



United Counties of
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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 5, 2019

Counties Council approves zero tax increase in budget

The United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Council voted to maintain the 2018 tax rate in passing its 2019 budget.

The United Counties will collect \$40.4 million from property taxpayers this year. The approved budget provides for total expenditures of \$104.4-million. Capital expenditures account for \$15 million. The total levy increase is 3.88%.

The taxation base includes additional tax revenue from real growth (new assessment) of \$592,908, or an increase of 1.27%. The additional tax revenue from assessment changes due to the phase-in is \$914,744 as property values in the residential, commercial, and farm property classes increased. Based on these increases, the Counties does not need to increase its tax rate in 2019.

An average residential property assessment in Leeds and Grenville is approximately \$220,250. The average tax increase, due to assessment phase-in, is \$10.00 for the average residential property. However, the impact varies for each taxpayer depending on the phase-in of the assessments over a four-year period. Leeds and Grenville ratepayers could see a small increase or decrease in their taxes depending upon the 2019 phase-in value of their assessments.

"The Joint Services Committee and Counties Council have been able to make significant enhancements to the Paramedic Service with the addition of two stations with 24/7 service, which will be a major improvement to meeting the rising call volumes," Warden Pat Sayeau said of one of this year's budget highlights.

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"In addition, a large investment in infrastructure has also been achieved without an increase to the tax rate," the Warden said.

Council was able to increase staffing levels in Paramedic Service to address the rising call volumes and in Public Works. The budget also included a 0.5% increase to the dedicated hospital levy to 1%, which amounts to \$383,365 for 2019. The budget increased the dedicated infrastructure levy from 1% to 1.5%, which amounts to \$575,047.

"With the passage of the budget and no changes to service levels, staff is able to commence with their 2019 work plans and capital works programs," Counties Chief Administrative Officer Andy Brown said.

A breakdown of the operating budget expenditures shows the largest piece of the pie is for Ontario Works at 22.03%, followed by transportation services costs at 16.56%, Community Housing budget at 12.45 % and the Paramedic Service budget at 14.58%.

The 2019 capital budget of \$15-million includes \$12.36 million for public works projects. The overall capital budget increased from last year's total of \$13.5-million. Road and infrastructure work accounts for 85.36% of capital expenditures. Paramedic Service takes up 5.14%, followed by 4.03% for County Properties, 2.4% for Community Housing, 2.43% for Corporate Services, and 0.65% for Maple View Lodge.

For more information, contact Treasurer, Pat Huffman at 613-342-3840, ext. 2468.

Upcoming meetings: Joint Services Committee Wednesday, March 6, and regular Counties Council on Thursday, March 21. All regular meetings begin at 9 a.m. in the Council Chambers at 25 Central Avenue, Brockville. For more information, contact County Clerk Lesley Todd at 613-342-3840, ext. 2454.

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