

Wednesday, November 18, 2020

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



### **BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE REVIEWS INVESTING IN WELLAND 2021 BUDGETS**

**Welland, ON** - The Budget Review Committee (BRC) received an Investing in Welland 2021 budget presentation from city staff at this week's BRC meeting. The presentation outlined considerations in developing the city's 2021 Tax Supported Operating Budget, 2021-2030 Tax/Water/Wastewater Capital Forecast Budgets, and 2021 Water/Wastewater Operating Budget.

The 2021 Tax Supported Operating Budget presents a 0% tax increase (municipal portion) after assessment growth and includes \$54 million in capital spending next year. In addition, staff are recommending decision units to increase the city's self-imposed debt limit to enhance capital spending by \$5.6 million for incremental road resurfacing and sidewalk restructuring, new full-time employee positions, and an \$85,000 investment over the next three years for a new hospice palliative care facility in Welland. If all decision units are approved by council, the estimated combined tax rate will be 1.77%.

The proposed 2021 Water/Wastewater Budgets will have the following impact on various customer types:

- Low residential (annual consumption of 75 cubic meters or less per year) \$37.00 annual increase
- Average residential (annual consumption of less than 180 cubic meters per year) \$2.00 annual increase
- Staff recommend increasing low-income water/wastewater rebate program from \$300 to \$340
- Commercial and industrial accounts will experience a decrease in the annual bill

The proposed 2021 Water/Wastewater Capital Budget recommends projects totalling \$15.2 million to replace watermains, sanitary sewers, ageing water meters, and other related infrastructure.

#### Key 2021 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)
- \$1.6 million for sidewalk replacement improvements
- Increase self-imposed debt limit to enhance road resurfacing by \$4.65 million and sidewalk additions/replacements by \$950,000

"The 2021 budget kick-off was a big success," said Welland Councillor and Budget Chair, David McLeod.

"Committee members recognize the city's momentum, and service levels depend on strategic and innovative solutions in order to secure our future. Residents need to know that the 2021 budget has a sincere balance of compassion for today's challenges, as-well-as a keen interest in not losing sight of long-term prosperity."

"The major theme in the 2021 budget is infrastructure renewal," said Mayor Frank Champion. "Council will be making significant decisions on the level of investment the city makes on roads, sidewalks, and water/sewer

projects. Along with this, council will also decide how these projects will be paid for. The city is positioned to work towards rejuvenating our city and reducing the infrastructure deficit in a responsible and cost-effective way."

For more information on the City of Welland 2021 budget process, or to join the conversation, visit Your 2021 Budget Talks on [Yourchannel.welland.ca](http://Yourchannel.welland.ca). Virtual public input meetings are scheduled for Dec. 7 and 9, 2020, via Zoom.

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