



MEDIA RELEASE

Monday, January 29, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2018 Budget focuses on roads and growth

(Barrie, ON) After amendments to the City of Barrie's proposed capital and operating budget, Council has approved a 2.75% tax increase. This breaks down to a 1.75% increase to deliver services from the city and its service partners and a 1% increase for the Dedicated Infrastructure Renewal Fund, which is used to replace and renew Barrie's infrastructure (city roads, bridges, and buildings). For the average Barrie home assessed at \$334,000, this increase translates to an additional \$114 annually.

As part of the budget, Council also approved changes to the water and wastewater rates this year. For a typical Barrie home consuming 180 cubic metres of water annually, the water bill is proposed to increase by \$9 this year and the wastewater bill will increase by \$14.

"This is a lean budget," said Mayor Jeff Lehman. "But our staff and Council have managed to develop a budget that still focuses on improving the quality of our services. I believe we've struck a balance between the need to continue investing in the bridges, roads and other existing infrastructure to maintain our modern community, while planning for future growth. This balance minimizes the total increase to the taxpayer while allowing our City the resources to address our growth needs."

"Also, the City's share of Alectra dividends are starting to pay off, which has helped us to ease pressure on tax payers," added Lehman. "The good work done to grow our power company has helped to fight high power prices while returning more to Barrie residents."

The Capital Plan is for \$312.6 million, of which \$135 million will be spent on infrastructure. This includes \$60 million for the Harvie Road crossing of Highway 400, \$15 million to widen and reconstruct Mapleview Drive East from County Lane to Yonge Street and \$3 million to continue the city's road resurfacing program. Some other major roads which will have resurfacing or renewal work this year include Bayfield, Anne, and Henry streets, Huronia Road, Mapleview Drive and McKay Road, and funding for the Barrie-Simcoe Emergency Services Campus.

As a result of the Dedicated Infrastructure Renewal Fund, the City is investing an average of \$8.4 million per year to fix local roads between 2018 and 2022—which is about twelve times more than the annual investment in local roads in the years immediately prior to the fund being established.

The capital budget will also focus on progress in the secondary plan areas, with construction beginning on a number of key watermain, sewers and road expansions. As well, land acquisition for facilities in the Hewitt's & Salem will be a major focus. The Barrie Fire and Emergency Services Station 6 and McKay Road/Highway 400 interchange will also see designs advance in 2018.

The 2018 Budget includes investments in significant technology projects that will modernize City processes and increase automation to provide residents and businesses with fast, simple, efficient service and an enhanced online business environment. For example, the City just recently launched a new 'Plow Tracker' app that allows residents to track the progress of winter maintenance on city roads.

Other notable investments in this year's budget include, Painswick Park expansion (addition of baseball diamond), two new Barrie Police officers and two civilian employees, and additional resources for the maintenance of parks.

About Barrie – Barrie is an exciting, caring and progressive community that 147,000 people call home. Situated 90 km north of the Greater Toronto Area on beautiful Kempenfelt Bay, Barrie offers an excellent life style and multitude of recreational opportunities. We are committed to the growth of prosperity of Central Ontario's leading City and most dynamic waterfront community.



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Residential property tax bill funds are allocated to City services (55%), education (14% as mandated by the Province) and Service Partners (31% between the Barrie Police Service, Public Library, County of Simcoe, etc.). The Business Plan & Budget will be funded through property taxes, user fees and other financing sources.

The 2018 Business Plan & Budget is available at www.barrie.ca/budget.

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