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PLATTE CHAT

Public Offers More Suggestions for Omaha

“Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion.” – Edmund Burke

When the Platte Institute recently offered alternative ideas centered on reduced spending as opposed to the debated tax increases for the city of Omaha, it sparked considerable dialogue about ways the city could escape its budget problems without further increasing the tax burden on its residents. We have been overwhelmed with more ideas and suggestions from civic-minded individuals about how to tackle this issue.

Since the debate about solving the budget woes in Omaha is still raging on, we wanted to take an opportunity to pass on some of the ideas and suggestions for reducing spending in Omaha and invite others to continue the conversation. Please feel free to provide your own suggestions by emailing us at: feedback@platteinstitute.org. Here are some suggestions from Platte Institute followers:

- [Ashland Gazette](#)
- [Aurora News-Register](#)
- [Beatrice Daily Sun](#)
- [Bellevue Leader](#)
- [Blair Enterprise](#)
- [Burwell Tribune](#)
- [Cambridge Clarion](#)
- [Cedar County News](#)
- [Chadron News](#)
- [Columbus Telegram](#)
- [Cozad Tri-City Tribune](#)
- [Curtis Hi-Line Enterprise](#)
- [Custer County Chief](#)
- [Doniphan Herald](#)
- [Elgin Review](#)
- [Elkhorn Douglas County Post Gazette](#)
- [Elm Creek Beacon-Observer](#)
- [Fairbury Journal-News](#)
- [Fremont Tribune](#)
- [Friend Sentinel](#)
- [Gering Courier](#)
- [Gibbon Reporter](#)
- [Gothenburg Times](#)
- [Grand Island Independent](#)
- [Grant Tribune-Sentinel](#)
- [Gretna Breeze](#)
- [Hastings Tribune](#)
- [Hemingford Ledger](#)
- [Hickman Voice News](#)
- [Hyannis Grant County News](#)
- [Imperial Republican](#)
- [Kearney Hub](#)
- [Lexington Clipper-Herald](#)
- [McCook Gazette](#)
- [Nebraska City News-Press](#)

- Eliminate tuition reimbursement programs.
- Eliminate the fire prevention bureau and transfer those duties to the city planner's office.
- Reduce the number of fire battalions from six to five.
- Make a significant portion of the fire department staffing come from college-age students and offer them college scholarships as opposed to pension contributions.
- Provide housing as opposed to pension benefits to police and fire fighters with service years of 10 years or less.
- Seek changes to the Commission of Industrial Relations at the state level.
- If there is no traction in dropping the minimum fire fighter staffing from four to three, then Omaha should initiate an ordinance that would require all city fire fighters to reside in a jurisdiction that offers the same level of fire apparatus staffing demanded by the Omaha Fire Union to help level the playing field during negotiations. This ordinance could allow current firefighters up to three years to make the move and give all new hires one year to move into such a jurisdiction.
- The city should initiate a comprehensive review of employee manpower throughout all departments. It is our understanding that such a review has not taken place in many years.

As indicated by the number of budget cutting suggestions on the subject, the Fire Department apparently is a target rich environment. Many Omaha citizens have risen to the challenge and have offered ideas to reduce city expenses rather than raise taxes – the easy way out.

- [Norfolk Daily News](#)
- [North Platte Bulletin](#)
- [North Platte Telegraph](#)
- [Omaha Catholic Voice](#)
- [Omaha Daily Record](#)
- [Ord Quiz](#)
- [Oshkosh Garden County News](#)
- [Osmond Republican](#)
- [Pawnee Republican](#)
- [Plainview News](#)
- [Plattsmouth Journal](#)
- [Ravenna News](#)
- [Scottsbluff Star-Herald](#)
- [Seward County Independent](#)
- [Sidney Sun-Telegraph](#)
- [South Sioux City Dakota County Star](#)
- [Superior Express](#)
- [Sutton Clay County News](#)
- [Syracuse Journal-Democrat](#)
- [Wahoo Newspaper](#)
- [Wauneta Breeze](#)
- [Waverly News](#)
- [West Point News](#)
- [Wood River Sunbeam](#)
- [Wymore Arbor State](#)
- [York News-Times](#)

Under our system of representative government, we give our elected leaders authority to act in our best interest – a fiduciary relationship. We place our trust and faith in city officials to act for the sole benefit of tax payers. We sincerely hope our city officials keep faith with voters with a zero based, priority setting budget effort. The mayor and the city council should embrace the obvious answer – set priorities and cut the budget; don't raise taxes.

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