



United Counties of  
Leeds and Grenville  
25 Central Ave. W., Suite 100  
Brockville, ON K6V 4N6  
T 613-342-3840  
800-770-2170  
F 613-342-2101  
[www.leedsgrenville.com](http://www.leedsgrenville.com)

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**March 25, 2021**

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### **Counties Council approves tax decrease in 2021 budget**

The Council for the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville has voted to reduce the 2021 tax rate by (0.05%) in passing its 2021 budget.

The United Counties will collect \$41.9-million from property taxpayers this year. The approved budget provides for total expenditures of \$108.5-million. Capital expenditures account for \$31.6 million. The total levy increase is 0.49%.

The taxation base includes additional tax revenue from real growth (new assessment) of \$223,126, an increase of 0.67%. The Province wide assessment did not occur so the Counties did not realize any additional tax revenue from assessment changes due to the phase-in. The average residential property, not on water in Leeds and Grenville, is assessed at \$221,000.

The budget also included a 1% dedicated hospital levy of \$404,873 and a 2% dedicated infrastructure levy in the amount of \$809,745 to help address current and future infrastructure requirements.

"The 2021 budget, as approved, ensures that all Counties services will be maintained, enable us to proceed with two major capital projects – County Road 43 and the redevelopment of Maple View Lodge – and continue to operate and support staff and residents through the ongoing pandemic," Counties Chief Administrative Officer Andy Brown said.

The majority of the Counties operating budget includes funding for Leeds and Grenville Paramedic Service, Ontario Works, Child Care, Community Housing, Maple View Lodge, and Public Works.

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"The 2021 budget reflects the demand for Counties services while being mindful of the challenges experienced by residents of Leeds and Grenville during this unprecedented time of COVID-19," Warden Roger Haley said.

The 2021 capital budget of \$31.6-million includes \$26.7-million for public works projects. County Road 43 in North Grenville and the redevelopment of Maple View Lodge in Athens are the largest multi-year projects undertaken by the Counties in recent years. The overall capital budget increased from last year's total of \$18.5 million. Road and infrastructure work accounts for 84.7% of capital expenditures. Maple View Lodge takes up 5.9%, followed by 4.6% for Community Housing, 3.3% for Paramedic Service, 1.0% for County Properties and 0.5% for Corporate Services. For more information, contact Treasurer Pat Huffman at 613-342-3840, ext. 2468.

**Two Collective Agreements awarded:** Bylaws to ratify the collective agreement with the Ontario Nurses Association and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) has been passed by Counties Council.

The Ontario Nurses Association (ONA) agreement is for all (Registered Nurses) bargaining unit members employed by the Counties. It will be in force retroactively from April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2023.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and its Local 4440 have entered into an agreement for all bargaining unit members employed by the Counties. The agreement is retroactive to January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2022. For more information contact Human Resources Manager Colleen Hickey at 613-342-3840, ext. 2332.

**Mud Creek Bridge replacement contract awarded:** The contract to fully replace Mud Creek Bridge on County Road 7 near Greenbush has been awarded to Ross and Anglin Limited at their low bid tendered price of \$1.244-million excluding taxes.

The bridge will be closed from early May until late August with detours in place. The Elizabethtown-Kitley Township Waste Disposal Site will be accessible via County Road 7 from the north.

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Mud Creek Bridge was constructed in 1960. The work will involve removal of the existing bridge and a full new structure replacement.

A total of 9 bids were received. For more information contact Engineering and Operations Manager Melanie Knowles at 613-342-3840, ext. 2411.

**Upcoming meetings:**, Joint Services Committee on Tuesday, April 6, Committee of the Whole on Wednesday, April 7 and regular Counties Council on Thursday, April 22. 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:**

Deanna Clark, Economic Development Officer/media releases  
United Counties of Leeds and Grenville  
32 Wall Street, Suite 300, Brockville, ON, K6V 4R9  
613-342-3840, ext. 5360 or [deanna.clark@uclg.on.ca](mailto:deanna.clark@uclg.on.ca)  
Cell: 613-803-0249