, over 2,000 native trees and shrubs were planted in 2012.

31 + **22** =

THOUSAND DOLLAR GRANT ACRES OF LAND

*Thanks to the Region of Waterloo's Community Environmental Fund.


2000
NATIVE TREES PLANTED



JOHN M. HARPER BRANCH LIBRARY & STORK FAMILY YMCA

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Waterloo residents want to be informed, connected and engaged in everything the city does. Maintaining channels of respectful communication is critical.



FIRST EVER TWITTER TOWN HALL - MAY, 2012

[To view the video on our youtube page, please click here.](#)

QUICK FACT LINKS



[PINGSTREET APP](#)



[CITY OF WATERLOO BLOG](#)



[SOCIAL MEDIA](#)



[WEIBO - CHINESE BLOG](#)



[HAVE YOUR SAY](#)

Reaching out and creating dialogue.

Technology and communications are evolving at an ever-increasing rate.

And with this evolution comes a public appetite for more information delivered in a convenient and timely way. [Engaging our citizens](#) is critical as we move forward. We need to tell the community not only what we are doing, but more importantly, why we are doing it. We also need to provide as many two-way communications channels as possible so the city maintains and grows a connection with residents.

[The city's social media](#) is a popular means for citizens to stay connected with what is happening in our community.

Not only does this medium provide up to date information, it allows our residents an opportunity to connect with staff as well as each other over any number of issues that are important.

Waterloo is an important player on the global stage, in 2012 Mayor Brenda Halloran was the first Canadian mayor to blog on China's Weibo site. Through this blog, she reaches out to an important community in China, as well as a cultural community here in Waterloo.



WATERLOO.CA - BUILT FOR EVERYONE AND EVERY PLATFORM

HEALTHY & SAFE COMMUNITY

The health and safety of our residents is a priority and with that comes an expectation that we provide clean water, adequate snow removal, good roads, fire protection and a focus on the importance of culture and healthy living that extends to how we move around this great city.



CITY OF WATERLOO'S PREMIER SPORTS COMPLEX

[To view the video on our youtube page, please click here.](#)

QUICK FACT LINKS



[AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY](#)



[CULTURE IN WATERLOO](#)



[WE ARE BICYCLE FRIENDLY](#)



[WATERLOO SKATEPARK](#)



[GREAT PUBLIC SPACES](#)

Be healthy, safe and inclusive.

By 2031, the population of Waterloo is expected to reach over 150,000 people, a 15% increase in population growth.

It is important that as the city grows, it does so in a way that supports a healthy and vibrant way of living. This includes everything from designing roads that are inclusive to all means of transportation, and not just cars, to supporting a rapid transit system that will assist in moving our residents, including over 40,000 student residents across our region.

The city has a keen focus on developing a culture that recognizes our diversity and provides much in terms of facilities such as The Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, the Waterloo Public Square, festivals such as Buskers and Open Streets and over 1,700 acres of green parkland and 150 km of trails throughout the city.

