



WELLAND COUNCIL APPROVES 2019 CAPITAL & OPERATING BUDGETS

Welland, ON - Welland City Council approved the City's 2019 tax supported Capital and Operating Budgets at the Feb. 19, 2019, Council Meeting. The city's budget is a strategic document that sets out Council's priorities and provides direction to city staff for the coming year. This year's budgets, which include \$24 million in capital spending, are focused on maintaining essential programs and services, strategic investments in infrastructure, and supporting the city's economic growth and development agenda. Council also approved construction of a new Fire Hall Headquarters and Training Centre, which will be built on a City of Welland parcel of land, located on East Main Street.

Council approved a tax rate increase of 3.64% for all property tax classes. The average residential property assessed at \$216,353 in 2019, results in a \$59 tax increase from the previous year. The following items were brought forward and approved in the operating and Capital Budgets.

Operating & Capital Budget Highlights:

- \$400,000 Foyer Richelieu expansion
- \$6 million Fire Hall Headquarters and Training Centre (Phase 1)
- \$1.4 million towards new transit buses
- Memorial Park Improvements - \$700,000 for continuation of the master plan implementation including parking, trail linkages and tree plantings
- Summerlea Park Playground Improvements - \$200,000 for replacement of the playground and completion of landscaping located at the end of Montgomery Road
- Investment in Road Improvements - \$4.23 million roadway capital budget including \$1,793,000 for the Roadway Resurfacing Program, \$250,000 for Asphalt Patching, and \$150,000 for surface treatment on rural roads
- Investment in sidewalk improvements - \$1.27 million sidewalk capital budget including \$700,000 for the sidewalk replacement and accessibility improvements to sidewalk ramps
- Roof Repairs - \$610,000 investment in the Municipal Service Centre on Federal Road and the King Street Firehall to ensure continued and efficient response by Public Works/Fire and Emergency Services staff
- Flood Prevention - \$1,350,000 investment in storm sewer infrastructure improvements and \$412,000 in engineering studies and risk assessments
- Residential Rodent Control Rebate Program - \$25,000 budget to combat residential rodent concerns

The City of Welland 2019 Water/Wastewater Budgets are scheduled for discussion at the March 5, 2019, Council Meeting.

"As Budget Chair, a sincere thanks to the Budget Committee, Mr Zorbas, finance, city staff and everyone involved in helping the Budget Committee reach its decision," said Councillor David McLeod, Chair of the Budget Review Committee. "With almost 3% of the 3.64% increase focusing on roads, sidewalks, and capital projects, clearly council has communicated that delivering tangible benefits to our community is paramount. On a personal side, seeing the new fire hall and training facility finally get funded was incredible. There are many councillors like me who participated in discussions regarding a long-term plan for emergency services back in 2011. Together we have successfully completed a nine-year process that staff, council and the community need to feel proud of, and recognize our city's commitment to emergency services. I believe the 2019 budget positions our city strategically and delivers on the priorities of our citizens."

“Council have demonstrated their support for maintaining the programs and services that Welland residents use every day; upgrading our roads, sidewalks, and facilities; and making strategic investments now to help us manage change and prepare our city for the future,” said Welland Mayor Frank Campion. “I’d like to thank city staff and our community partners for working with Council to achieve a budget outcome we can be proud of.”

“The city’s budget creates a line of sight for staff that provides a connection between our individual responsibilities and our collective contributions and how they align with budget expenditures, Council’s priorities, and getting results for the community”, said CAO, Gary Long. “These are exciting times for Welland and staff are moving forward with the approved capital projects and strategic initiatives for the coming year.”

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