

Budget includes maintaining service levels, putting money aside

By Mark Pavilons

King's recently passed 2015 Budget and Business Plan maintains service levels and puts money aside in reserves.

This follows the Township's commitment to financial sustainability and responsible management of growth. The budget reflects the increasing cost of maintaining existing programs at current service levels, as well as making additional contributions to infrastructure reserves and tax supported capital projects.

As adopted, the 2015 Budget & Business Plan, when combined with the Draft Regional (+3.79%) and Education (0.00%) components, results in a blended increase of 2.69% to the municipal property tax bill. For a home assessed at \$614,000 (average assessment in King), this will add \$156 to the total 2015 property tax bill.

The Township's operating budget increases net operating resources by \$578,000 (2.97%). On the strength of projected assessment growth of \$1.9 million (9.63%) the approved 2015 operating budget increases the Township's commitment to infrastructure reserves (\$722,000) and 2015 tax supported contribution to capital (\$220,000) by a total of \$942,600 (4.84%). This budget ensures more than 50% of property taxation revenues generated through increased assessment is either invested to support 2015 capital project needs or set aside to support planned future infrastructure requirements.

Mayor Pellegrini noted that staff should be commended for proposing a budget and business plan that strikes an appropriate balance between maintaining existing service level standards, while also ensuring that steps are being taken to implement a sustainable fiscal strategy that will support long-term renewal of existing and planned future municipal infrastructure requirements.

Increasing the Township's tax supported operating budget by 2.97% sees investments in:

- Capital/infrastructure projects totaling \$1.8 million, a \$300,000 increase over 2014.

- Infrastructure reserve contributions to \$1.5 million up from \$800,000 last year.

- Program changes that add \$421,000 to improve access to recreation & cultural facilities, special events/programs and enhancing our ability to improve efficiency of municipal facilities.

The 2015 Capital Budget of \$7.1 million includes infrastructure investments as follows:

- Park developments in King City and Nobleton totaling \$3.4 million.

- Fleet and equipment renewal of \$1.4 million.

- Road design and reconstruction/culvert replacements of \$1 million.

- Fire services, facility improvements and equipment replacement of \$1.2 million.

The water and wastewater operating budgets reflect the new water and wastewater rate structure that council approved on Dec. 15, 2014. The annual impact on a typical water consumer (based on annual consumption of 250 m³) is an increase of \$23.08 and \$23.96 for wastewater services with a combined impact of \$47.04 (or \$3.92 per month).

For detailed information on Township's 2015 Budget and Business plan, please visit the Township's website (www.king.ca) or contact Allan Evelyn (aevelyn@king.ca), Director of Finance at the Township.