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## MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 25, 2019

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The highlights of the regular United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Council Meeting held on Thursday, April 25th and a special Committee of the Whole meeting on April 9th are listed below.

**Funding application to expand County Road 43 in Kemptville:** Council has approved a joint funding application by the Counties and the Municipality of North Grenville for the expansion of County Road 43 in the Municipality of North Grenville.

If funding is secured, the shovel-ready project will see the highway expanded to four lanes in the Kemptville area for approximately three kilometres. It will include the addition of pedestrian and cycling facilities, illumination, and twinning the existing bridge and the rehabilitation of the Kemptville Creek Bridge. The Project will allow for future growth in the area and improve economic sustainability.

If successful, the federal government would contribute up to \$5-million through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) and the Ontario government would contribute \$3.3-million through the Rural and Northern Communities Stream. The Counties and the Municipality of North Grenville would contribute \$1.67-million.

The total estimated cost of the County Road 43 expansion is \$25-million. Although this application is for only \$10 million portion of the project, the Counties will seek out future funding for the remainder. For more information, contact CAO Andy Brown at 613-342-3840, ext. 2301.

**New MP Michael Barrett meets with Counties Council:** Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes MP Michael Barrett, who was elected in a by-election last December, has addressed Counties Council.

"Make my office aware of what your priorities are," MP Barrett said to Council members at the regular meeting, adding his door is open and he and his staff are ready to assist.

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MP Barrett spoke about funding priorities in the riding and the importance of having projects shovel ready. He voiced his support of the Eastern Ontario Regional Network's (EORN) proposed \$213-million public-private partnership to improve the reach and quality of cellular data services in rural Eastern Ontario. "The investment has to happen," MP Barrett said of the project. MP Barrett also answered questions from Counties Council members during his visit, including several about the recent federal budget.

**Counties ends 2018 with a surplus:** Counties Council has passed a bylaw to approve the distribution of its \$1.67-million surplus from 2018 into three reserve accounts.

The Year End Budget Variance Report shows Leeds Grenville has a surplus of \$1,674,881, representing approximately 1.67% of the Counties \$100 million annual budget. Council approved the transfer of \$272,228 to the Roads/Bridge/Culver Amortization Reserve; the transfer of \$243,684 to the Maple View Lodge Amortization Reserve; and \$1,158,968 to the Operating Surplus Reserve.

"We have healthy reserves and healthy asset management," said Treasurer Pat Huffman.

Normally the full amount of a surplus is transferred to the Operating Surplus Reserve. However, with the future demands of the Strategic Asset Management Plan and needed infrastructure work, as well as the Maple View Lodge expansion announcement, staff recommended the surplus be transferred into the three accounts. For more information, contact Treasurer Pat Huffman at 613-342-3840, ext. 2468.

**Counties Economic Development update:** Counties Economic Development presented its 2019 plan to Counties Council at the Committee of the Whole meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

The department maintains its five strategic areas of focus: regional leadership and building economic development capacity, investment attraction, tourism, regional marketing and communication, along with its primary focus on Business Retention and Expansion (BF+E).

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The Counties will be delivering a regional BR+E report along with reports for Augusta, Merrickville-Wolford and Rideau Lakes. Business interviews are continuing through the months of May and June. With the project feedback, Counties has already supported proposals related to workforce development.

The Leeds Grenville Visitor Services will be set-up at the Mallorytown ONroute Centres in early June to the end of August to encourage guests travelling through the region to explore area attractions. All businesses are encouraged to verify they are listed in the Leeds Grenville Business Directory. For more information, contact Counties Economic Development Manager Ann Weir at 613-342-3840, ext. 5365.

**Upcoming meetings:** There will be a special Committee of the Whole meeting on Wednesday, May 1; Committee of the Whole Tuesday, May 7; Joint Services Committee Wednesday, May 8, and regular Counties Council on Thursday, May 23. 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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**Media inquiries:**

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