

Examining tax rates

Kudos to Messrs. Martin (June 27), Rentsch (July 6 and July 20) and Taylor (July 20) for raising the issue of this year's very high property tax increase.

There is an important point made by Mr. Taylor that deserves further emphasis.

Our property tax actually consists of three separate taxes; the York Region tax rate which is set by York Regional Council, the Educational tax rate which is set by the province, and the Municipal tax rate which is set by Township Council. Combining these three establishes the rate that is applied to your property's assessed value to determine the property tax that you pay each year.

What becomes apparent is that, when faced with the windfall increase provided by the MPAC property value reassessment this year, both the Province and York Region did the responsible thing and reduced their tax rates to partially offset the effect of this increase.

In very stark contrast, the Township of King did the opposite. It increased the municipal tax rate (the only rate that it controls) by 10%! This offset the combined provincial and regional tax reductions, resulting in a zero increase in the overall rate, so someone taking only a casual look at their tax notice might just blame the reassessment. The reality is quite different.

It gets even more interesting when you look at the combined effect of this 10% municipal rate increase compounded by the market value assessment increase. Various writers have mentioned average assessment increases of 5.1% for King City, 7.5% for the Township of King, and of having personally experienced increases in excess of 10%, so let's look at the effect these increases have on the actual municipal taxes paid:

Property owners in the Township will, on average, pay 15% to 18% more tax dollars to the Township than they did last year, and in some cases will pay +21% or more!

I join the other writers in calling on council to review their decision on this increase which, I suggest, any objective observer might view as unreasonable.

Bob Brooks