

Municipal Reform realigns Bathurst's financial focus in 2023 Budget

Bathurst, Wednesday November 23, 2022 – The City of Bathurst's 2023 Budget will see no increase in its residential tax rate. Such is the recommendation Council passed at its Regular Public Meeting on Monday night.

Exclusive to this budget exercise, Council's mandate was to recommend all operational budgets, subject to approval by the Minister of Local Government and Local Governance Reform. As of January 1, 2023, the City boundaries will also include portions of North Tetagouche and South Tetagouche, portions of Big River and portions of the Bathurst Local Service District, bringing the City's population to approximately 15,000.

"As we welcome close to 3,000 new residents, who will be represented by two new Councillors, 2023 will be a year of adjustment to our operations. Existing services such as Police services, Fire services, Waste and Recyclables collection and road services will be the same models as present in the existing and new boundaries. We will take the next 12 months to carefully analyse the present operational models to determine the most efficient approaches to serve our new residents. We will do so with the challenge of having greater boundaries but with less funding with the gradual rollback in provincial Core funding", said Mayor Kim Chamberlain.

Because of the Core funding cuts (\$287,000 in total over five years), municipalities can now adjust the ratio (multiplier) for the non-residential rate (businesses) to compensate for Core Funding losses, and that rate must be the same for old and new boundaries. The City recommends a rate of 1.7 times the base tax rate.

Council approved the recommendation to maintain the 2023 Property Tax Rate for the existing boundary at \$1.775 per \$100 of assessment, as it has been for the six previous years. 2023 Property Tax Rate for the new boundaries will be determined by the Provincial Government in the coming weeks.

The 2023 General Operating Budget is \$39,979,409 and the Capital Budget is \$1,950,000, totaling \$41,929,409.

Capital investments will cost \$1,950,000 and include the following notables:

- Purchase of two Police vehicles - \$140,000
- Purchase of five work vehicles - \$415,000
- Asphalt Roller - \$100,000
- Paving of portions of St. Mary Avenue and Basin Street - \$375,000
- Water and Sewage upgrade and repairs - \$570,000
- Equipment and upgrades for the K.C. Irving Regional Centre - \$130,000
- Walkway and stair structures at Daly Point Nature Reserve - \$50,000

- 30 -

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