

Wetaskiwin City Council Approves 2020 Capital and Operating Budgets

December 10, 2019

(Wetaskiwin, Alberta) – Wetaskiwin City Council approved the 2020 capital and operating budgets at their regular December 9, 2019 Council meeting.

The approved 2020 operating budget—funded through the tax base, operating grants, and user fees/sales—totals \$15,821,502, resulting in an **estimated overall 2.28 percent tax rate decrease** for 2020. Highlights of the approved operating budget include:

- Five percent wage rollback for Council members
- Wage freeze for municipal staff following comparable market band adjustments
City positions currently compensated below their comparable market band will be brought into the 50th percentile. No cost of living adjustments or merit increases are included in the budget.
- Reduced hours of service at the recycle centre
Closed Mondays and Tuesdays as of January 2020

The approved 2020 capital budget total of \$7,183,100 is funded from a combination of grants, reserves, and cost-sharing agreements. Highlights of the approved capital budget include:

- Renovation of—and addition to—existing public works shop
Council selected cost-saving reno/addition option at \$3 million. No borrowing will occur for this project.
- New fire rescue vehicle to replace one aging out of service
20% of cost will be covered by the County of Wetaskiwin as per our cost sharing agreement.

“I truly appreciate the time people took to get involved in the budget process,” said Mayor Tyler Gandam. “Council heard what the community had to say and worked hard to maintain existing service levels where possible without increasing the overall cost to taxpayers.”

The 2020 budget engagement process involved an online budget survey, three budget open houses and five days of public budget deliberations. Overall, nearly 250 community members provided their feedback on the proposed 2020 municipal budget.

“Council asked Administration to explore scenarios that addressed the economic pressures on both citizens and businesses while simultaneously delivering on Council’s sincere desire to finalize a budget that is responsive to the input collected from this community,” said Robert Osmond, Acting CAO. “The approved budget provides the community with a level of service we are proud to deliver, and Administration will continue to modernize and improve the efficiency of our municipal services.”

The Tax-Rate Bylaw is expected to be brought before Council in the spring of 2020. A comprehensive overview of the 2020 budget will be published at www.wetaskiwin.ca/budget once it becomes available.

-30-

For more information contact:

Robert Osmond

Acting CAO

780.361.4409