

Wednesday, February 3, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES “INVEST IN WELLAND” BUDGET FOR 2016

Welland, ON – City Council approved all 2016 Budgets for the City of Welland on February 2, 2016. This year’s Operating and Capital Budgets have an “Invest in Welland” theme with a focus on investing in additional road surfacing, replacing aging water and wastewater infrastructure, and continuing to deliver quality programs and services to further invest in community priorities. Taxpayers will see a 4.67% municipal tax levy increase this year. Combining the Municipal with the Regional and Education rates will result in an estimated net tax levy increase of 1.50% for the average residential property assessed at \$196,000; ultimately increasing property taxes by \$46.70 for the average homeowner.

Highlights:

- ✓ Investing an additional \$946,000 into road resurfacing
- ✓ Increased funding from last year by \$150,000 for Downtown Redevelopment (Downtown Health & Wellness Community Improvement Plan)
- ✓ Invest \$250,000 into for Emerald Ash Tree removal on City lands
- ✓ Water customers with an annual consumption of 75 cubic metres will see a bill increase of \$36
- ✓ An additional \$1,000,000 invested in replacing watermains and wastewater infrastructure

The Budget process is always a challenging and strategic development for the Budget Committee, and a significant responsibility for Council to deliver a financially balanced budget to Welland constituents and stakeholders. The Budget Committee, along with Chair David McLeod, was dedicated to wrap-up the 2016 budgeting process much earlier this year in order to assist the City in receiving more competitive pricing for various capital projects. “The 2016 budget is a significant step forward. Our business approach to the budget process has minimized politics and expedited investment. This could not have been accomplished without the collective efforts of Finance, City Staff and City Council,” said McLeod. Chair McLeod believes that the benefits of a decisive budget approximately three months earlier than in previous years, will help see better tender pricing and kick start projects earlier. “It is now time for our talented City Staff to execute and diligently stretch every taxpayer dollar invested, to provide quality services and complete needed infrastructure for the citizens of Welland,” he added.

Mayor Frank Campion commends the diligence of Welland City Council. “Council is committed to protecting core services, making investments in infrastructure and our facilities, and keeping tax increases to a minimum to benefit our residents and businesses and position us for the future,” said Mayor Frank Campion. “Investing in Welland gives us a competitive advantage that will help us grow our community and our economy. The new residential developments, commercial activity, and business investments speak for themselves, and we intend to build on this positive momentum.”

-30-

Contact: Steve Zorbas
General Manager, Corporate Services/Treasurer
60 East Main Street, Welland, ON L3B 3X4
Tel: (905) 735-1700 ext. 2170
steve.zorbas@welland.ca
www.welland.ca

Contact: David McLeod
Budget Chair, Budget Committee
60 East Main Street, Welland, ON L3B 3X4
Cell: 905-736-0465
david.mcleod@welland.ca
www.welland.ca