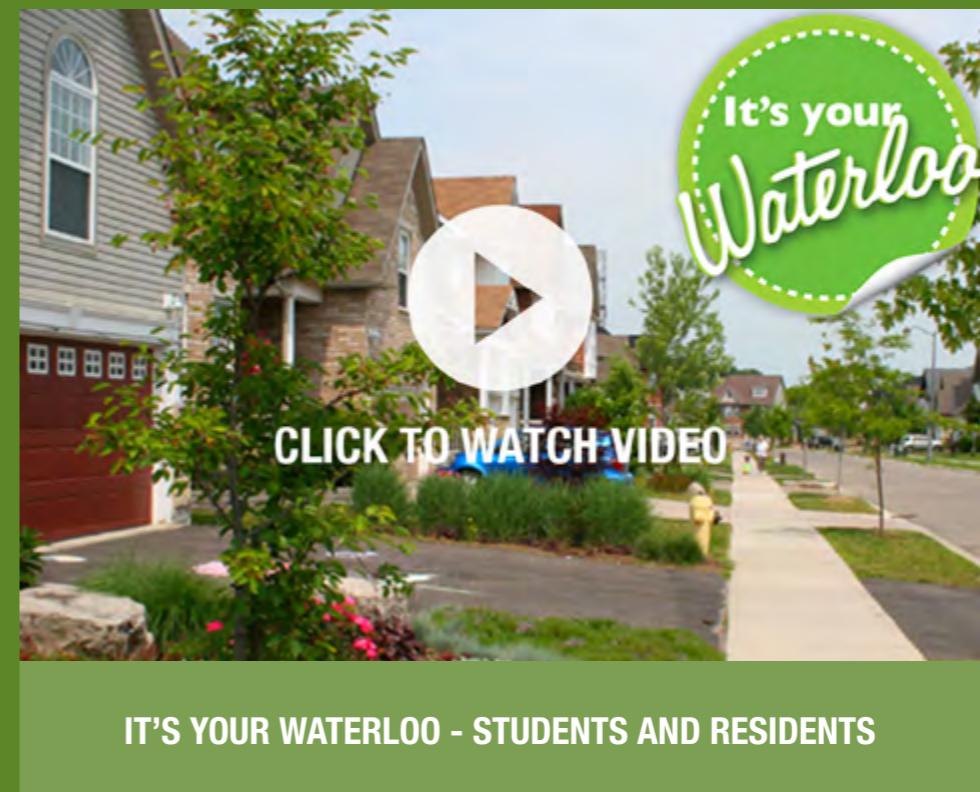
Like many municipalities in Canada, our infrastructure is ailing and there is a need to upgrade and develop as we grow. Waterloo will continue to address our infrastructure deficit with a focus on the corridors that are expected to intensify in the future.



WATERLOO PUBLIC SQUARE - KING STREET AND WILLIS WAY

VIBRANT NEIGHBOURHOODS

Our neighbourhoods are a reflection of who we are. Encouraging development and involvement in our neighbourhoods is a good thing and will contribute to the vibrancy of Waterloo.



[To view the video on our youtube page, please click here.](#)

QUICK FACT LINKS



[OPEN STREETS](#)



[NEIGHBOURHOOD MATCHING PROGRAM](#)



[COMMUNITY GARDENS](#)



[NORTHDALE](#)



[WATERLOO EARTH DAY](#)

Neighbourhoods are where we live and where things happen at a grass roots level.

Vibrant neighbourhoods is a relatively recent strategic pillar for the City of Waterloo, but one that impacts us all, whether you live in a high rise or the suburbs.

We have many active neighbourhood associations that bring residents together to get things done. We see that each year when neighbours roll up their sleeves and work with the city and community partners to build new playgrounds for their kids to enjoy.

The Neighbourhood Matching Program was created to ensure there will be more citizen-led projects aimed at improving the quality of life in our neighbourhoods now and into the future.

Located near the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, the Northdale neighbourhood is home to both long-term residents and to students, with challenges on both sides of the fence. The status quo is not an option for the people who live there, which is why the Northdale land use and community improvement plan exists today.

Smarter Cities Challenge

CLICK TO WATCH VIDEO

IBM philanthropic initiative helps the City of Waterloo

The image is a video thumbnail for the Smarter Cities Challenge. It features a collage of images: a green forest, a city skyline with a prominent skyscraper, and a grid of orange and yellow squares. A large play button icon is overlaid on the right side. The text "Smarter Cities Challenge" is prominently displayed in bold black letters. Below it, "CLICK TO WATCH VIDEO" is written in a smaller font. At the bottom, a dark green banner contains the text "IBM philanthropic initiative helps the City of Waterloo" in white.

IBM Northdale neighbourhood receives IBM Smarter Cities Challenge grant.

Recently, the city had the honour to receive an IBM Smarter Cities Challenge grant. The program, which is IBM's single largest philanthropic initiative, assigns a team of six top IBM experts to a winning city to study a key issue identified by the city's leadership team. IBM will help Waterloo reposition the image of Northdale to attract the kind of investment that builds on the vision that is the foundation of the planning something that was outside of the scope of the Northdale plan, but which is important to its success.

GETTING AROUND

With more intensification and a strong desire to evolve to a more sustainable lifestyle, there are more walkers and cyclists than ever before. These modes of transportation are not just recreational anymore – they've become a big part of how we get around.



[To view this video on youtube, please click here.](#)

QUICK FACT LINKS



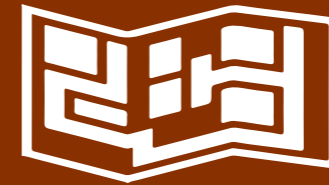
[RAPID TRANSIT](#)



[TRAILS AND BIKE LANES](#)



[DAVENPORT ROAD](#)



[TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN](#)



[INTERACTIVE CITY MAP](#)

What does “Getting Around” mean to you?

