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MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 26, 2018

The highlights of regular United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Council Meeting held on Thursday, March 22 and Committee of the Whole and Joint Services Committee meetings held earlier in the month, are listed below.

Council approves 2018 budget: Council voted to maintain the 2017 tax rate when passing its 2018 budget at the Counties Council meeting Thursday.

The United Counties will collect \$38.9 million from property taxpayers this year. The approved budget provides for total expenditures of \$100-million. Capital expenditures account for \$13.5 million. The total levy increase is 3.49%.

"This budget provides for the hiring of four full-time paramedics, which will increase the number of staffed ambulances for response on nights from five to six," said Warden Robin Jones. In addition, the Leeds Grenville Paramedic Service will implement the Advanced Care Paramedic (ACP) program with the goal of having five paramedics trained and certified by September 2018.

"The Public Works Division budget provides for some additional operational and management resources to enable the department to focus and enhance its capital program," Warden Jones said. The Capital Program includes the rehabilitation of four bridges and approximately 35 kilometres of roads, including culverts, guiderails, shoulders and paving.

An average residential property assessment in Leeds and Grenville is approximately \$220,000. The average tax increase is \$15.00 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 2018 phase-in value of their assessments.

Council was able to increase service levels in both Paramedic Service and Public Works. The budget also introduced a dedicated hospital levy of ½ % which amounts to \$186,096 for 2018.

A breakdown of the operating budget expenditures shows the largest piece of the pie is for Ontario Works at 22.77%, followed by transportation services costs of 17.17%. Community

March 26, 2018

Housing budget is 12.68 % and the Paramedic Service budget is 13.61%. Operating expenses are up by 5.31% overall.

The 2018 capital budget of \$13.5 million includes \$11.3 million for public works projects. The overall capital budget decreased from last year's total of \$12.7 million. Road and infrastructure work accounts for 84.11% of capital expenditures. Paramedic Service take up 4.59%, followed by 4.28% for County Properties, 2.23% for Community Housing, 1.37% for Corporate Services, and 3.31% for Maple View Lodge.

The taxation base includes real growth (new assessment) of \$378,085, or an increase of 0.97%. The change in assessment due to the phase-in is \$934,244 as property values in the residential, commercial and farm property classes increased. For more information, contact Treasurer, Pat Huffman at 613-342-3840, ext. 2468.

Council passes Front of Yonge Official Plan: Counties Council has approved The Township of Front of Yonge's Official Plan.

The Township's last official plan dated back to 2006. A review began three years ago and during the process, the Township decided to repeal the plan and adopt a new one. Public meetings were held last fall. Following those meetings, the official plan was adopted by Front of Yonge Council, reviewed by the Counties planning staff and the Planning Advisory Committee.

"The Counties is pleased that the first of the local official plans to comply with the Counties Official Plan has been approved for the Township," said Manager of Planning Services Cherie Mills. "The Plan represents a collaborative effort between the Counties and the Township of Front of Yonge and reflects the Township's vision for land use. It will last for 10 years before it will need to be reviewed again," she said.

This is the first Official Plan passed by the Counties (upper-tier) since 2016 when it assumed responsibility for the approval of local, lower-tier official plans and official plan amendments. For more information, contact Planning Services Manager Cherie Mills at 613-342-3840, ext. 2419.

Active Transportation Summit in May: Eastern Ontario Active Transportation Summit coordinators gave a presentation to Counties Council encouraging their attendance at the May 10-11 event "Planning for Action."

March 26, 2018

Cycling advocate Alan Medcalf outlined how the two-day summit will provide a learning and networking opportunity to help rural and small municipalities become healthier and more active places to live, work and play. It is being held at the Brockville Memorial Centre.

The organizing committee is drawn from the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit, the RTO 9 Regional Tourism Organization, Ontario By Bike, Brockville and 1000 Islands Tourism, the DBIA, City of Brockville operations senior staff and members of Brockville's cycling advisory and Brock Trail committees. For more information, visit the [Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Healthy Communities Partnership website](#).

Upcoming meetings: Committee of the Whole Tuesday, April 3; Joint Services Committee Wednesday, April 4, and regular Counties Council on Thursday, April 19. 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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