

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, December 11, 2019



WELLAND COUNCIL APPROVES A TAX RATE DECREASE

Welland, ON – Welland City Council has approved a tax rate decrease, along with a record \$62 million in capital spending for 2020. Welland City Council approved the municipal 2020 tax-supported Capital and Operating Budgets on Dec. 10, 2019, after a two-month process that included budget deliberations and a public engagement campaign. Municipal budgets are strategic financial plans that support Council’s priorities, and include key projects to be implemented by city staff.

The 2020 municipal budgets will continue to protect core programs, maintain service levels, invest in infrastructure, maintain the city’s economic competitiveness, and support the city’s growth and development agenda with a -0.65% tax levy decrease for all property classes. The average residential property assessed at \$223,109 in 2020, results in a \$11.21 tax decrease from the previous year. This applies to the City of Welland portion only. Niagara Region tax rates and education rates have not yet been finalized.

Welland City Council also approved the Water/Wastewater Operating and Capital Budgets for the coming year. The cost to enhance water and to treat wastewater for Welland is established by the Region of Niagara. A 6.42% rate increase will be experienced by residents using 75 m³/year, which will increase residential bills from \$675 yearly in 2019 to \$719 yearly in 2020. The 2020 Water/Wastewater Capital Budget is also proposing expenditures in the amount of \$4.49 million for wastewater and \$4.18 million for waterworks.

Key 2020 Budget Highlights:

- \$53.6 million in tax-supported capital projects.
- \$8.6 million in water/wastewater capital projects.
- New Central Fire Station HQ and Training Centre to open in 2021.
- New King Street Fire Station to open in 2021.
- \$5.1 million for road resurfacing.
- \$1.1 million for sidewalk replacement improvements, and missing sidewalk links.
- \$500,000 for a new Community Boathouse to accommodate the city’s canoe/kayak rental program at Rotary Park of Welland.
- \$150,000 for new & rebuilt docks for unsupervised swimming at Rotary Park of Welland.
- New Transit Operations Facility (pending Federal & Provincial funding).
- Replacement of Forks Road Bridge (pending Federal & Provincial funding).
- New playground equipment at Glenwood, Elmwood, Chippawa, and Cooks Mills Parks.
- \$13.562 million total ICIP-Recreation & Culture Application (pending Federal & Provincial funding).
- \$1.4 million total ICIP-Green Infrastructure Application (pending Federal & Provincial funding).
- New splash pads at Memorial and Maple Parks.

- Holiday Transit service (increased service for winter control and sidewalk snow clearing)
- Upgrades to soccer fields and investments in baseball diamonds.
- Funding to support partnerships with the Welland Museum, Welland Public Library, Welland Hospital, Welland McMaster Family Health Team, Niagara College, and Foyer Richelieu.

“Council and staff worked very hard to deliver operating and capital budgets that address today's expected service levels while providing the strategic necessities of a growing city,” said Councillor David McLeod, Chair of the Budget Review Committee. “Mindful, Methodical, and Strategic investment is what constituents expect of us, as it lays the foundation for future years. If a budget does not provide a clear message of investment in capacity, infrastructure and service levels, then it fails the taxpayer in the long-run. I am pleased to say the 2020 budget delivers loud and clear on all three fronts.”

“City of Welland staff and Council have collaborated on a sound financial plan for 2020 that will result in improvements to all classes of infrastructure, which will enhance quality of life in our municipality,” said Welland Mayor Frank Champion.

“Welland is on a 20 year trajectory of positive growth and transformative change, and the 2020 Budget supports this with “city building” investments in new Fire Stations, a new Transit Facility, waterfront redevelopment, and in the hard infrastructure we depend on now and into the future,” said Gary Long, Welland’s Chief Administrative Officer. “The 2020 Budget also supports the public services that Welland residents use every day, while investing in the recreational infrastructure and cultural programming that contribute to the civic satisfaction our residents enjoy.”

For more information the City of Welland 2020 Budget visit welland.ca, or for more information on Your 2020 Budget Talks Public Engagement Platform visit YourChannel.welland.ca.

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