

Infrastructure Needs

One strategy

Municipal Constant

The Ratepayer

History

- More non-competitive operating grants
- Non financial assistance
- Limited reliance on tax levy for infrastructure
- Changes in 1995 and 1998
- Local Service Realignment
- Simpler assessment and taxation system
- Decrease in operating support from Province

New Realities

- If something is important you will find a way to pay for it
- More autonomy when making program decisions
- More reliance on tax levy

Capital Planning

- Focus on the asset to come
- Based on asset life cycle
- Demonstrates the need for increased assessment

Operating Budget

- Annual budget
- Danger to shelve projects if focus too limited
- *Municipal Act* support a five year budget
- Choices can be examined with a broader focus
- Politically motivated vs. reality of activities
- Danger to compound errors of past

Hastings Highlands Example

- Capital plan and five year operating budget established for the 2009 year
- Example - \$3,750,000 vs. 100,000
- Tax levy from \$4 million to \$5 million
- Responsible debt as a financing tool
- Remember the one constant.....

Selling the Plan

- Smoke, mirrors and percentages
- ‘Warm’ public reception
- Reaffirming path established by plan
- Common script focusing on plan
- Commitment to moving forward
- Attending ratepayer associations
- Media relations, newsletter
- Change how tax levy changes are reported

Important Points

- Plain English
- Repeating key points
- Non-financial illustrations
- Updating plan and performance on at least an annual basis

Change in Culture

- From Staff – living within appropriate means
- From Council – more focus on future years
- From Ratepayers – supportive of the new normal – eventually

- All reflective of change in financial relationship with Province

Initial results

- Growth in reserves - \$1.4 to \$4 million in 3 yrs
- Reserves can now be used as internal funding
- Departmental spending under budget
 - Work being completed
 - No significant increase in operating budgets
 - Reinvestment of operating surplus into capital needs
- More streamlined budget process

Questions?