

TOWN COUNCIL PASSES 2018 INTERIM BUDGET

December 20, 2017

The 2018 Interim Budget reflects an enhanced focus on economic development that encourages community growth while reducing overall municipal expenditures in support of more modest services and a prioritized capital plan. Council has directed Administration to maintain current public works and parks service levels with continued efforts to identify and achieve program efficiencies.

After consideration of several options, Council will be establishing Community Peace Officer services for the Town of Drayton Valley. This approach will provide dedicated protective services to the Town in a cost-effective manner. Initial startup, capital, equipment and operational funding will be derived from the Automated Traffic Enforcement reserve, resulting in no net burden on the Town's tax base.

Council has implemented a rate structure plan that will realize a cost neutral operation of the Early Childhood Development Centre within three years. Recognizing the importance of high-quality and affordable child care for our residents, the Town will be providing user rebates to town residents equivalent to the rate increase over the next three years.

User fees for recreational opportunities will see a gradual increase in order to minimize the cost to the Town.

Council is accelerating the implementation of the full cost utility rate structure to occur over the next three years. Revenue requirements for the Town's water and sewer utility will be achieved sooner thus providing sustainable funding for future asset needs. Establishing this reserve fund quicker allows the municipality to be better positioned for funding significant or modest capital improvements of the water and sewer infrastructure of the community.

"During the election, Council and I heard that residents value Town services; they were clear in their desire and expectation that spending be focused on the needs of the community rather than the wants," commented Mayor Michael Doerksen. "The 2018 Interim Budget reflects a balanced and responsible approach in meeting the needs of the community while being mindful of the current economic challenges."

After careful consideration of the needs and expectations of the community, Council has set the direction for the 2018 interim budget with the intention of holding the general tax rate increase at zero for 2018. This approach will be confirmed in the 2018 Final Budget in the spring following the provincial budget, Brazeau Foundation's requisition, the Alberta School Foundation Fund requisition, and the establishment of Brazeau County's tax rates.

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