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CITY'S 2021 BUDGETS WILL INVEST IN INFRASTRUCTURE TO ENRICH QUALITY OF LIFE

Welland, ON - Welland City Council approved the 2021 municipal budgets at last night's City Council Meeting. The 2021 Budgets will focus on essential infrastructure and investments in additional road resurfacing. The budgets will also invest in capital projects, such as replacing ageing water and wastewater infrastructure to reduce infiltration into the city's wastewater system.

The 2021 Tax Supported Operating Budget presents a 1.96 % tax increase (municipal portion) after assessment growth and includes \$44.4 million in capital next year.

2021 capital project budget highlights:

- \$8.2 million for sanitary sewer replacements and infrastructure renewal
- \$7 million for watermain replacement and infrastructure renewal
- \$7 million for Forks Road Bridge replacement
- \$5 million for Forks Road reconstruction
- \$2.8 million for a Fire Station #1 and a new training centre
- \$2.75 million for a new multi-purpose outdoor facility
- \$2.1 million for road resurfacing (base budget)
- \$2.55 million for sidewalk replacement improvements
- Enhance road resurfacing by \$4.65 million

The 2021 Water/Wastewater Budgets will allow the city to provide sustainable water services, maintain current water infrastructure, and invest in replacing or building much-needed infrastructure. The proposed 2021 Water/Wastewater Capital Budget totals \$15.2 million to replace watermains, sanitary sewers, ageing water meters, and other related infrastructure.

Water rate customers will experience the following changes in their 2021 water bills:

- Low residential water consumers (annual consumption of 75 cubic meters or less per year) will have a \$37.00 annual increase
- Average residential water consumers (annual consumption of less than 180 cubic meters per year) will have a \$2.00 annual increase
- The annual rebate for the low-income seniors water/wastewater program has been increased from \$300 to \$340 effective January 1, 2021
- Commercial and industrial accounts will experience a decrease in the annual bill

"The 2021 budget strikes a balance between achieving long term community objectives while respecting our community's immediate challenges," said Budget Review Committee Chair, David McLeod. "Council has endorsed an aggressive \$59.6 million capital budget. Significant infrastructure investment is what our constituents expect of its leadership, and that is what we delivered: \$43.7 million in Roads, sidewalks, water & wastewater, storm sewers, bridges & culverts; \$4.66 million in Parks; \$3.77 million in Facilities; \$3.75 million in Fire Services and \$3.01 million in Transit and Fleet. Not only did we fund key community investments, but we also made improvements to city service delivery while minimizing the impact on the taxpayer and water/wastewater consumer. There is no substitute for great leadership or solid decision making. As Budget Chair, the momentum this 2021 Budget brings to our city was only made possible through the strategic initiatives brought forward by city staff and the courage of committee members to pursue

them. Collectively we share an understanding of our challenges, an agreement on priorities, and a vision for our city's future. A sincere thank you to staff and the committee for delivering a responsive 2021 budget."

"This budget reflects Council's commitment to infrastructure renewal by investing \$59.6 million in total capital spending in 2021," said Mayor Frank Campion. "Infrastructure like roads, sidewalks, sewers and watermains are the foundation that our community is built upon. Quality of life, economic stability, protection of the environment and source water are some of the results of these strategic investments."

The City of Welland will continue to focus on emergency management and preparedness, community wellbeing, and economic recovery in the coming year. For more information on the City of Welland and its municipal budgets, visit www.welland.ca.

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