



Castlegar, British Columbia, October 21, 2017 – The City of Castlegar is planning for the 2018 budget process and is encouraging residents to *have their say* by using a new, interactive online budgeting tool.

“Each year, we encourage residents to provide feedback on how their tax dollars are spent,” says Mayor Lawrence Chernoff. “As Council continues to focus on Community Engagement as a key priority, this public budget consultation process will give residents more opportunity to shape the 2018 budget.”

This year the City has expanded its public engagement platform by launching a new, online budget tool called Citizen Budget. The interactive tool will be launched October 26, 2017 at a public budget meeting and will allow residents to provide valuable input on how they would like to spend their tax dollars related to services and programs in our community.

Members of Council and staff will be showcasing this new tool at the **Community Forum, 445 13th Avenue, on Thursday, October 26, 2017 from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.** Residents who use the online tool at the public budget meeting will be entered into a draw to win a gift basket filled with products from local area vendors.

The *Citizen Budget* tool allows residents to use their own property assessments to see how much they currently pay for City Services. By using the calculation tool, they can increase, decrease or maintain service levels in each area and see what impact it has on their property taxes.

When they are satisfied with their budget choices, residents can submit their feedback and share it on a variety of social networks. The results will be collected from October 26 to November 19 and inform Council on how residents feel about how their tax dollars are being spent.

A link to the *Citizen Budget* online budget tool can be found on the City's website at www.castlegar.ca or by going directly to <http://castlegar.citizenbudget.com/>

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