“Getting around” means many things to many people.

That’s why a central objective of this pillar is to support all forms of transportation. And this is where the city’s transportation master plan enters the picture with its focus on getting people to leave their cars at home and opt to walk, ride a bike or take a bus.

While the transportation master plan recognizes the significance of the automobile in both the existing and future system, the development of a multi-modal system of walking, cycling and transit will provide the transportation balance we need.

This plan also recognizes the movement of goods and freight, which will continue to require a reliable road network to remain economically competitive.

The overarching direction for our future transportation system will be through complete streets - roads that are designed to safely accommodate cars, bicyclists, pedestrians, wheelchairs and transit users.

Useful links:

www.regionofwaterloo.ca

www.rapidtransit.regionofwaterloo.ca

www.waterloo.ca



RAPID TRANSIT - ARTIST'S RENDERING OF UPTOWN WATERLOO

City of Waterloo staff are working closely with the Region of Waterloo to develop a rapid transit route that will link the north end of Waterloo to downtown Cambridge, ON. when it is complete.

ECONOMIC VITALITY

Waterloo's thriving economy continues to evolve and grow in many sectors. We are a diverse community that offers a high quality of life, strong tradition of industry, entrepreneurship and we are internationally recognized in the fields of research, science, technology and innovation.

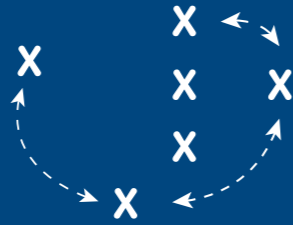


ACCELERATOR CENTRE - WATERLOO

QUICK FACT LINKS



[STRATEGIC PLAN](#)



[ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY](#)



[ECONOMIC VITALITY REPORT](#)



[EMPLOYMENT LAND STRATEGY](#)

waterloo

[WE ARE WATERLOO](#)

Waterloo is one of Canada's economic development success stories.

“WE ARE WATERLOO” ...

Collaboration and innovation are the cornerstones of our successes.

Known globally as an Intelligent Community, we are home to two dynamic universities, one college and a diverse economic base that continues to grow and evolve. Collaboration and innovation are the cornerstones of our successes, and we will capitalize upon them as we face the future head on with new approaches and solutions to emerging challenges.

Guiding our economic development team on this journey are our corporate strategic plan (includes economic vitality as one of its six pillars), our economic development strategy and our economic vitality report.

The City of Waterloo works to facilitate a positive local business environment by focusing on attraction, expansion and retention. Our corporate priorities include:

- Encouraging business retention and expansion
- Facilitating development projects
- Fostering a positive business environment
- Managing the city's industrial land inventory
- Marketing the city to key stakeholders
- Providing economic and community information

1.5

MILLION

sq. ft. of office space constructed in 5 yrs.



50

PLACES

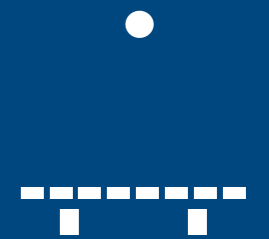
Waterloo ranks in the Top 50 Places to live in Canada.



18

PERCENT

of our workforce in 2011 was in manufacturing.



2013

OPENING

80,000 sq. ft. medical building at “The Boardwalk.”

CFO'S MESSAGE



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Patel'.

Keshwer Patel, Chief Financial Officer, City of Waterloo



It is my pleasure to present a clear and comprehensive summary of the financial operations of the City of Waterloo for the year ended December 31, 2012. These results demonstrate the city's commitment to fiscal responsibility and delivery of excellent service to our residents.



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Financial highlights are included on the following pages but I would like to draw attention specifically to the improvements we have made in the area of debt and reserve levels. The increased financial capacity created from these improved levels will be especially important in implementation of infrastructure reinvestment over the next decade as defined in the city's 10-year capital budget. The implementation of the region's rapid transit system and further intensification along the route will also drive immense change in the way the city does business and the infrastructure needed to succeed.

