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Release Date: February 27, 2019 **Town of Arnprior 2019 Budget Approved**

Arnprior, ON. Following public consultations in December 2018, and budget deliberations last week, Arnprior Council approved its 2019 Budget on Monday, February 25th. The 2019 Budget incorporates a modest 1.75% Municipal Tax Rate increase. This increase is below the rate of inflation and will prevent sharp tax rate increases in the future while assisting to cover needed repairs at the Nick Smith Centre and the purchase of the Fire Departments new truck. A \$400,000 donation to the Grove Redevelopment over a four-year period has also been approved in the budget without the need for an additional increase as well as the intent to amend the Development Charge By-Law to exempt not-for-profit long-term care facilities.

The Town continues with the “pay-as-you-go” financial model which is founded upon the principles of incurring no new long term debt, paying down existing debt, increased annual contributions to reserves, as well as continuing investment into infrastructure renewal. The Town’s debt retirement strategy will see the Town debt free by 2032. The 2019 Municipal Tax Rate increase will result in a net increase of **\$6.37 per month** or **\$76.50 per year** based on the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation’s average residential home assessment of \$231,500. Over the past six years, Arnprior’s annual average Municipal Tax Rate Increases have been less than the rate of inflation.

As with the previous five budgets, the 2019 budget continues to implement a pay-as-you-go model, resulting in over \$5.1M in contributions to reserves to fund pay-as-you-go projects. After total 2019 capital investments over \$3.8M, there is a net positive contribution to reserves of \$1.3M as part of the planned reserve fund recovery from the Downtown Revitalization project. A strong reserve policy is vitally important to avoid new long term borrowing, protect rate payers from sharp tax rate increases and fund future projects.

New capital investments in 2019 contain a number of infrastructure projects, including those as part of a life cycle replacement strategy. Major capital budget highlights include:

- \$711,060 – William Street W Reconstruction – Phase II (Division St to Edward St)
- \$250,000 – Rolling Road Rehabilitation
- \$260,000 – Single Axle Plow Truck Replacement
- \$175,000 – Madawaska Bridge 300mm Watermain Replacement
- \$72,000 – Roof Replacements – Robert Simpson Park Washrooms & Canteen, Pump Station #3, Albert Street Cemetery Shed
- \$85,000 – Nick Smith Centre Building Condition Assessment and Fire & Life Safety Study

- \$97,000 – Nick Smith Centre Roof Top Unit and Roof Guardrails
- \$150,000 – Airport Area Lands Comprehensive Development Plan
- \$100,000 – Waterfront Master Plan

Mayor Walter Stack stated that “It’s a very responsible budget that keeps taxes low while meeting expectations. Residents are faced with increased expenses this year from a variety of areas such as hydro and natural gas rates so it was important to keep the increase below inflation while still ensuring the Town’s priorities are being met.”

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