



City Council passes 2021 capital budget, investing \$5.2 million in infrastructure

Port Colborne, ON (Sept. 29, 2020) – Port Colborne City Council passed their 2021 capital and related projects budget at last night's Council meeting and will invest \$5.2 million on key projects to renew and replace infrastructure across the City.

Earlier this year, City Council acknowledged the need to review and approve the capital and related projects budget prior to the end of the year to allow City staff to develop strategic operational plans for 2021. Like many municipalities adapting to the current COVID-19 situation, it was important to find a balance between cost and investment when developing this budget. With infrastructure continuing to age, a top priority is to improve roads, sidewalks and City buildings. Through various planned grant applications, the City will also look to update community facilities including beaches, parks and active transportation networks.

The approved 2021 capital project will result in a 1% tax increase to the average detached family home in Port Colborne. This 1% increase will be allocated toward key projects, including:

- Funding to complete roof repairs at the Vale Health and Wellness Centre
- An Infrastructure Needs Assessment of water, waste-water and roads with the goal of assessing asset conditions and identifying opportunities to reduce water and wastewater billings
- Replacing the multi-use trail to Dain City; the trail running from Lakeview Park along the Promenade to Dain City. Recognizing recent trail deterioration resulting in closures due to safety, this budget would repair the trail.
- Road reconstruction and maintenance work as well as sidewalk replacement will increase by 20% to update infrastructure

"This was a collaborative effort by both members of Council and staff," said Bryan Boles, Director of Corporate Services. "This budget concentrates on core infrastructure within the City and complements planned grant applications to update community facilities previously supported by Council."

The first phase of the Downtown Community Improvement Project (CIP) previously approved as Clarence St. from West St. to Catharine St. will move forward to the architect and engineering phase following initial work by the Infrastructure Needs Assessment project. However, due to COVID-19, this multi-year project will be reviewed in the 2022 capital budget.

"I want to congratulate staff for a very thorough and comprehensive 2021 capital budget plan," said Mayor Bill Steele. "This was a collaborative effort by many different departments and I'm confident the funding allocated to these capital projects will continue to enhance our city. Port Colborne City Council supports innovative approaches to repairing and renewing infrastructure and with the approval of the 2021 capital budget, we're excited to see continuous improvements to infrastructure, as well as community initiatives like our beaches and parks."

The City of Port Colborne will be issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to have an Infrastructure Needs Study completed in order to help Council and staff prioritize long-term infrastructure needs of

the City. This is an important next step as it will help to anticipate future City needs and allow staff to strategically plan for larger scale projects moving forward.

“Council identified a desire to move the budget process earlier in the year and I’m happy to say staff is on track to have all City budgets approved before the end of the year to meet that priority,” said Scott Luey, Chief Administrative Officer. “By approving the budgets now, we have the ability to strategically plan for 2021 projects. This gives us the opportunity to take our time to review competitive pricing for tenders and RFPs, which should result in project savings and ensure all operational objectives are met.”

On Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2020 Council will be reviewing the City’s 2021 operational budget. Members of the community who are interested in participating can watch the meeting live on the City’s YouTube channel starting at 6:30 p.m.

About City of Port Colborne

Located on the south coast of the scenic Niagara Region, Niagara’s Port of Call has found the perfect balance – successful industrial and commercial sectors, comfortable and scenic residential areas, white sand beaches, unique culinary choices, the world class Sugarloaf Marina, fishing, golfing, trails, shopping districts along the historic Welland Canal and an energized festival and entertainment scene that includes live theatre – truly a community that adds to the overall Niagara Experience.

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For more information, contact:

Alex Pedersen
Corporate Communications Officer
905-835-2900 ext. 307
alexpetersen@portcolborne.ca