

December 18, 2019

Community services and City budget – 2020 financial planning concluded

City Council concluded financial planning and finalized the City's 2020 budget the first week of December. The budget was adopted at the Dec. 16 Council meeting, in time to submit to the Province before year-end.

"This is the fifth 10-year budget for Campbell River, built on the principles of long-term vision and stable, predictable property tax rates. Financial planning translates into essential community services, including renewal and replacement of aging infrastructure and funding to introduce new or improved services that meet community needs and expectations," says Mayor Andy Adams. *"The 2020-2029 Financial Plan builds on the previous international awards for best practices in local government budgeting. We appreciate the hard work of the entire finance team and the efforts of all staff in this process that translates financial planning into community services."*

Consistent with Council's direction, the property tax rate on a Campbell River home of average value is in the mid-range of tax rates when compared against other British Columbia communities of similar size.

"Next year's budget maintains the momentum of economic activity driven by new development, while planning to meet long-term community needs," says city manager Deborah Sargent. *"2020 will be another busy year for infrastructure replacement – and the 10-year plan ensures funding, employees, tools and equipment, programs and services to support community development and advancement, with a future focus to spread out costs of modest service enhancements."*

Financial planning meetings took place Dec. 2 through 4. Presentations from community residents ahead of Council's deliberations focused on establishing signs for trails in the Campbellton area, and to mark the Greeways Loop.

"Significant ongoing investment and construction in Campbell River continues to provide additional revenue that allows the City to fund new services related to community growth, and in response to community demand. Examples include enhancements in protective services, development services and parks services. Apart from property tax revenue, annual provincial gaming grants and the Community Works Fund (Federal Gas Tax) continue to help fund community and capital improvements," says Alaina Maher, the City's finance manager. *"The City's Financial Stability and Resiliency policy outlines how stable and predictable tax increases will be used to maintain Campbell River's many services and amenities while continuing to plan for future improvements."*

View recordings of the budget meetings at www.campbellriver.ca (click on the Council Webcast button).

For more information about the City's 2020 budget, please contact Alaina Maher, the City's finance manager at 250-286-5780.

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Contact: Alaina Maher, Finance Manager

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Please see background information, next page.

Background

Budget Facts

Less than half of the City's budget is funded through local property taxation; the majority is funded through user fees, sale of services and senior government grants.

More than 34 per cent of the amount collected by the City was on behalf of other agencies (for provincial and regional district taxes, and for the hospital, schools and library).

The City's budget efficiently maintains more than 100 services, including: drinking water, sanitary sewer, emergency response, garbage, recycling and yard waste collection, storm water management, streets, sidewalks and traffic control, development services, economic development, tourism, bylaw enforcement, fire protection, police, parks, recreation and culture programs and facilities, transit, airport, environmental management, museum, art gallery and other public facilities.

Highlights of 2020 budget

- Provides approximately \$78 million for operations, with another \$38 million for capital projects
- Includes funding for new capital projects and infrastructure renewal (\$19.8 million for aging infrastructure over the next 10 years, funded through a \$211,000 incremental tax levy each year)
- Allocates unanticipated revenue and expired debt payment commitments directly to pay for infrastructure renewal and replacement – directing existing funding to re-invest in infrastructure without raising property taxes higher than budget parameters
- Includes a property tax increase of 2.9 per cent, which equates to \$57 on a Campbell River home of average value estimated at \$401,000.
- Increase is in line with Council's budget parameters for a predictable increase between 2 and 3.5 per cent to cover inflationary costs and contract increases in the base budget, including major contracts to maintain existing RCMP and transit services

Highlights of service enhancements in 2020

- Supports significant development application increase (additional community development engineer)
- Enhances public safety (two additional firefighters and increased RCMP forensic video analysis)
- Efficiencies through employee-run sewer camera inspection program that supports asset management
- Bike Skills Park, phase two

Highlights of capital projects and community infrastructure investment in 2020

- Library site assessment work and design work on Seagull Walkway
- Downtown washroom improvements
- Highway 19A underground services and road improvements from Simms Creek to Rockland Road
- Willow Point field turf upgrade
- Additional bus stop shelters, including bus pull-out on Dogwood Street at Carihi
- Sportsplex public consultation to address facility roof replacement and rehabilitation
- Ongoing community infrastructure renewal for parks, sewer, water, roads and storm drains
- Robron fieldhouse
- Sidewalk along Cheviot Road

Highlights of operating projects

- Manages organizational change and maintains the City as an employer of choice (human resource employee one-year term position)
- Expands CR Live Streets to include another summer event
- Strategic economic development
- Continuation of grant programs to local associations in four main commercial areas (downtown, Pier Street, Campbellton, Willow Point) and to assist with the strategic visioning of these projects

Videos about City of Campbell River budgeting and property taxes at [youtube.com/cityofcampbellriver](https://www.youtube.com/cityofcampbellriver)