CONTINUED
ASSESSMENT GROWTH

REVENUE EXCEEDED
BUDGET

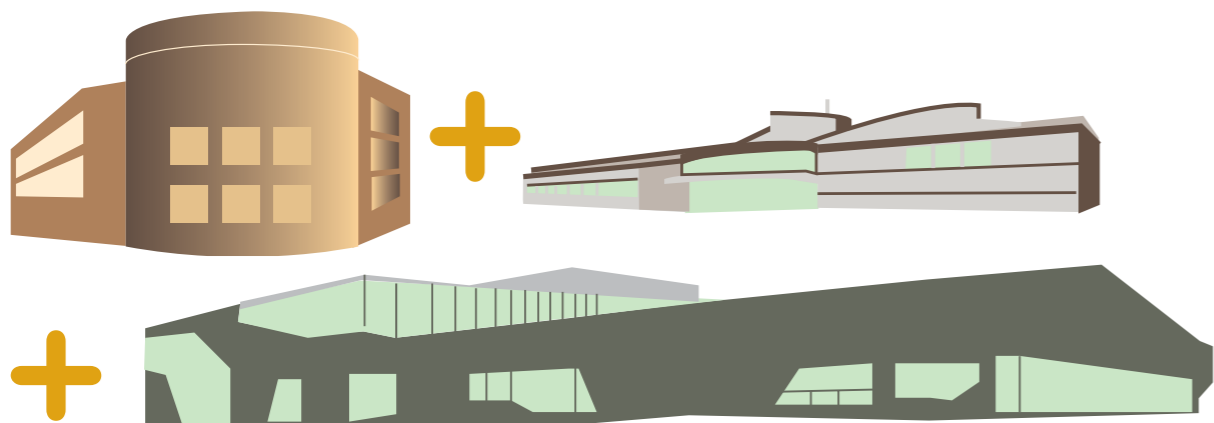
RESERVE LEVEL
INCREASE

PER CAPITA
DEBT DECREASES

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Assessment growth continues to be strong, averaging close to 2% for the past five years. Assessment growth is associated with the addition of new properties to the city's tax role. It is not related to the increase in the value of a tax payer's property. Increases in market value assessment will not result in any new tax revenue overall, but a redistribution of the current tax burden.

