



NEWS RELEASE

Town Council Advances 2025 Budget Discussions with Key Priorities in Focus

For Immediate Release

November 20, 2024

At tonight's [Budget Review Committee Meeting](#), Town Staff presented the current considerations for the 2025 Operating Budget, marking a significant step in the iterative planning process. The Town is in the early stages of budget development, and these early discussions are necessary to develop the 2025 budget.

[View tonight's Meeting Agenda and watch the recording of the Meeting.](#)

As part of the presentation, Council was provided with a draft operating levy increase of \$2,321,958, reflecting early-stage estimates that align with the Town's commitment to maintaining financial sustainability, addressing community needs, and preserving or enhancing service levels. Staff outlined the step-by-step nature of the budget development process, emphasizing the importance of Council's input on priorities such as balancing taxpayer impacts with service improvements and advancing long-term strategic goals. Discussions also included plans for reviewing significant funding requests, managing financial risks, and ensuring transparency through variance analysis. This presentation served as a foundational step in the collaborative effort to finalize the 2025 budget in alignment with community and Council priorities.

"We aim to ensure the 2025 budget meets immediate needs while funding initiatives that advance Council's long-term Strategic Plan priorities," stated Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa. "This process is about aligning resources with our priorities to create a stronger, more sustainable future for Niagara-on-the-Lake. I want to thank Staff for their ongoing leadership throughout the budget process and Council for their collaborative discussions."

As part of this process, Town Staff are working diligently to:

- Maintain financial sustainability while addressing community needs.
- Invest in capital and support long-term financial planning and policies.
- Ensure service levels are preserved or enhanced where possible.
- Consider the financial impact on taxpayers while balancing existing needs with service improvements.



- Appropriately manage financial risks.

The next steps in the budget process include:

- Reviewing and discussing business cases for larger funding requests exceeding \$30,000.
- Analyzing variance reports to ensure financial transparency and accountability.
- Considering legal expenses and their impact on the 2025 budget.

"This budget planning process represents a tremendous amount of teamwork, and I want to thank Staff for their dedication and efforts," stated CAO Bruce Zvaniga. "Budget planning is a complex undertaking, and our goal is to ensure that Council's strategic priorities and the community's needs are reflected well."

The community is encouraged to stay engaged in the process and learn more by visiting the project page at www.jointheconversationnotl.org/budget.

The Town remains committed to an open and transparent budgeting process that supports long-term sustainability and reflects the needs of the Niagara-on-the-Lake community.

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