

Wednesday, December 7, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



CITY COUNCIL APPROVES A “WELLAND IS READY” 2017 BUDGET

Welland, ON – Council approved the City of Welland’s 2017 Capital and Operating Budgets at last night’s Council meeting. These budgets, which include \$18.1 million in capital spending, are focused on strategic investments in infrastructure, maintaining programs and services, and supporting the City’s continued economic growth and diversification. Combining the Municipal with the Regional and Education rates will result in an estimated net tax levy increase of 2.92%. Therefore, taxpayers will see a 5.07% municipal tax levy increase in 2017. The average residential property assessed at \$203,000, this will result in a property increase of \$92.00 starting in 2017.

Budget Highlights:

- Effective June 2017, introducing expanded Saturday and new Sunday service for WellTrans
- \$4.3 million for road resurfacing
- \$350,000 for Emerald Ash tree removal on City and Canal lands
- \$1 million refurbishment of Forks Road Bridge
- \$20,000 additional funding for economic development marketing and promotions
- \$750,000 for Buchner Road/Hwy 140 intersection improvements to support GE investment
- \$700,000 for sidewalk replacements
- \$30,000 for conceptual plan for Atlas Landfill
- \$1 million additional investment for water and wastewater infrastructure
- \$250,000 for green energy projects
- \$3.8 million for strategic economic development initiatives

The Budget Committee, along with Chair David McLeod, was dedicated to wrap-up the 2017 budgeting process by the year’s end in order to assist the City in moving forward with capital projects. “There is no better way to leap into 2017, than to start executing the City’s strategic direction on day one,” said McLeod. Chair McLeod was pleased with the support from committee members, which resulted in a productive committee and decisive decision-making process. “An amazing effort was put forward by City staff, which provided the confidence Budget committee members needed to make strategic investment decisions for our great City. Although no member got exactly what they wanted, there is much to be excited about in our progressive 2017 Budget. Furthermore, Council has provided staff its strategic direction prior to the start of the New Year.”

“This budget is an investment in Welland by renewing the infrastructure our residents and businesses rely on, and it maintains our competitiveness,” said Welland Mayor Frank Campion. “This budget sends a strong signal that Welland is ready, we’re a growing community, and we’re a smart city that is positioned to attract new residents and investment.”

“We’re entering a new phase of growth and prosperity for the City and this budget provides a solid foundation of funding to build on recent economic activity and residential development,” said Chief Administrative Officer Gary Long. “City staff are ready and eager to work with Council and the community to move forward with projects and priorities for 2017.”

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