CONTINUED
ASSESSMENT GROWTH

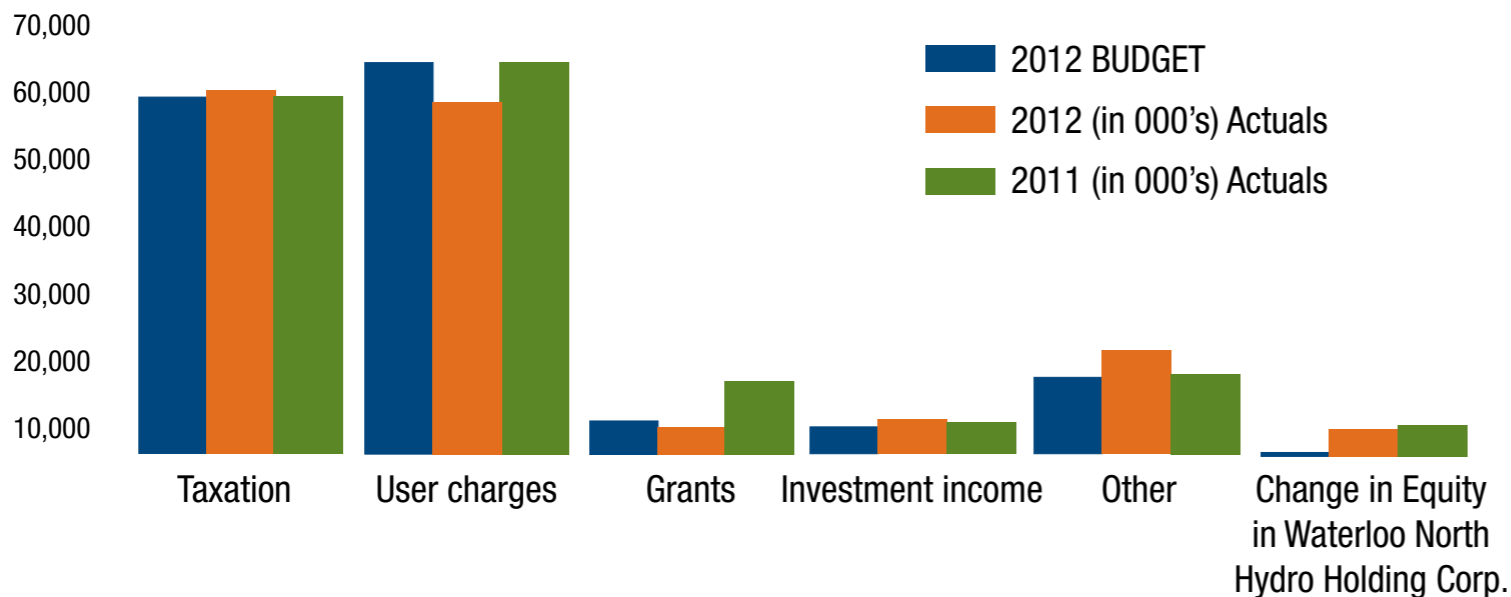


FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The city's total revenue exceeded budget in several areas while expenditures were within budget and resulted in an operating budget surplus of \$3.1 million. These surplus funds have been transferred to reserves for future operating and capital expenditures such as upgrades to city infrastructure including buildings, roads and sewer systems.

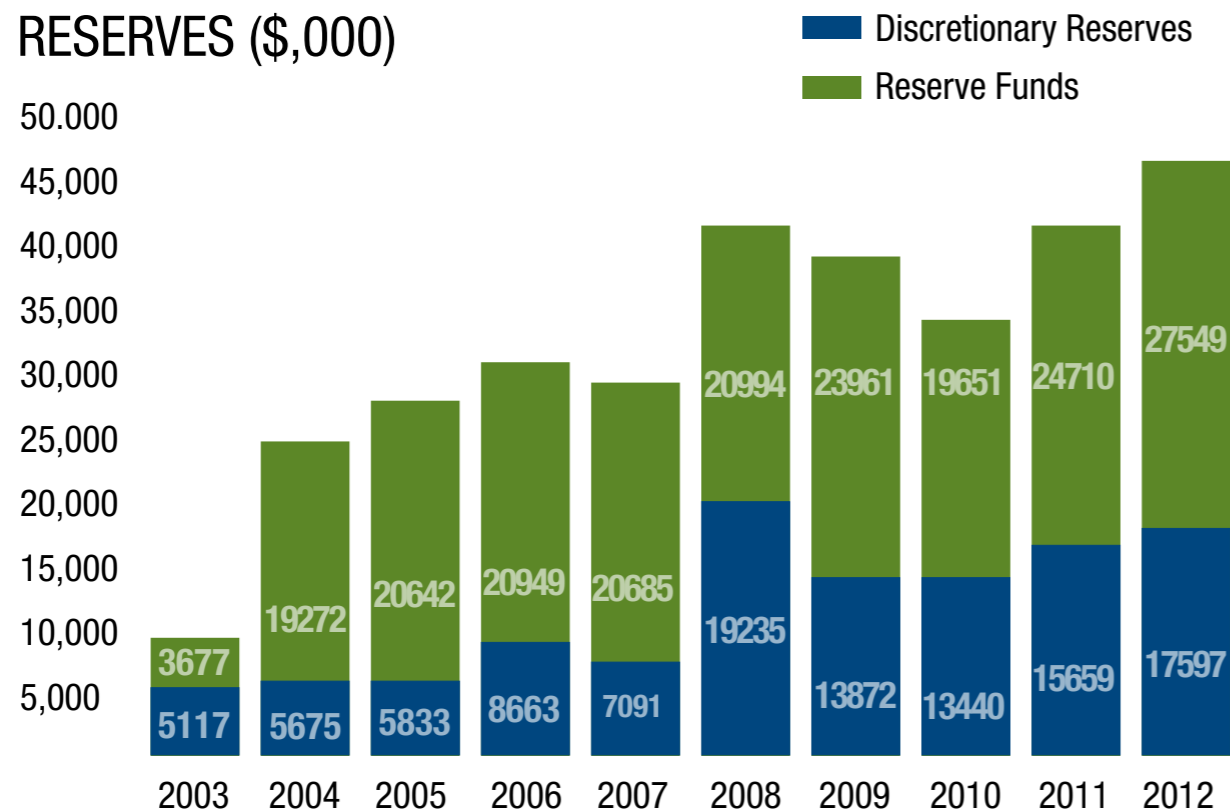
REVENUE EXCEEDED BUDGET

TOTAL REVENUES (\$,000)



FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Reserve levels have grown over the last ten years. The largest contribution in 2012 was a \$3 million increase to the tax rate stabilization reserve for the 2012 budget surplus. It is anticipated that reserve and reserve funds will decline, as the city continues to implement the planned capital replacement programs to address the infrastructure deficit.



