



Council Finalizes 2020 Budget

For Immediate Release

January 21, 2020

-Niagara-on-the-Lake- - After an intensive and rigorous process, budget deliberations finished last night with Council's approval of the 2020 Operating Budget. After much consideration, negotiation, and determination, the final Operating Budget for 2020 is \$12,686,151, which is an increase of \$1,167,601 from 2019, or a 10.14% overall increase and 8.62% levy increase after assessment growth.

For the average homeowner with an assessment of \$530,000, this is an increase of approximately \$92/annually on their tax bill. A storm levy of \$437,199 was also approved, which is a 2.48% increase from 2019. As a result, residents who live in an urban area will see an extra \$4/annually on their tax bill, in addition to the \$92/annually as stated above.

Significant drivers of the 2020 budget increase are associated to legal fees, staff salaries, transfer to the capital reserve, and flood mitigation. A one-time transfer of \$650,000 from the parking reserve was approved to help mitigate expenses not expected to continue year after year.

The 2020 Capital Budget, approved at the December 16, 2019, Council Meeting, is \$10,393,750, which is an increase of \$1,348,000, or 14.9%, from 2019. A few of the approved 2020 Capital projects include Dock Area shoreline restoration, Community Centre front entrance redesign, Memorial Park tennis courts expansion, Village Playground installation, community skatepark installation, road resurfacing and construction, sidewalk improvements, Fire Ladder Truck replacement, and Fire Light Rescue vehicle replacement. It is important to note that approximately \$1.77 million in capital projects was deferred in order to work within the Town's available funding.

"This budget allows the Town to provide additional services that residents and businesses have been asking for, such as by-law enforcement and phragmites mitigation. Council's next focus must be on how we will obtain resources to pay for the capital obligations that the Town will soon face," stated Lord Mayor Disero. "I look forward to the results of the Service Delivery Review, which I hope will highlight where further efficiencies can be found in Town administration."

"Thank you to the Town's Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer, Kyle Freeborn, Town staff, Council, and the Audit Committee for their commitment to our local taxpayers throughout this budget process," stated Sheldon Randall, Interim Chief Administrative Officer. "Council members and staff worked diligently to reduce the budget as much as possible, while maintaining and upholding the needs of the community."



Niagara-on-the-Lake's property tax bill includes levies for the Town, Niagara Region, the Province of Ontario (for education purposes), and the Niagara Health System. At this time, despite budget approval, the total impact on residents' tax bills can not yet be determined. Stay tuned for further budget communication tools, which will be available in the coming weeks.

For more information, please contact:

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