

HIGHLIGHTS OF DEC. 9, 2020 COUNCIL MEETING***New safety requirements for Council meetings help prevent spreading the coronavirus.***

Presentations to Council by City staff and community members use online video conferencing technology. Watch City Council meetings live or view recordings at campbellriver.ca/webcasts.

2021 Local By-Election

Council appointed Elle Brovold as the Chief Election Officer and Tracy Bate as the Deputy Chief Election Officer for the City of Campbell River's 2021 Local By-Election. The City will send a formal request to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for a Ministerial Order to run a by-election during the pandemic, with enhanced mail ballot voting and other administrative amendments that may be required for public health and safety. The by-election is tentatively scheduled for Feb. 27. Additional information for candidates and voters will be published in the coming weeks.

2021-2030 financial plan bylaw now proposes 1.95 per cent tax increase

Council has given first three readings to the 2021-2030 Financial Plan Bylaw that proposes a 1.95 per cent tax increase. Pressure on the City's budget was relieved by using a portion of the \$4.6 million provincial COVID Safe Restart grant and an additional \$160,000 in property tax revenue related to new construction.

The 1.95 per cent tax increase equates to approximately \$41 on a Campbell River home of average value (estimated at \$442,000).

Mayor Andy Adams noted that Campbell River tax payers will also see reductions in levies charged for regional solid waste and hospital services, which add up to anticipated savings of \$80 for a home of average value.

Council expressed deep concern about the financial impact of the pandemic on residents and local businesses and will meet early in the new year to discuss and carefully consider the use of the remaining \$3,178,000 in provincial Safe Restart grant funding to best benefit our community.

The City anticipates another challenging year ahead in 2021 and is working to ensure Campbell River is well-positioned to adjust as pandemic unfolds and eventually resolves.

The proposed 2021 budget preserves most Council decisions made in October, including more than \$1.24 million in service cuts – of which \$360,200 are permanent cost savings.

The exceptions are:

- Adding \$220,000 to operate the Centennial Pool in 2021 (if public health restrictions allow)
- Using \$378,000 of provincial Safe Restart grant funds to reduce the property tax subsidy needed to operate the airport. Council recognizes the airport's importance to Campbell River's economy. Using a portion of this one-time grant funding helps offset significant airport revenue loss during the pandemic and the costs to gradually and safely restart airport operations.

The budget includes a significant investment in downtown safety (select committee, matching grants for building and property improvements). The budget also includes \$69,000 for a COVID-safe by-election and a riverside parklette and signs that promote connection to the river and safe, outdoor activity in Campbellton.

Council will consider adoption of the budget at the Dec. 14 meeting, which enables the City to submit the 10-year financial plan to the Province by year end and move forward with projects in new year.

The proposed tax increase was 2.78 per cent following the Nov. 30 meeting. Council endorsed a 2.85 per cent maximum following the October meetings.

COVID-19

Please note: We have new procedures in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

For the most recent information on City services, please see our website campbellriver.ca/COVID-19
Reach us with general inquires by email: info@campbellriver.ca or telephone 250-286-5700.