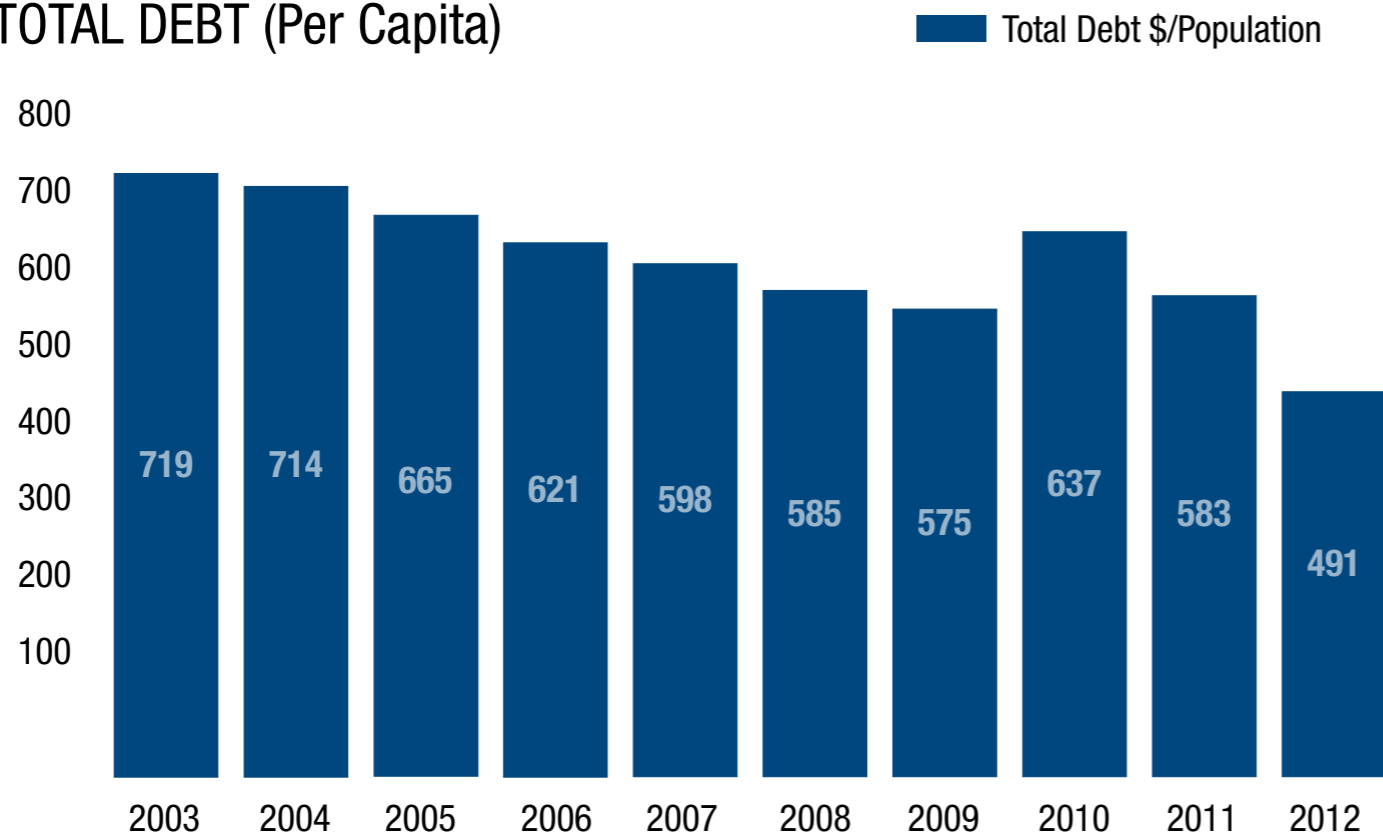
RESERVE LEVEL INCREASE

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

The city has implemented strong controls on the issuance of new debt and therefore, per capita debt has decreased to a ten-year low after a small spike from development-charge-funded debt issued in 2010.

