

# HAMPTON VA

## NEWS RELEASE

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## City manager seeks input/ideas for 2017 budget

**March 9, 2016** - Join City Manager Mary Bunting later this month for two online chats designed to gather input from residents on Hampton's 2016-2017 budget.

To accommodate schedules, one chat will be held in the evening and one chat will be held in the afternoon. Go to <http://www.hampton.gov/chat> 7 p. m. on Monday, March 14 - or at noon on Tuesday, March 22 - to ask questions and get answers about the budget without coming to City Hall.

Hampton's award-winning public input process on the city budget is unique because it gives residents a chance to discuss their priorities and concerns before the next budget is drafted, rather than after it comes together. Bunting has sought citizen input each year, with this being the seventh budget.

The format of the "I Value" input is different every year. One year, residents completed questionnaires to determine whether certain city services were a "want" or a "need," or to determine their tolerance for reductions in service (budget cuts). As real estate values fell - reducing property tax bills and the city's annual revenue - residents were asked about their tolerance for raising the tax rate to keep their tax bills more flat. And last year budget questions focused on rates for separately billed services - including trash collection - and the pace of meeting pollution mandates.

All of the input from citizens, both in-person and online, is used by the city manager to develop the budget she will recommend to City Council.

For the 2016-2017 fiscal year, Bunting has noted that revenues are up slightly — not enough to add new services, but enough that dramatic cuts are not expected. And City Council has said that staff compensation is a priority.

In an in-person budget chat Tuesday night, Bunting noted that she would not recommend a tax increase.

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