

TOWN COUNCIL PASSES 2018 BUDGET

May 9, 2018

The 2018 Budget represents a fiscally responsible strategy that identifies key areas of investment in the community as well as a prioritized capital plan that aligns with reduced operational expenditures. The Town of Drayton Valley will continue to focus on economic development that encourages community growth while ensuring value for residents.

Community concerns regarding public safety have led to the dedication of funding for Community Peace Officer services in the community. To reduce the burden on the Town's tax base, initial startup, capital, equipment and operational funding will be derived from the Automated Traffic Enforcement reserve.

Town Council is deeply committed to supporting strategies and opportunities that foster growth, diversify the local economy and increase economic resilience. Attracting investment to our community is pivotal to economic success. Town Council continues to explore emerging business developments, including the hemp industry, bio-fuel and solar energy to realize the full potential of our community.

"Significant work has been done since the interim budget was passed to reduce operational expenditures, refine our priorities and pursue opportunities that strengthen our local economy. Budgetary adjustments were made which reflect the expectations of the community while still being mindful of the on-going economic challenges facing our residents and businesses." remarked Mayor Michael Doerksen. "The 2018 budget demonstrates fiscal discipline while addressing our immediate priorities and investment in key services and infrastructure that will see the continued growth of our Town."

Several opportunities exist within the Clean Energy Technology Centre. Our existing partnership with NorQuest College provides increased access to enhance training and education and the attraction of students to the region to pursue further educational opportunities.

The Town of Drayton Valley is committed to ensuring levels of service are maintained through the Parks and Public Works Department and are delivered efficiently and effectively to residents year-round.

The Early Childhood Development Centre received \$553,334 from the Government of Alberta as part of the Early Learning Child Care Centres one-year pilot program. Through strong leadership and dedication, Town Council is committed to working with all levels of government to secure additional sources of funding.

Appropriate investment in new and existing infrastructure will support current demands and will anticipate future needs of the Town. Funding has been allocated for improvements, upgrades or replacement to various Town assets which will address capital priority requirements, including improvements to 62 Street (RR75), Meier Avenue rehabilitation, the high lift raw water pump station, erosion rehabilitation on the Coulee Road, expansion of cell four at the Aspen Waste Management Facility and sidewalk and trail rehabilitation.

As part of a strategic budgetary management plan, work and studies will be undertaken in 2018 to clearly identify road infrastructure requirements in key areas of our community. Assessments of 50 Avenue (east), 43 Street, the south sanitary trunk twinning and the Ring Road connection to 50th Street will be taken to ascertain improvements and capital requirements needed for 2019.

The accelerated implementation of the full cost utility rate structure will realize revenue requirements for the Town's water and sewer utility earlier than anticipated. This will ensure sustainable funding for future asset needs and will eliminate additional subsidies needed from the Town.

Resources have been committed to the construction of a new aquatic facility. Dedicated investment in this important community project will benefit residents of all ages and will attract visitors to Drayton Valley.

Budget 2018 reaffirms Council's commitment to responsible fiscal management and directing resources to services of value to residents and projects that support economic growth. By identifying efficiencies and prioritizing capital projects, expenditures were reduced by \$1,391,837 or 5.9% to bring the operating budget to \$22,134,787. Under Council's direction to minimize impacts to our community, analysis of the Provincial budget, Brazeau Foundation's requisition and Brazeau County's tax rate, the average homeowner will not see an increase in their tax bill.

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