This trend is expected to continue over the next few years. As of December 31, 2012, \$63.3 million of debt remains outstanding.

TOTAL DEBT (Per Capita)



PER CAPITA DEBT DECREASES

2012 Tax Increase

CITY OF WATERLOO

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Why do taxes increase every year?

The overall tax increase in 2012 was 2.16% or 1.09% after the stormwater phase-in. Why do taxes increase every year? The city is growing, with the region outpacing the forecasted provincial growth rate of 1.8%. With this growth comes new developments and the new requirements for new infrastructure such as roads, sewer lines, stormwater requirements and protective services such as fire and bylaw services. This growth requires additional funding that comes through taxation. In addition, the costs of supplies used to build new infrastructure increases year by year with the inflation rate. This increase in costs is also reflected in the increase in taxation. As well, aging infrastructure is continually in need of repair, upgrades and replacement. All of these service costs are paid for through tax dollars.

Meeting today's challenges with an eye to the future.

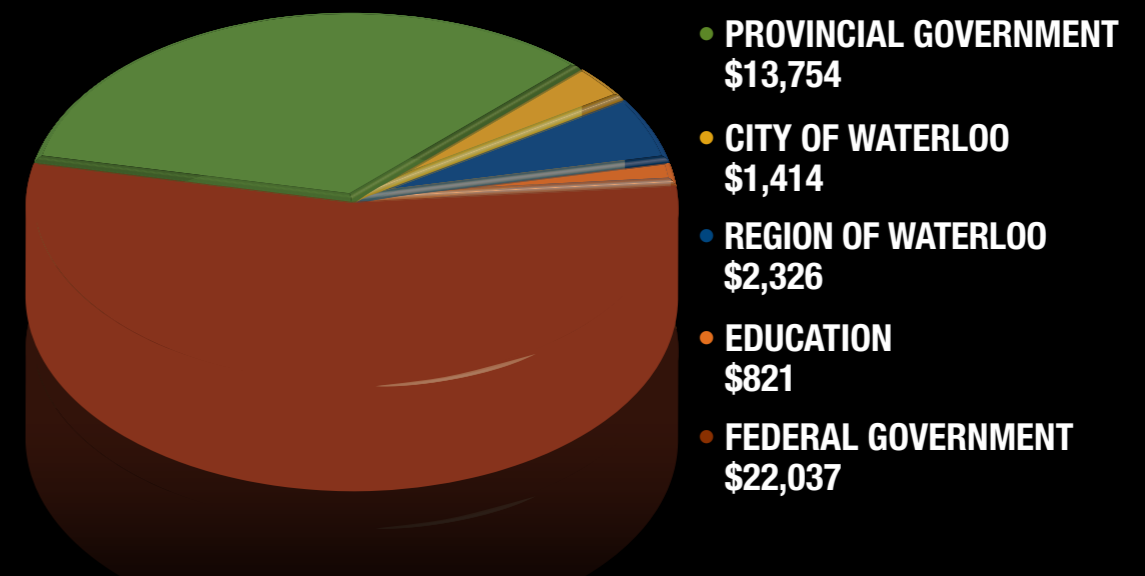
We have made tough choices on spending and for this reason, our tax increases are among the lowest, compared to neighbouring municipalities, increasing only 1.6 per cent in 2012 and 2013 combined, after taking the stormwater phase-in to a user fee system into account.

Our municipal debt load has been on a steady decline for the past three years. In 2010, our debt stood at \$78 million; in 2011 it decreased to \$70 million; and at the end of last year, it was \$63 million. This decline is due in part to the tenacity and smart choices this council and staff make every day, as well as our dedication to living within our means.

We will continue to maintain modest tax rates that are fair and provide services at the level residents have come to expect.

Where do my tax dollars go?

The City of Waterloo receives 3½ cents, on average, for every tax dollar you pay to the various levels of government. With that, we deliver city services you depend on, including snow clearing, leaf pickup, recreational programs, fire services and road maintenance, among many others.



*Based on the average Waterloo family with an income of \$95,776 and who pays \$40,352 in taxes.

Thank you for viewing our interactive community and financial report.

CITY OF WATERLOO

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

Click below to view our detailed 2012 Report and Summary Analysis of the Financial Statements

Click below to view our detailed 2012 Financial Statements



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www.waterloo.ca

